

Daily
Heavenly Manna
and
Devotional Service
for the
Household of Faith

*

A Collection of

SCRIPTURE TEXTS

With
Appropriate Quotations
from

**THE TOWER
AND
THE PRESENT TRUTH**

for
Every Day in the Year

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LAYMEN'S HOME MISSIONARY MOVEMENT
CHESTER SPRINGS, PA. 19425, U.S.A.
1980

To the King of kings and Lord of lords

IN THE INTEREST OF

ALL HIS CONSECRATED SERVANTS
THAT FEAR HIM, BOTH SMALL AND GREAT

— AND OF —

"ALL THAT IN EVERY PLACE CALL UPON THE LORD,"
"THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH,"

— AND OF —

THE GROANING CREATION, TRAVAILING AND WAITING FOR
THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD,

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED.

"To make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God," "Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things, under Christ."
Eph. 3:4, 5, 9; 1:8-10.

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PREFACE

AS A BASIS for Christian table talk at breakfast, the DAILY HEAVENLY MANNA has had a richly blessed mission among Truth people, as it has also been richly blessed to many devout Christian people outside of Truth circles. Years after its appearance our Pastor suggested that its texts for Thursdays be made the basis for the testimonies at Wednesday night testimony meetings in local ecclesias; and at conventions, where the reading of the day's text and comment has also formed a part of the service of worship at the opening of each day's first session, the day's Manna text ordinarily is used as the testimony meeting's text. But for years its publishers ceased to issue this helpful book; and it has, therefore, been considered in the Lord's order to publish it anew. In this edition the autograph and birthday features have been dropped, and Helps for Devotional Service have been added. These additions have not been made from the thought that our Pastor's edition was considered defective.

Originally this book was prepared for use at the breakfast table; but when our Pastor later suggested that its Thursdays' texts be used as the basis of the weekly devotional services' testimonies, the thought of Helps For Devotional Service was suggested as advisable. Nor are the Editor's comments supplied from the standpoint that those of our Pastor are poor, for they are most excellent. As originally written our Pastor's comments were not made as special direct comments on the texts to which they were appended in the Manna, for use as Manna comments. And, as a rule, they are topical rather than textual comments on the pertinent texts; while those of the Editor are, as a rule, textual rather than topical. Hence the two sets of comments more or less supplement each other. These Devotional Services are not intended to be used in the testimony meetings themselves; rather they are intended to serve as preparatory helps for use during the week. Except the Editor's comments, these Helps were prepared especially as Helps For Devotional Service. His comments originated as follows: his wife asked him to fill in the spaces for autographs and birthdays in her Manna with brief comments on the pertinent days' texts. This was done from time to time from 1906 to 1918, nearly all the second half of them having been written during the first part of 1918, with never a thought of their being used for the purpose to which they were devoted in Helps For Devotional Service; for they were finished at least a full year before the thought came to him to prepare such

Helps. Their use as such in the Epiphany movement has been blessed; and when the thought of his publishing the Manna formed in his mind, with it came the thought of combining the Manna and these Helps, so as better to advance the second use of the Manna—its testimony meeting use. Needless to say, such an addition to the Manna is not a disparagement of it; rather it is a complement to it; for it forms a commentary on it; and only worthwhile pen products deserve a commentary; and such are rightly more highly esteemed than their commentaries. The greater importance of the Manna, among other ways, is indicated by its being printed in a larger type than the Helps. May the Lord richly bless this edition of the Manna in its twofold use—at the breakfast table and for the testimony meetings!

Your brother and servant,

PAUL S. L. JOHNSON.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., U.S.A., MAY 8, 1937.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

With deep gratitude to God and appreciation to those who have co-labored on it, we are glad to supply to His people this new edition—with an improved format—of this very helpful devotional book.

It has been a rich blessing to many in morning devotions and also in many cases in afternoon and evening use (either by one or two or more individuals, especially those who cannot readily use it in the mornings).

New composition has facilitated the making of some corrections and minor changes, many of them long desired. Some of these changes make the comments apply more directly to all God's present-day people who are seeking to grow in Christlikeness, to be filled more and more with the holy Spirit. Texts and comments applying directly only to the Little Flock and the Great Company may be considered as applying in principle to others of God's consecrated people. Some parallel passages have been added; some substitutions have been made in the *Poems of Dawn* selections (to use more poems) and in the hymns chosen (so as to have seven in each day's list and use more hymns); references to Tower Reprints (R) have been added; the index has been expanded; and a few helpful additions, including a birthday record, have been made at the end.

Your brother in God's joyful service,

AUGUST GOHLKE.

CHESTER SPRINGS, PA., U.S.A., JUNE 15, 1980.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

PROFITABLE DAILY TITHING

"Prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it"—Mal. 3:10.

If Christians allow the rush and crush of selfish ambition to deprive them of their daily portion of heavenly food, they must not be surprised, if they grow spiritually leaner day by day, and if "the peace of God" gives place in their hearts to the discontent which is growing in the world, notwithstanding the multiplication of our comforts and privileges. Let us remember the exhortation, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:6). Our first edition of 20,000 *Manna*, met with far better success than we had dared hoped for; and we have been greatly encouraged by the kind words of its many friends far and near. Some call it their "Heavenly Breakfast Food" and tell that they feast upon its lessons as regularly as the sun rises. Surely the little tithing of time daily spent in partaking of its morsels of heavenly counsel cannot fail to profit all who partake. The day opened with such meditations is sure to be the better spent and more profitable. The heart thus turned to holy thoughts is much less likely to go aside from right paths than otherwise. "The wisdom that cometh from above" is thus gradually and easily assimilable, and cannot fail to bear some good fruit in the hearts of the saints, and to awaken reverence in the worldly.

Every Christian who sees this book is sure to be interested and to want a copy for his own breakfast table. And as it is published, not for profit but to do good, we have put the price so low as to bring it within the reach of all. We do our friends and neighbors a valuable service when we call the *Manna* to their attention and assure them that it is merely Christian—not denominational. Some use them as birthday presents and holiday gifts; others anxious to extend their good influence, purchase them by the quantity and sell them at a slight advance to cover their time and car fare. All are welcome to engage in this service of love to the extent of their opportunity and ability. The book will last a lifetime, and can be used year after year, for the sacred message never grows old, but is line upon line, precept upon precept.

Your brother and servant,

C. T. RUSSELL.

MEDITATION

I love to steal a while away
From ev'ry cumbering care,
And use some time of early day
In thought and fervent prayer.

I love to think on mercies past,
And future good implore,
And all my cares and sorrows cast
On Him whom I adore.

I love by faith to take a view
Of brighter scenes beyond;
The prospect doth my strength renew,
And hence my songs abound.

Soon shall earth's days of toil be o'er,
Its darkness passed away;
Its storms and trials but prepare,
And lead to endless day.

JANUARY 1

O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard, which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved—Psa. 66:8, 9.

Thanks be to God that His grace has preserved us, "kept us from falling," through another year; that so many of us are still of one heart and of one mind in respect to His Word and its service! When we remember that the Adversary is to be permitted to bring "strong delusions" upon the Lord's people for the very purpose of sifting out all not truly His (2 Thes. 2:1-12), it should surely call forth our thanks to God that the opening of another year finds us still standing fast, appreciating the Truth, and in full accord with all the Divine appointments by which He has kept us from falling—Z '03, 3 (R 3125).

The true people of God exhort one another to speak highly of His Word and to cause the message that embodies His attributes to be understood. He preserves the existence of His true people throughout their entire course. He does not, nor will He allow them to be overthrown nor to lose their position in Christ, the solid Rock on which they stand—P '35, 182.

Parallel passages: Joel 2:26; Psa. 103; 104:1; 105:1-7; 91:1-16; 92:1-5, 10-15; Rom. 8:31-39; 1 Pet. 1:2-9; Jude 24, 25; Psa. 40:1-4; 115:18; 145:1, 2; Isa. 33:16; Matt. 10:28-31.

Hymns: 34, 235, 236, 237, 238, 145, 120.
Poems of Dawn, 274: *The Year Before Us*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 216 (R 5500).

Questions: Have I this week made His praise known? How did it energize me and keep me from stumbling? What will I do with His praise this year?

THE YEAR BEFORE US

STANDING at the portal of the opening year,
Words of comfort meet us, hushing every fear;
Spoken through the silence by our Father's voice,
Tender, strong and faithful, making us rejoice.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

"I, the Lord, am with thee, be thou not afraid;
I will help and strengthen, be thou not dismayed.
Yea, I will uphold thee with Mine own right hand;
Thou art called and chosen in My sight to stand."
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

For the years before us, oh, what rich supplies!
For the poor and needy, living streams shall rise;
For the sad and mournful, shall His grace abound;
For the faint and feeble, perfect strength be found.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

He will never fail us, He will not forsake;
His eternal covenant He will never break;
Resting on His promise, what have we to fear?
God is all-sufficient for the coming year.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

R5500: "THE LORD THY GOD IS A FAITHFUL GOD"

"O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of His praise to be heard; which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved."—Psalm 66:8, 9.

IN THIS Psalm the Prophet David calls upon all the world to praise the Lord. In prophetic language he exclaims: "All the earth shall worship Thee; they shall sing to Thy name!" Then he recounts the wonderful manifestation of the Power of God in His dealings with Israel; he calls upon the people to bless the Lord and sound His praises abroad. Taking a retrospective view of the dealings of Jehovah with His people, he continues: "For Thou, O God, hast proved us, Thou hast tried us as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; Thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place!"—vs.10-12.

The Psalmist then declared that he would enter into the house of the Lord, and would pay unto the Lord the vows which he had made in the time of his trouble. He recounts the goodness of God to himself. He tells that he had cried unto the Lord and extolled His praises, that his prayers had been answered, and that he had been lifted up and blessed and delivered. He calls upon Israel to remember all the leadings of the Lord in their past history and all His goodness to them as a people, and exhorts them to sound forth the praises of His great name. God had brought the people of Israel up out of bondage to Egypt; He had protected them through all their wilderness journeyings and ever since.

King David reminds them that they had been kept alive, that God had not permitted them to be exterminated—He had "suffered not their feet to be moved." They were not vanquished by their enemies, so long as they had trusted and obeyed. Subsequently, because of their disobedience and perversity, God caused them to be carried away into captivity in Babylon. But this was for their good, that He might prove them, and afterwards bring them—all worthy ones—back into their own land.

LET SPIRITUAL ISRAEL SOUND HIS PRAISES!

But although this Psalm has a primary significance as relates to Natural Israel, our thought is, in harmony with the applications made by our Lord and the Apostles, that these words are even more appropriate in their application to Spiritual Israel. The Lord has brought us up out of the world. He has delivered us from the great taskmaster, Satan. He has guided us through the wilderness journey; He has fed us with the Manna from Heaven; He has brought us forth the Water of Life from the great Rock of Ages smitten for us, that we might drink and live. He has washed our feet from the dust of our wilderness way. He has faithfully disciplined and chastened us as His sons; He has gone before us through all the toilsome march, and has been our Rearward as well, to protect us from all danger and harm. If Natural Israel had great cause for thankfulness and praise, what should be *our* attitude, for all the marvelous manifestations of His love and care for us, His Spiritual Israel! Truly, as no other people on earth, past or present, can *we* praise our God! With the poet we can say:

"He was better to me than all my hopes,
He was better than all my fears;
He made a bridge of my broken works,
And a rainbow of my tears!
The billows that guarded my sea-girt path
Carried my Lord on their crest;
When I dwell on the days of my wilderness march,
I can lean on His love for the rest.

"He emptied my hands of their treasured store,
And His covenant love revealed;
There was not a wound in my aching heart,
But the balm of His breath has healed.
Oh, tender and true was the chastening sore
In wisdom that taught and tried,
Till the soul He loved was trusting in Him,
And in nothing on earth beside!

"He guided my steps where I could not see,
By ways that I had not known;
The crooked was straight and the rough made plain,
As I followed the Lord alone.
I praise Him still for the pleasant palms,
For the water-springs by the way;
For the glowing pillar of flame by night,
And the guiding cloud by day.

"There is never a watch in the dreariest halt
But some promise of love endears;

I read from the past that the future shall be
Far better than all my fears.
Like the golden pot of the wilderness bread,
Laid up with the blossoming rod,
All safe in the Ark with the Law of the Lord,
In the Covenant care of my God!"

SOME FAITHFUL THROUGHOUT THE DARK AGES

Our God never fails His children: His name is Faithfulness! He has never permitted His Church to be exterminated, notwithstanding all the assaults of error and of the powers of darkness. There are still true people of God in the world, and ever have been. Throughout the Dark Ages, the great fact of our Redeemer's sacrifice for sin was still held by some of the true saints of the Lord. This precious truth was never completely lost during those years of darkness and obscurity, and in God's due time His Church emerged from the wilderness, "leaning upon the arm of her Beloved." The light has since grown brighter and brighter to the faithful, watching ones. And what a flood of glory now shines upon the path of the saints!

"Looking back, we praise the way
God has led us day by day!"

The saints of God during the past centuries did not need these additional blessings which are supplied to the faithful of today, but their every need was supplied. We are living in the days of the "cleansed Sanctuary." More Truth is now due than at any time in the history of the Church. Truly, our Lord has "brought us into His banqueting House, and His banner over us is Love!" (Cant. 2:4.) Truly, "He holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved," despite all the thousand snares laid for our feet by the great Adversary and his servants—many of them unwittingly serving him. We can see that long ago we might have been overcome by the Adversary's attacks had not our God been a Wall of Protection round about us.

HIS SAINTS SHALL NEVER BE MOVED

"Our lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places!" (Psalm 16:6.) But it is only the faithful who are thus kept. We are not to understand that the Lord keeps any who do not themselves make the proper effort to *know* the will of God that they may *do* it; it is those who are following in the footsteps of Jesus, doing all in their power to please the Lord as they are able to discern the way wherein He would have them walk. These are today causing the voice of His praise to be heard, and grace sufficient is their portion. If the trials of faith, submission and trust shall be greater in the near future than they have yet been, these faithful ones will not fall. Their feet shall not be moved, even though a host encamp against them, and thousands fall at their side. "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." These will be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, even though they be required for a time to follow where they cannot see.

Let us therefore go forward with good courage, knowing that He who hath led us thus far will continue to lead. He who favored us first will favor us last; and "He that is on our side is greater than all they that be against us." Thanks be to God that His grace has preserved us, that He has kept us from falling, that so many of us are still of one heart and one mind to go forward unflinchingly, whatever the coming days may bring! If they shall bring hardship and persecution, pain and trial, His grace will uphold us still. If they shall bring us tests of faith and endurance, His promises will not fail. Let our entire trust be centered in God. Let us continue to rejoice in Him. "Let Him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord, which exerciseth loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth; for in these things do I delight, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 9:24.) Testings will be permitted to come upon the people of God for the very purpose of sifting out all who are not truly His. Then let us stand fast, knowing that He is faithful.

JANUARY 2

Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's—1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

At the opening of the new year, what lesson could be more important to us than this one, that we are not our own, but belong to another; that we are not, therefore, to seek to please ourselves, but to please Him; nor to seek to serve self, but to serve Him; nor to seek to obey self-will, but on the contrary His will? This means holiness in the most absolute and comprehensive sense of the word, not only separation from sin to righteousness, but separation from *self* (and the world) to the will of God in Christ—Z '97, 35 (R 2097).

Not only are God's people *His* by virtue of creation and sanctification, but also by virtue of redemption. It is therefore reasonable and appropriate that all they have and are should be made to reflect credit upon God their Owner and Creator; and this reasonable thing they should render with all their strength of faith, hope, love and obedience; for less than this were unworthy and unseemly—P '29, 189; P '30, 14.

Parallel passages: Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Acts 20:28; Rev. 5:9; 14:4, 5; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; Titus 2:14; 1 Cor. 7:23; 10:31; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 9:12; 1 Pet. 1:18; 2:9; Matt. 5:16; John 15:8; Phil. 1:9-11.

Hymns: 191, 5, 15, 132, 178, 187, 215.

Poems of Dawn, 279: *Another Year for Thee*.

Tower Reading: Z '10, 199 (R 4632).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? Amid what circumstances? With what results?

ANOTHER YEAR FOR THEE

ANOTHER year we welcome!
Dear Master, may it be,
In thought and word and action,
Another year for Thee!
Another year of leaning
Upon Thy loving breast,
Where heartaches, pain and sorrow
Are lost in happy rest.

Another year of proving
Thy holy, blessed will,
To find my joy in doing,
And in Thy hand hold still;
Another year of service,

To prove to Thee my love;
Another year of training
For greater works above.

Another year of trials
And the blessings that they bring;
Another year's protection
'Neath the shadow of Thy wing.
Another year of gladness!
Dear Master, may it be,
In living and in dying,
Another year for Thee!

R4632: DOES OUR LORD NOW OWN THE HUMAN RACE?

IF A MAN were purchasing a building, had entered into negotiations for it, had signed a contract and were making arrangements to secure the money to apply it in payment for the building, it would be very appropriate, as soon as he had signed the contract, to say, this is the owner of the building. In the strict sense of the word, however, he would not be the owner until he had paid the price and *all the receipts were properly given, and, instead of the contract, he had the deed*. A contract is an agreement for the carrying out of a project; the deed witnesses the transaction actually accomplished.

As far as the contract was concerned, our Lord Jesus entered into it with the Father; and in view of his having given to the Father the ransom-price—"Even as the Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many"—he already has a claim to being Lord of all, in a prospective sense, not in the actual sense, as there are millions of people on earth today of whom he is not Lord; their knees have not bowed; their tongues have not confessed. So he is not their Lord in the absolute sense, but his work is progressing, and, in view of the authority which will yet be exercised by him and of the work which he will yet do, the Father speaks of him prophetically as "Lord of all."

THE WORLD ASLEEP IN JESUS

We will here consider certain Scriptures as having a bearing upon the matter. We mention first the Scripture which says that the world "sleep in Jesus." (I Thess. 4:14.) How can they sleep in Jesus, unless Jesus owns the world, may be asked? We answer that they sleep in Jesus in exactly the same way that Abraham and all Israel sleep and all the kings and prophets are said to be asleep. Not that Jesus at the time of their death had paid a ransom-price for mankind, nor had come into the world to do so, but because, in the Divine Plan, God had made arrangements for the entire transaction and had guaranteed that a Redeemer would be found, that a ransom-price would be given, and that all mankind would be recovered from the tomb. Further, God himself spoke from that standpoint when he said that he was the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, speaking as though they were really not dead at all, but merely asleep, waiting for him.

Similarly, all who believed God could speak of and think of all who were dead as merely asleep for the time and awaiting the resurrection, even though Jesus had not yet come. The same is true since Jesus came and died. It is now still more reasonable and proper for *us* to say that all "sleep in Jesus," because now he is identified as the one who has given himself a ransom-price for all. It is not that the price has been applied for all, but merely that he has placed in the Father's hands his sacrificed life, which is his to appropriate and which is sufficient "for the sins of the whole world." (John 3:16.) It has not as yet been appropriated for the world, but merely for the Church, for the price is first a satisfaction for our sins, the Church's sins, and afterwards for the sins of the whole world.—I John 2:2.

THE CHURCH ALONE REDEEMED THUS FAR

We will next consider the text, *Ye* were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. (I Pet. 1:18, 19.) The reference here is to *us*, the Church, and does not extend beyond the Church to the world. It does not imply that the *world* is redeemed as yet. Jesus' merit, of course, is all-sufficient for the whole world, but he has not yet appropriated it for all men.

We will consider another text, "*Ye* are bought with a price." (I Cor. 6:20.) This text, similarly, speaks not of the world, but of the Church. It is the "*Ye*" class that were bought, and even they were not bought when Jesus died at Calvary. There, indeed, he committed to the Father's hands a price (Luke 23:46) sufficient for all; but it was not then appropriated for anybody—not even for us, not until his resurrection and ascension, when "he appeared in the presence of God for us." (Heb. 9:24.) Then *we* were bought. "*Ye* were bought with the precious blood of Christ." His blood was made the offset so far as believers are concerned.

Another text: "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (I John 2:2.) We answer that he was a propitiation, satisfaction, for our sins, in one sense of the word, when he died, but the satisfaction *had not then* been applied for our sins. When he died the merit of his death was a satisfaction-price for the sins of the whole world, also, but it was not applied for the sins of the whole world. When he ascended up on high he appeared for *us*, the Church class, and made satisfaction for our sins. Therefore, as we believe and make consecration, our sins are remitted. His merit is additionally the satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; but he has not yet applied it for the world, hence the world is not free from the penalty of sin; it is still under condemnation. Concerning us, however, the Apostle says, "*We have escaped* the condemnation that is on the world." And again he says, "*We were* children of wrath even as others." The others, we see, are still children of wrath. Why? Because the satisfaction for their sins has not yet been made. The great Redeemer has the satisfaction price; it merely awaits the due time for application.

Notice another passage, "Christ died and rose and revived that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living." (Rom. 14:9.) This text very appropriately states the valuable transaction accomplished by our Lord. His death was a necessary feature of the

redemptive work. His raising and revival were also necessary features. And further, he could not have been Lord in any other way than by the Father's proclaiming him "Lord of all," and "Let all the angels of God worship him." But while he is proclaimed to be Lord of all, it will take time to bring about the recognition of it. In harmony with this, the Apostle says, "In the fullness of time God will gather together under him (Jesus) all things in heaven and earth." But it will take the fullness of time, the fullness of the Millennial Age, to accomplish this gathering together under him and making him Lord of all. So we see that prophetically and by Divine appointment he already has that office, but now he waits until his enemies shall be brought under him or made his foot-stool, and all things shall be subjected to him.

"A RANSOM FOR ALL"

We next consider the text, "He gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (I Tim. 2:6.) The giving of himself as the man Christ Jesus was when he presented himself at Jordan and surrendered all to the Father's will. This work of surrendering his earthly life and all his earthly rights was fully accomplished at Calvary when he cried, "It is finished." He had finished the work the Father had given him to do. He had given himself to be "a ransom for all," and his death-merit is sufficient to constitute a ransom for all, as soon as it shall be so appropriated. Thus far, we see, it has been applied only for us who believe, and the time for its application for the remainder of the world will be at the beginning of the Millennial Age; but it will not *reach all* of the human family at the beginning.

While our Lord's merit is fully appropriated during the Gospel Age for all who come unto him, it will be fully set free when the last of the consecrated ones shall have passed beyond the vail. His merit has been imputed to them for the very purpose of enabling them to be sacrificers and when it shall have been released by the death of the last of the consecrated, it will be again at his disposal for appropriation. Then the great High Priest will make the second sprinkling of the blood—not on *our* behalf, because we shall have no further need of it, having by that time become perfect as New Creatures beyond the vail, members of his Body. The second sprinkling will be on behalf of "all the people"—all who will come under the New Covenant arrangement—"to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile"; all who will desire, when they come to sufficient knowledge, under that New Covenant, to come under the merit of our Lord's ransom-price; and those who will fail to thus come, will reject the ransom-price and hence the blessings of restitution.

All these blessings will come gradually, not instantaneously, not by faith, but actually, by restitution processes. All through the Millennial Age The Christ will be giving men the benefit of our Lord's ransom or "corresponding price," and the full benefit of this price will not have been given until the work of the Millennial Age shall have been finished and shall have brought to perfection all who desire to be God's people, upon God's terms, as God never intended to give his blessings to any but those who desire to be in harmony with him on his terms. God never intended to do anything for those who are willingly and intentionally contrary, such as Satan.

It may be asked how the foregoing will conform with the text, "That he [Jesus], by the grace of God, should taste *death* for *every man*." (Heb. 2:9.) We answer that this is God's great work which he purposed in himself before the foundation of the world—that the ransoming of Adam and all his race should be accomplished through the death of Christ. Thus he tasted death for every man, whether the benefit of it was received on the Day of Pentecost, or later, during the Age, or whether they will get it at the beginning of the Millennial Age. It is for *every man* that he "tasted death," that he might give them the blessings that will come to the world of mankind down to the completion of the Millennial Age, and, if obedient, to all eternity.

"He ascended up on high and led captivity captive"—or, as another translation gives it, and we think more correctly, "He ascended up on high leading forth a multitude of captives." This passage shows that he was the leader of all the captive race. We, the Church, follow first; the "Great Company" follow next; the Ancient Worthies will follow soon afterward, and at the end of the Millennial Age he will bring in the remainder of the race. They will all be led forth, all delivered from the power of sin and death.

THE PRICE ONE THING—THE APPLICATION OF IT ANOTHER THING

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." This passage does not state that Christ made an application of his merit for the ungodly; it merely states that God arranged his plan so that it was necessary for Christ to die for the ungodly. Why did God so arrange it? He arranged it on behalf of, or in the interest of, the ungodly—not merely the Jews and those who were, as some of us may have been, desirous of harmony with God, but for all the ungodly. The merit of his death was intended by the Father to be applicable to every member of the race, the ungodly race of Adam, all of them sinners and more or less depraved and degraded and out of the way.

Now, then, the object for which the price was given is one thing and the application of it is another. The purpose of Christ's death was to redeem the world, to be the world's ransom-price, that he might be the restorer of all. But in this Plan there are time and order; the work progresses step by step. The first step was for Christ himself to secure eternal glory by his own obedience to death and to have as an asset something that he could give away—his earthly life, which he had not forfeited.

The next step was that he should ascend up on high and apply this price. He appeared as advocate for a special class of humanity. What special class? We answer, he appeared for all those from among men who should desire to come into harmony with God, who should desire to accept God's favor and to become members of the Body of Christ under an invitation or programme that God had arranged. When he appeared for these he imputed the merit of his sacrifice on their behalf, and thus all this merit is absorbed, so to speak, in this one work first undertaken, this work of justifying and assisting this special class who desire to walk in Jesus' steps, desire to suffer with him that they may also share with him the heavenly glory. He does this, not by first giving them earthly restitution, but by simply *imputing* his merit to them.

This imputation of his merit, coming to those who have turned from sin, who are believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have consecrated themselves to God, covers their Adamic sin and makes up for all deficiencies of their flesh, so that they can "present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, their reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.) In other words, he becomes endorser for these. They are not sufficient of themselves, but he guarantees for them that if they will faithfully perform this laying down of their lives, his merit will continue to be applied for all their imperfections. These are the Royal Priests, whom he in one picture represents as his Bride, and in another as members of his Body. These are "more than conquerors."

Then comes the secondary class, not up to this standard—a class that does not voluntarily, heartily and cheerfully lay down their lives in the desire to please the Father and do his will. These, nevertheless, are loyal at heart and are restrained from full sacrifice only through "fear of death," through fear of what it will cost them. They will be tested to the point that they will be obliged ultimately to lay down their lives, and to do so with a willing mind. They fail of coming off more than conquerors because of permitting experiences designed to test them to retard their progress in the matter of gaining the high position offered them, thus they become the Second Company. There is, also, a third class, those who die the "Second Death," who "draw back unto perdition."

By the time that these three classes shall have finished their course, all the merit that Christ imputed will be available again as at first; all will be at his disposal afresh. Then it will be applied in the sealing of the New Covenant which will be made with Israel, but which will be broad enough to include every individual of all the nations of the earth who will be willing to come under the same terms and to become the children of Abraham through faith and obedience.

"THE REDEMPTION OF THE PURCHASED POSSESSION"

In this connection let us consider the text, "In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the *purchased possession*."—Eph. 1:14.

The holy Spirit now granted to the Church is the earnest or foretaste of our inheritance. What are we to inherit? We are to "inherit all things." First of all we are to inherit the Divine nature, and secondly, we are to inherit the great Abrahamic promise that through us, in union with our Lord Jesus, as members of his Body, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. We speak of ourselves as being of the Lord's purchased possession, and when we are changed to receive his glory, this part of his possession will be complete and we shall be perfected with him and be under his direct control.

After this another feature of the same possession, and linked in as part of this same promise, will become operative. The precious blood will then be applied to seal the New

Covenant on behalf of the sins of all the people and the work of recovering the still larger possession will progress until the close of the Millennial Age, when the whole possession will have been brought into line and everything subjected to his rule and turned over to the Father.

We will also consider the passage, "For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Christ Jesus, hath abounded unto many."—Rom. 5:15.

In this text the Apostle evidently does not mean to be understood as saying that the full abundance of grace had then *reached* the many, because that would be an untruth. It is now 1, 800 years since the Apostle's day, and the abundance of grace has not yet reached the majority of men. So we must understand him to mean that this abundance of grace that is in Christ according to the Father's plan and arrangement and purpose, is *yet* to reach the many. The world is yet in its sins, and Israel is yet in its sins and will not be recovered until after the Church shall have been glorified, as the Apostle says (Romans 11:27), "For this is my Covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

Since this grace has not yet gone to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles in general, the only way in which it *has abounded* is *through the promise of God* that the death of Christ will yet be made efficacious for all. Therefore, speaking from this prophetic standpoint, it is plain to be seen how Jesus is the Savior of the world, although he has not yet finished the work of saving the Church and will not do so until the end of this Age. Similarly he will not be the Savior of the world in the full sense until the end of the Millennial Age. Some he will never save, because they will refuse the grace of God; and yet he is, according to the Scriptures, the Savior of all men—the Savior of the world.

He was the Savior of the world, according to the Scriptures, when he was born. The message of the angels was, "Unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." He was a Savior in the prospective sense—not because of what he was then, as a babe, and not merely because of what he has yet accomplished, but because, according to God's promise, of what he will effect up to the time when he shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. "He is a Savior and a great one," "able to save unto the uttermost all that will come unto the Father through him." (Isa. 19:20; Heb. 7:25.) He is now saving *us* in a partial sense, by *hope*, because we have come unto the Father through him, according to the arrangement of this Gospel Age. He will yet save us in the fullest sense in the "First Resurrection." The saving of the world will then begin, when he shall awaken them from death; but they will not be fully saved, will not attain full restitution nor gain eternal life, except as they shall exercise faith and obedience. He opens the door. He makes the way. He provides all the arrangements by which they may know and obey.

The whole earth is a part of the purchased possession and shall be filled with the glory of God. And if any knee will then refuse to bow and any tongue refuse to confess and any fail to accept of the favor of God, there will be nothing further for him. He will be doing "despite to the spirit of grace" and will die the "Second Death."—Heb. 10:29; Jude 12.

JANUARY 3

Pray without ceasing—1 Thes. 5:17.

Whatever might be our natural inclinations with reference to definiteness and persistency in prayer, we must take our instructions from the Scriptures; and overcoming our natural predilections, we must as "little children" and as "dear children" conform our views and conduct to the instruction which is from above. Let us all, therefore, remember the words, "Ask [in My name], and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24). The Heavenly Father has multiplied mercies, blessings and providences in store for His obedient and faithful children *who will ask for them*—Z '96, 162 (R 2004).

The Lord's people ought always to pray and not to faint. The answer long delayed is the blessing most valued. Therefore, continued seeking in prayer for the Father's favor will result in the deepening of our spirituality and the attainment of our holy desires—P '34, 189.

Parallel passages: 1 Pet. 4:7; Luke 2:37; 11:5-13; 21:36; Rom. 12:12; Eph. 1:15, 16; 6:18; Phil. 4:6, 7; Col. 1:9; 4:2; Psa. 5:1-3; 42:8; 109:4; 116:2; Dan. 6:10; Acts 6:4; 10:2, 9; Rom. 1:9; 1 Thes. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:5; 2 Tim. 1:3.

Hymns: 35, 239, 1, 26, 48, 69, 115.

Poems of Dawn, 115: *Pray Without Ceasing*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 182 (R 5707).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences with ceaseless prayer? What helped or hindered therein? In what did they result?

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

UNANSWERED yet, the prayer your lips have
pleaded
In agony of heart these many years?
Doth faith begin to fail, is hope declining,
And think you all in vain those falling tears?
Say not the Father hath not heard your prayer,
You shall have your desire, sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Tho' when you first presented
This one petition at the Father's throne,
It seemed you could not wait the time of asking,
So anxious was your heart to have it done.
If years have passed since then, do not despair,
For God will answer you sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? But you are not unheeded;
The promises of God *forever* stand;
To Him our days and years alike are equal.
Have faith in God! It is your Lord's command.
Hold on to Jacob's angel, and your prayer
Shall bring a blessing down, sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Nay, do not say unanswered;
Perhaps your part is not yet wholly done.
The work began when first your prayer was uttered;
And God will finish what He hath begun.
Keep incense burning at the shrine of prayer,
And *glory* shall descend, sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Faith cannot be unanswered;
Her feet are firmly planted on the Rock.

Amid the wildest storms she stands undaunted,
Nor quails before the loudest thunder shock.
She knows *Omnipotence* hath heard her prayer,
And cries, "It shall be done, sometime, somewhere!"

R5707: PRAYER—ITS USE AND ABUSE

"And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint." "Pray without ceasing."—Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

IN THE first text under consideration, we see that our Lord used a parable to point out the lessons He designed to give. A parable is a word-picture designed to illustrate some truth, but is not necessarily a statement of facts. On the contrary, it seems very rarely to be a statement of facts, but is merely a suppository case. More than this, in a parable the thing *said* is never the thing *meant*, literally. The wheat and the tares of one of Jesus' parables were not literal wheat and tares, but were the children of the Kingdom and the children of the Adversary. So the parable here is of an unjust judge, who had no appreciation of justice. Notwithstanding this, a poor widow came to him again and again importuning for help. To get rid of her he finally gave her the relief desired.

The Lord uses this parable as an illustration of our coming to the Heavenly Father—not that the Heavenly Father is an unjust Judge nor that the Church is a widow, but that the parable is merely an illustration of the reward of importunity in prayer. The woman's persistency in continually coming to the judge illustrated what Jesus wished to emphasize. In concluding the parable, He says that if an unjust judge would grant this poor widow her petition because of her continued asking, what might we expect of our Heavenly Father? When His children cry unto Him day and night, He is sure to hear their prayers. This implies that the prayers are proper ones for the Lord to answer. We cannot

think that God would do anything but that which is just and right and proper, and in harmony with this thought the instruction to the Lord's people is that in coming to the Lord in prayer we should make sure that we ask only for the things pleasing to Him. Therefore Christians who live near to God are the best qualified to offer prayer that would be acceptable and would be answered.

"ABIDE IN ME, AND I IN YOU"

Our Lord Jesus was thoroughly informed regarding proper prayer. We have His own testimony, "I know that thou hearest Me always." He never had a refusal, because he always asked the things in harmony with the Father's will. There must be two conditions met in order that our prayers may be answered. We must first have accepted Jesus as our Savior, and then have made a consecration to God in His appointed way. These steps must both be taken before we can be in Christ at all. When accepted of the Heavenly Father in Christ Jesus, we become New Creatures in Him. It is to the New Creature that all God's promises apply. Whoever has not become a New Creature by being begotten of the Holy Spirit is outside of all these promises—but not outside of hope; for we see that, in God's Plan, there is a broad hope for all the world. But in this "acceptable time," none can offer acceptable prayer except in this special appointed way.

There is but one sheep-fold in the present time. Only those who are in this fold are in God's favor. These have a right to pray. But there is a second consideration, after consecration has been made; namely, Are these *abiding* in Christ or are they going out of harmony with Him? God's Word must *abide* in us—not merely that we should once have read the Bible through, or that we read so many verses or chapters each day—but the Word must *remain* in us, its teachings and principles must be assimilated and incorporated into our lives. Thus we shall be able to see what God's mind is, what is pleasing to Him, what we should ask for and what we should not ask for, under His terms. All who thus abide in Christ, and in whom His Word abides, may ask "what they will." They may ask anything that is guaranteed in God's Word, and this means that they may ask whatsoever they will; for His Word dwells in them richly, and they would not think of asking anything not authorized therein.

BLESSINGS EASILY GAINED NOT APPRECIATED

Our lesson teaches continuity in prayer—not merely that we pray once, and then say, "I have prayed about this matter, and now I will leave it." But the question may arise, "Why *continue* to ask? God knows every need. Why not leave the entire matter with Him?" The Scriptures seem to answer this question by showing us that we need to ask for our own benefit, that we may be ready to appreciate the answer when it comes. If we get things without our realization of our need of them, they would come to us so easily that in our fallen condition they would be unappreciated.

Indeed it is true that the majority of people receive daily many, many blessings that they are never thankful for; they do not appreciate them. God sends the sunshine and the rain, as our Lord Jesus told us, upon the evil and the good; and He intimates that these are

great blessings from God. Yet how few people really appreciate the rain as a blessing from God! How few, when they see the sunshine, appreciate the blessing God is sending to them through the sunshine! Because these blessings are very common, and come without the asking, they are very little appreciated by the majority.

But the Christian, having the eyes of his understanding opened, appreciates more and more all these blessings as from the Lord. Therefore as he comes to realize his needs, and what is promised in the Lord's Word, he knows that he may advantageously go to the Lord in prayer that these needs may be supplied. His heart has come into that receptive attitude where he is ready to receive God's blessings thankfully and profit by them.

What, then, should we ask for as God's children? What do the Scriptures tell us to ask for? In the first place, they tell us *not* to use "vain repetitions." How should we understand this? Our Lord explains that we should not use vain repetitions "as the heathen do," who think that they will be heard on account of the number of times they repeat the prayer. The Chinese, for instance, have praying wheels, by which they can say a hundred prayers a minute. Thus they save time, voice, etc. But such prayers are only vain repetitions. Many professed Christians, we believe, practise vain repetitions; they say many prayers, which we fear often do not come from the heart, but are said over and over from an imaginary sense of duty or obligation.

NOT FOR OLD CREATURE, BUT FOR NEW

The proper heart condition would be one in which we would feel the need of the Lord's blessing and assistance, and would go to Him in a trustful attitude, presenting our petition, and waiting for His time and way to answer. As to the things that we should ask for, the Master points out in one of His discourses that the heathen, the people of the world in general, all not believers, ask for earthly blessings—"What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" So might a child pray for these earthly things in its innocence of mind. But children of God should pray for earthly blessings only to the extent that they would minister to the growth or usefulness of the New Creature.

As the Christian grows in grace and in knowledge he should come to realize more and more that he is a *New Creature*, and that the New Creature is to pray for itself and not for the old creature. The New Creature must take into consideration the needs of the mortal body which is its tabernacle and its servant, but must ask for this body only what will be necessary that the New Creature may properly develop, and may accomplish the work given him to do by the Lord. He may ask nothing merely that the old creature may be gratified; for the old creature is reckoned as dead. He may ask the Lord to supply his real needs according to His unerring Wisdom.

We should pray for strength to overcome the flesh, for wisdom to know how to deal with ourselves, for strength of character and for the development of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. We should pray for spiritual food, for grace and wisdom to keep our garments unspotted from the world and to put on the whole armor of God. We should ask

for wisdom as to how to understand the Word of God, and how to appreciate the Spirit of the Truth. All these things would be proper subjects of prayer, because they are part and parcel of what goes to make up the New Creation.

In these prayers for the higher things, we are not ignoring the body and its needs, though we are not to seek after the things that the Gentiles seek (the name Gentiles including all those who are not in covenant relationship with God). Those who are in this covenant relationship with God should not ask as do those who are not in such relationship. God does not hear the prayers of those who have never come into His family. They have not been instructed to pray. And we are to pray for things different from those for which they would pray. In all the words that Jesus spoke there is no suggestion that His disciples should pray for better shoes or dress or better home or how to pay off the mortgage. Jesus and the Apostles never prayed for such things. What they prayed for is a suggestion of what we should pray for.

We are to distinguish between prayer, petitions to God, and adoration. *Any one* may worship God, may bow down and adore Him. But in the matter of prayer there is a *limitation*. Only certain persons may pray to the Lord with any assurance of being heard. And these are they who have become His people by a definite covenant. Any who have come into such covenant relationship with God have the privilege of prayer. This was true of the Jews under the Law Covenant arrangement; and it is true of us who have made a Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord through Jesus Christ. But even when privileged to pray, we must note the conditions of acceptable prayer. The conditions are that we should pray in harmony with the Divine will and not seek to bend the Divine will to ours. This would lead us to study the Word of God to find out the things which the Lord has promised us, and we should not ask outside of the Divine promises.

BODY CARED FOR AS PROPERTY OF NEW CREATURE

We should appreciate the fact that throughout the Gospel Age the Lord deals with His children as New Creatures in Christ, and that all His promises to us are to the New Creature. The New Creature is interested in the old body, because this body is its property. The body's interests are ours as New Creatures only in so far as these interests are beneficial to us in making our calling and election sure to our Heavenly inheritance, in so far as their consideration will in no wise interfere with our spiritual interests—but no farther. We are not, therefore, to tell the Lord what we prefer, but are to take what He sees best to give; for this will be what is for our best interests. This does not mean that we are not to mention to God our bodily needs. But we are to do so in the way that our Lord indicates to us in His sample prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread," our daily provisions, acknowledging that the daily food comes from Him, whether it is fine or common, bountiful or not. It will all be for the best interests of the New Creature.

The prayer of one who asks only in harmony with the Lord's Word is certain to be answered. Good earthly parents are pleased to give good gifts to their children, gifts that they see are for their children's real interests. But if they see that the child is unappreciative of favors received, they might the next time withdraw the favors until

proper appreciation is manifested. And so it is with our Heavenly Father. In bestowing His best gifts He waits for us to become really hungry for them. He does this that His blessings may do us the more good when they are granted.

PRAYER FOR SPIRIT-BEGETTING UNNECESSARY

In respect to the giving of the Holy Spirit some people have a wrong conception. Many not consecrated pray that the Lord would give them the Holy Spirit; but they have not studied the Scriptures enough. The Lord gives the Holy Spirit without our asking for it specifically, just as with the disciples at Pentecost: they presented themselves before the Lord and waited. They were praying, but they did not know enough about the Holy Spirit to pray for it. But the Lord gave the proper thing at the right time. And so it is with us, irrespective of prayer for the Spirit, provided we meet the required conditions. When we make our consecration to God through Christ, we do not need to *ask* for the begetting of the Holy Spirit—no more than a child in its natural conception. The child does not ask for its own begetting. How could it? But after we have received the spirit-begetting, we should pray that we may have God's sentiment, God's mind, God's will, as our sentiment, our mind, our will.

God loves righteousness and hates iniquity. So we, realizing that we are surrounded by evil and selfishness, need to cultivate the spirit of love, that we may have that spirit which would appreciate and love righteousness. We are to learn gradually to love righteousness and to hate injustice and iniquity in large things and in small. We are to hate unrighteousness so much that we would scorn to do an injustice or an injury knowingly to anybody. The New Creature sees these things but dimly at first—what are just and what are unjust things, what are righteous and what are unrighteous things. We wish to have the Lord's sentiment as our sentiment in everything. Thus by studying the Lord's character as revealed in His Word, and striving day by day to be conformed thereto, we are "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord." And thus we become more and more filled with the Spirit.

EVIDENCES OF POSSESSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

As the child of God develops, the possession of the Holy Spirit is more and more evidenced in his meekness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. These are the elements of character, of disposition, that God wishes us to have. These are to rule in our hearts, in our thoughts, and more and more in our outward lives. Anger, malice, hatred, strife, evil-speaking, envy, jealousy, all these are evidences of the unholy spirit, the spirit of the world and the Adversary, which we as children of the Heavenly King are to put away. They are the works of the flesh and the Devil.

Since all of us have a measure of the unholy spirit in our flesh, some more and some less, it is right to pray daily for a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, more and more of the spirit of harmony with His perfect will. But we must *cooperate* with these prayers; for the Lord never arbitrarily fills any heart with His Spirit, even after the begetting has taken place. By coming to the Lord in sincere prayer for these blessings continually, by

asking along these lines, we shall be preparing ourselves to look for the evidences of the Holy Spirit in our life. We shall be enabled to see whether we have more meekness than we once had, or whether we still lack in meekness. We shall perceive whether we are more gentle and more patient, whether we have more self-control, and in what respects we especially need to develop more in spiritual fruitage. Undoubtedly all of these qualities are lacking to a greater or less extent; but as we watch and pray, we shall learn to find the answer to our prayers; and as we grow in knowledge, in love, in Christlikeness, we grow in likeness also to our Father in Heaven.

IMPROPER VIEWS OF PRAYER

Prayer, as we have shown, is very essential, absolutely indispensable, to Christian growth, yea, to spiritual existence. Yet we have never thought of praying in the extreme way that some do. We have never thought of telling the Lord all about His Plan and of our wishes as to how He shall govern the Universe, and when and how to bring to pass our own will. We think there is far too much praying along this line. The sooner it is stopped the better. In answer to the request of His disciples, the Master gave them a sample prayer, which was surely very different from the prayers that the majority of people offer, who seemingly do not heed the example at all.

The proper thing is to hearken to the Word of the Lord and not do too much speaking to Him. We are to do a great deal of listening, while He speaks to us. The poet has well expressed this important thought:

"Master, speak! Thy servant heareth,
Waiting for Thy gracious Word,
Longing for Thy voice that cheereth,
Master, let it now be heard!
I am listening, Lord, for Thee!
What hast Thou to say to me?"

We understand that the Bible is the Divine presentation of the Divine will, purpose, plan, concerning us as His children. It is the Truth that the Lord designs shall sanctify us. "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." So declares our Master. He does not say, Sanctify them through prayer! The Master's prescription is that we study the Word and become sanctified thereby. And who is wiser than He? If we have not written a volume on prayer, it is because we find no Scriptural authority or precedent for so doing.

While prayer is absolutely indispensable to the Christian, as we have said, yet it is the Word of God which teaches us God's will and Plan and which points out the way for us to go. We believe it is the failure to see this that has been largely responsible for the great want of faith of many professed children of God. No amount of praying will make up for a neglect of the study of the Lord's Word, which is the only Lamp to our feet given us as our Guide in this long, dark night in which sin has reigned in the world. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."—Psalm 119:105.

We are to "pray without ceasing." We are to do this in the sense of not being discouraged when the good things promised us and asked for do not come quickly. We are to remember that the Word of Promise is sure. We are to rest in these promises and to continue to ask and to wait for their fulfilment—patiently, hopefully. Thus we pray unceasingly, "Thy Kingdom come," not by repeating the words every moment or every hour, but by continuing the thought, the expectation, the waiting for it, and by laboring in the interests of that Kingdom and in the preparation of our characters in order that we may have a share in it. We have known some to fall into difficulty by supposed communion with God—remaining on their knees for some time beside an empty chair on which they tried to imagine the Lord to be seated, etc., etc. We believe that they were in danger of falling into a snare of the Adversary by such unscriptural proceedings.

For our part we feel that the Lord has already granted so many blessings that we would be ashamed to ask for many more. Our own requests, therefore, must be few. The Editor's presentations at the Throne of Heavenly Grace are thank-offerings, praise-offerings, indications of his devotion to the Lord and trust in Him, petitions for wisdom and grace to guide in life's affairs. We recall the Divine promises all the time, and not merely when on our knees. We seek to live in harmony with our prayers, and would encourage others to do the same. However, we are not all constituted alike; and having stated the matter from the Bible viewpoint, as we believe, also as viewed in the SCRIPTURE STUDIES and in other WATCH TOWER articles, we must leave it, trusting that the Lord's providence will guide His people aright.

THE HOLY SPIRIT THE SPECIAL OBJECT OF PRAYER

The reason why the prayers of so many Christians are unanswered is that their prayers are for things God has not told us to pray for or that they were not offered in sincerity. They have asked for wealth or temporal blessings, or perhaps for the conversion of a specified number of souls at their revival meeting, or something else unauthorized, or they have not really desired what they asked for, if it was for spiritual blessing. The Lord *might* grant a request for some temporal thing to a babe in Christ who prayed in his ignorance, not being properly instructed. But it would be different with an advanced Christian. The little child at the table might ask for something improper and violate the rules of etiquette without blame; while a person of mature age, advanced in education and in knowledge of etiquette, should know better. The things for which the Lord's children should especially pray are specified in His Word. The Holy Spirit is the special gift of God to His children.

When we come to know that the Holy Spirit is the influence, the disposition of God, then we know what we are praying for. We want more and more of the Holy Spirit of God, that it may make us more gentle, more kind, more loving; we want more and more of the mind of Christ (mind and Spirit being used here interchangeably). We realize that we must strive to have this mind of Christ. If we day by day cultivate the spirit of the Devil, we cannot expect ever to attain the mind of Christ. If we determinedly cultivate the Spirit, the mind, of Christ, then the spirit of the Adversary can gain no entrance into our hearts; and we shall become more and more sound in mind. We come to know more and

more the perfect will of God as we are filled with His Spirit. Thus we are being prepared for an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom.

PRAY IN FAITH, NOTHING DOUBTING

The Lord in the lesson under consideration, tells us that we must not "faint," the word faint being used in the sense of faint-heartedness—"Consider Jesus, ... lest ye be weary and faint in your minds"; "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." We may ask for more of the Holy Spirit, feeling that we need grace along some particular line. For instance, we may feel that we need more patience. While praying for patience, we should not say, "I shall never be patient; I was not born that way!" But we are to expect our prayer along this line to be *answered*. We are to ask and then wait for the patience, continuing our petition, knowing that the patience will come, if we strive for it in harmony with our prayers. An excellent and practical way to assist in this is to impose a punishment upon ourselves for every outbreak of impatience.

The Lord's people have long been praying, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth." This prayer has been offered for more than eighteen hundred years, and God's children have not yet seen His Kingdom established. Shall we cease to pray? Ah, no! We are assured that it will indeed come. Even now it is at the very doors! God's Kingdom shall be fully set up; and the time will come when there will be no disloyalty in all the earth, as now there is none in Heaven. Our prayers will not bring God's Kingdom one minute sooner than He has planned, but we pray by way of assuring the Lord that we are waiting for the Kingdom and expecting it in harmony with His sure promise. By so praying and not fainting, the children of the Lord are strengthening themselves. God's glorious Kingdom will be manifested—and *soon!* Then all who have attained the character-likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be exalted to reign with Him in this Kingdom.

JANUARY 4

Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD—Psa. 27:14.

Time is an important element in all God's plans: we are not, therefore, to be disappointed when the test of endurance is applied while the blessings we crave tarry long. God took time to frame the world and to fit it for human habitation; time to give the world its necessary experience with evil; time to prepare for the advent of Christ as the world's Redeemer; time for the preparation of the Church and the rest of His Gospel-Age people to share in His glorious reign; and time must be allowed for the shaping and adjusting of the individual affairs of His people. God has not forgotten when the answers to our prayers seem to tarry long. He who heeds the sparrow's fall and numbers the very hairs of our heads is not indifferent to the faintest call or the smallest necessity of His humblest child—Z '95, 20 (R 1759).

The providences of God on behalf of His people involve many delays to test their patience. Those who endure these tests with courageous hearts will thereby become strong in the Lord. Therefore they wait on the Lord amid all the varying circumstances of life, assured that He who is for them will manifest this in every time of need that comes into their lives—P '33, 191.

Parallel passages: Jer. 14:22; Psa. 25:3, 5, 21; 39:7; 123:2; 62:1, 2, 5; 33:20; 37:7; Hos. 12:6; Gal. 5:5; Psa. 130:5, 6; 40:1; 25:21; 69:3; Mic. 7:7; Dan. 12:12; Isa. 40:31; 64:4.

Hymns: 313, 7, 92, 102, 201, 214, 318.

Poems of Dawn, 209: *Wait, O Thou Weary One, a Little Longer*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 190 (R 5711).

Questions: Have I this week waited upon the Lord? How? Why? With what results?

WAIT, O THOU WEARY ONE, A LITTLE LONGER

WAIT, O thou weary one, a little longer,
A few more years—it may be only days;
Thy patient waiting makes thee all the stronger;
Eternity will balance all delays.

Wait, O thou suffering one, thy days of sorrow
Bring to thy weary soul its richest gain;
If thou a Christian art, a brighter morrow
Will give thee ten-fold joy for all thy pain.

Wait, O thou anxious one; the cloud that hovers

In gathering gloom above thine aching head
Is sent of God in mercy, and He covers
Thee with His heavenly mantle overspread.

Be patient and submissive; each disaster
Will bring thee nearer to thy loving Lord.
These trials make thee like thy blessed Master,
Who knows them all, and will His grace afford.

Be patient and submissive; strength is given
For every step along the weary way.
And for it all thou'lt render praise to Heaven,
When dreary night gives place to perfect day.

Yes, perfect day, the day of God eternal,
When not a shadow shall flit o'er the scene
In that fair land where all is bright and vernal,
And we will be with Christ, and naught between.

Wait, then, dear heart; control thy sad emotion;
God will subdue each angry wind and wave,
And when the voyage ends across life's ocean,
Within the haven of sweet rest will save.

R5711: HOW WE ARE TO WAIT ON THE LORD

"Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart."

—Psalm 27:14.

THE expression, "Wait *on* the Lord," does not mean so much a rendering of service to the Lord, as a waiting *for* the Lord, a waiting *before* Him, to see what is His will for us. We do not understand that it has the thought of ministering to the Lord, as a servant would wait on his master, but of patient watching until we learn what our Lord would have us do. Each child of God should wait to be guided by Him, and not run on before Him unmindful of what is the Lord's purpose for him. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths," is the counsel of the Wise Man. (Proverbs 3:5, 6.) Many of the children of God have made mistakes along this line.

Having committed our ways to the Lord, we should go forward only as He leads us. If we are not clear as to His will, let us not be in too great a hurry, nor try to guide ourselves, but present the matter to the Lord in earnest prayer, asking that we may have no will or way of our own, but may be guided only as He wills. Then let us wait and watch for the indication of His providence, and follow as He seems to lead, leaving the results with Him. We are not to follow our own choice, without evidences that it is God's

will. The question may sometimes be asked of us, "Are you going to do this way or that way? Are you going to this place or to that place?" Our attitude and our reply, if we have not as yet clearly ascertained the Lord's will in the matter, should be, "I am not yet fully decided. I will consider the Word of the Lord, to see how His instructions seem to apply in this case." Or, "I am watching to see what the Lord's providences seem to indicate, and am praying over the matter, that I may be guided aright." The poet expressed the right thought:

"I am afraid to touch
Things that involve so much."

Those who wait on the Lord do not always seem to prosper best, from outward appearances. But the Psalmist declares that we should be of good courage as we thus wait on God. We are pursuing the right course, and shall have His blessing. We make no mistake when we wait upon Him. Others may seem to be getting ahead of us at first, but we are to "*wait on the Lord.*"

Take no step unless you feel sure that the Lord is directing and guiding. Watch for the *meaning* of His providences. Study His Word. Let not your faith depart from its moorings. "Be of good courage!" "Good" courage is courage of a good degree, not merely a little courage. Be of strong courage; "and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." The word heart here may be understood to mean the soul, the being—especially the intelligent portion of us. The Lord will support us, He will fortify us and make us strong to bear, strong to do His will as it is made known to us. They that wait upon the Lord shall not want any good thing.

TRAITS NECESSARY TO SUCCESS

Courage, fortitude, persistency, in the service of the Lord are very necessary to the child of God. Such traits are needful even to the world. Whoever lacks these qualities of character is pretty sure to make poor success in life. Lack of courage, lack of hope, is one of the chief causes of failure in the world. Our text, however, calls attention, not to the world, but to those who belong to the Lord. The precious promises of God's Word, which are only for His people, those who are wholly His, give these every reason for hope; they have full authority to be strong and of a good courage. The children of God will have trials and experiences similar to those of the world, besides experiences and trials peculiar to them as followers of Christ. These come not to us in a haphazard way, however, as to the world, but are under the direct supervision of the Lord.

Those who are new in the service of the Master might think for a time that matters should run smoothly for them, that they should not have the difficulties common to the world; that now as they were God's children He would protect them from afflictions and mistreatment. But as they study the Lord's Word, they soon see that this is not true; they see that they are to walk by faith, and not by sight. They learn that they are not to expect to have outward and tangible manifestations of His favor, but that they are to suffer with

Christ—that hereunto they were called. (1 Peter 2:20, 21; Acts 14:22.) They learn that they must be obedient, and they come to see what obedience means.

The Master learned obedience—learned what obedience meant—"by the things which He suffered." The narrow way is not an easy path. His followers learn that the Lord is now calling a class that have faith in Him, a class who accept His Word fully. In time they come, too, to see that "If God be for them, who can be against them?" If matters do not go as they had expected, if trials come, they will say, "We know that *all things* work for good to them that love God."

So these learn, as they are guided by the Word of the Lord, that they are to be of good courage as they pursue their onward way. There are many difficulties to be surmounted, and it requires courage to surmount difficulties. But the courage born of faith in God and in His "exceeding great and precious promises" strengthens them when otherwise they might be overwhelmed. It gives them a strength to which all others are strangers.

TRUST WHERE WE CANNOT TRACE

If a child of God becomes discouraged and loses his hope and strength, it is because he has lost his hold upon the Lord's promises to help. To lose courage is to lose faith. Loss of faith and courage makes a child of God powerless before his foes. We must trust our Father even when the meaning of His providences is veiled from our eyes and when our efforts to serve Him seem to be hedged up. We look back at the Apostles and their experiences. The Apostle Paul was very desirous of carrying the Message of the Gospel to others. Several times he tried to go into Asia, but he was not permitted to go. He began to wonder why this was, why his efforts continued to prove failures. But the Lord revealed to him that he was to go into Greece instead. In his first Epistle to the Church at Thessalonica, he writes, "Wherefore we would have come to you, even I Paul, once and again, but Satan hindered us." (1 Thessalonians 2:18.) But we are sure that the Lord would overrule the machinations of Satan and cause them to work out His own glory, and the lesson of patience and submission would be a blessing to His children.

We see that in the Garden of Gethsemane our Lord had not lost faith in God, but was fearful for a time. As He came to the closing hours of His experiences on earth, He wondered whether or not He had faithfully conformed to all the Father's requirements. He knew that the slightest infraction of God's Law would mean His death. Had He completed His sacrifice acceptably? Would He be ushered from death into Heavenly glory by a resurrection? Then He received from the Father the assurance that He had been altogether faithful. All the trials and difficulties which the Master underwent in the laying down of His life preceded Him as a sweet incense, a precious perfume, beyond the veil, into the Most Holy as shown in the type.—Leviticus 16:12, 13.

A PROPER FEAR

After the Jewish high priest had crumbled the sweet incense upon the fire of the golden altar, after its fragrance had penetrated beyond the second veil and had covered

the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat, he then himself passed beneath the veil. Every time the high priest raised the veil thus to pass under it he probably feared; for in case he had failed in *any* particular to carry out his sacrificial work acceptably he would have died as he passed under the veil. So our Lord Jesus knew that His work must be acceptable in the most absolute sense, else He would forever forfeit His existence. He would become as though He had not been; He would lose *all*.

There was no earthly being to give our Lord encouragement along this line. There was no one to say, You have done everything perfectly; you could not have done better. So the Master went alone to the Father for this assurance and for strength and courage. He prayed, "Not My will, but Thine be done"; and the Father heard His prayer and gave Him the needed assurance and strength. He was heard in respect to that which He feared; and during all that night and the following day, up to the hour of His crucifixion, He was calm and courageous.

So the Lord's people should have a proper fear. Proper fear is good for them. But it should not proceed to the point of hindering their efforts and dissipating their courage. They should have the fear enjoined by St. Paul when he said, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." (Hebrews 4:1.) This proper fear the Master had. He never became discouraged, never held back from the work which the Father had given Him to do. His fear was a filial one, which engendered a watchfulness and care, a circumspection of walk and of life, that He might be wholly pleasing to the Father. This all Christians should have. We should watch lest we neglect some privilege or duty.

This proper fear will lead us to careful inspection of ourselves. We should ask ourselves, "What do I believe? Why do I believe it? We should go over the ground again. We should again go over in our minds the proofs of the correctness of our Faith. By so doing, the Lord will strengthen us in the Faith, He will strengthen our heart. If any hope in themselves, and lean upon their own strength mainly, it will be to their advantage that the Lord shall allow them to come to the point of discouragement, that they may become more timid, may lose all self-assurance, may realize their utter helplessness and weakness and their need of leaning wholly upon the Lord, of looking constantly to Him for guidance and support. As the Lord's children thus learn to wait upon Him, to them is fulfilled the promise, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."—Isaiah 40:31.

JANUARY 5

The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me—Rom. 15:3.

Let us see to it that we bear the reproaches of Christ as He bore them—with pity and prayer for the erring and depraved, if perchance God may grant them repentance; and with humble fortitude esteeming it a privilege to prove our devotion to the Lord by enduring hardness in His service as good soldiers. He was not surprised by the exhibitions of human depravity; He knew that He was in an unfriendly world bound by sin and largely under the dominion of the prince of darkness, and therefore He expected reproaches, taunts and persecutions, all of which He endured patiently while His great loving heart, almost unmindful of its own sufferings, was full of pity and loving concern for others—Z '96, 83 (R 1963).

Misrepresentation of our Heavenly Father's character by the Adversary's delusions and misunderstandings of His purpose through humanity's sinfulness and ignorance, make Him the reproach of the irreligious. Those who take His part as His true people for His sake bear in His defense reproaches from the same persons, but not necessarily nor usually with the same things—P '32, 197.

Parallel passages: Psa. 69:9; Mark 12:35-40; Luke 12:50; Rom. 6:1-11; 8:10, 17, 18; 15:2, 3; 1 Cor. 15:29-34; 2 Cor. 1:5; 4:8—5:9; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:24; 2:11, 12; 2 Tim. 2:10-12; 1 Pet. 2:19-24; 3:13-18; 4:12-19.

Hymns: 134, 135, 203, 277, 299, 325, 326.

Poems of Dawn, 185: *Patience*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 323 (R 5116).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they received? How did they affect me?

PATIENCE

THE purple grape must be crushed
To make the sweet, red wine,
And furnace fires must fiercely burn,
The drossy gold to refine;
The wheel must cruelly grind,
Else where the jewel's light?
And the steel submit to the polishing,
Or how would the sword grow bright?

How then, my soul, wilt thou
The Spirit's fruits possess,
Except thou lovingly yield thyself
To the Hand that wounds to bless?

Then patiently let the fire
Consume all earthly dross—
Thou canst not hope to wear the Crown,
If thou refuse the Cross!

R5116: PERSECUTION AND FIERY TRIALS THE CHRISTIAN'S EXPERIENCE

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

GODLINESS IMPLIES a character which is actuated by principles of righteousness. In all our dealings we are either just or unjust, kind or unkind, not according to what some people may think of us, but according to the standard of righteousness found in the Scriptures. Therefore, in order to develop that character which is pleasing to God, we should in every detail of life consider carefully what is right and what is wrong, according to that standard. This course is Scripturally termed meditating in God's Law. When we reach that development of character in which thought, word and deed are measured by the principles of righteousness, we shall have attained godlikeness.—Psa. 119:97.

What the Lord desires to see in His people is not merely an outward manifestation of devotion to Him and to His brethren, but a development of love in our hearts and our dispositions. If we profess to love one another and yet pursue a course of self-seeking, wherein do we manifest love? So St. John admonishes to love not in word only, but in deed and in truth.—I John 3:18.

Primarily, the godly are those who are in Christ Jesus, members of His Mystical Body, having presented their human bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through the merit of the great Advocate. Secondly, the term godly includes those who live righteously, in sympathy with Christ Jesus, even though they may not live up to the full standard which the Lord has set, because they shrink from the suffering that results from godly living. Thirdly, the term godly includes some in the remote past, who, believing in the promise of the Lord that the "Seed" should some day come, separated themselves from the rest of the world and, having obtained new aims, new ideas, were out of touch with the remainder of the race because of having a different standard.—Heb. 11:13-16.

The Ancient Worthies composed this third class, who had a share in the suffering of the godly and a participation also in the blessing. Moses, for example, preferred to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to participate in the honors of the Egyptian Government. Although adopted into the family of Pharaoh, he had respect to the promise that the Messiah would come. Hence he suffered on account of his faith in the promise. So all the patriarchs desired to be in harmony with God, in accordance with His promise made to Abraham, and because of belief in that promise they suffered more or less persecution.—Heb. 11:24-26;36-38.

Some one may ask, "Why should the godly suffer?" The Bible answers that sin has brought the world into opposition to God. Whoever, then, would have all men speak in commendation of him would not be in harmony with the Divine arrangement, for the masses of the world are pursuing a course that the Lord does not approve. We are not saying that everything which the world does is sinful, but that the standards of God are so high that because of their fallen condition the masses of the world are not subject to the Law of God, neither, indeed, can they be, for they are carnal, sold under sin. (Rom. 8:7; 7:14, 15.) Those who wish to have influence with the world must cater to popular prejudices. On the contrary, those who would be God's people must be loyal to the principles of righteousness and consequently must go in the opposite direction to that of the world. Hence they are opposed by the world.

From the standpoint of God the course of the world is sinful. There is a tendency in our flesh to go with the world, who are laboring under false views of various kinds, because that course is in sympathy with the desires of our own fallen flesh. Hence to live godly is to live in opposition to the course of the world and of our own flesh. This would include not only living uprightly and avoiding sin, etc., but also the making of sacrifices as well, where principles are not involved. We are to beware, however, lest we be deceived along this line. Not only are we contending with the world, but we are wrestling with wicked spirits in high positions.—Eph. 6:12.

ILLUSTRATION OF SATAN'S DEVICES

Sometimes Satan's arts seem to be employed to get those who are trying to live godly into contention with each other. One of his devices is to make unimportant things seem important, and in this way to make people think that they are contending for righteousness' sake, and that the sufferings that they bring on themselves in this manner are for righteousness' sake. Another device is to deceive people into "busy-bodilying in other men's matters." (I Peter 4:15.) It behooves us, therefore, as the Lord's people, not to try to straighten out all the affairs of the Church or of the world, and not to get into conflict with the brethren. They, like ourselves, are laboring to counteract the influences of the world, the flesh and the Devil.

Our influence upon each other should be uplifting; we should not cause others to grieve, except where suffering is absolutely necessary. Hence the Lord's people should cultivate the fruits of the Spirit increasingly—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. The cultivation of these fruits of the Spirit is a law in respect to the Lord's people. All who would live godly in Christ Jesus are to see to it that they are not the *cause* of suffering to others—especially to those of the household of faith.

SUFFERING AS A CHRISTIAN

While it is true that all who will live godly in this world will suffer to the extent to which they are out of harmony with the present evil conditions, yet the promised blessings of the Scriptures are to those who live godly *in Christ Jesus*, those who are

Christians. Of these St. Peter says, "If any man suffer *as a Christian*, let him not be ashamed."—I Peter 4:16.

A Christian is a follower of Christ, one who has cast in his lot to suffer with Christ, that He may be also glorified with the Lord. (2 Tim. 2:12.) From the Apostle's standpoint, therefore, no one could *suffer* as a Christian unless he had become a Christian.

Every painful experience which our Lord had was suffering for righteousness' sake—not only the great sufferings, not only the great fight against sin, but also all the little, unpleasant experiences common to the world. Being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26), there was no reason why He should suffer. We do not understand that the Heavenly Father has provided sufferings, trials and difficulties for the angels who are in harmony with Him. Nor do we think that Jesus, being a Son in full accord with the Father, would have suffered were it not for His Covenant of self-sacrifice. All of His sufferings were because He had come into the world to be man's Redeemer. They were all parts of His necessary experience.

The sufferings which our Lord endured were the result of His activity in the service of the Father. These were His weariness, His weakness after giving out His vitality to heal others, His bloody sweat, His ignominious buffetings, and all the reproaches, the sneers and the bitter words incurred on account of His faithfulness, to all of which He meekly and quietly submitted until His sufferings on Calvary terminated His human existence.

SUFFERINGS RESULTING FROM HEREDITY, NOT SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

There is no question that suffering in general is not suffering with Christ, but with Adam. Our physical infirmities which are of heredity, are not sufferings of Christ. Rather we should speak of the sufferings of Christ as being *voluntary* and not involuntary. When the Apostle says that if we suffer with the Lord we shall also reign with Him (2 Tim. 2:12), he means the suffering which we bring on ourselves through faithfulness to our Covenant. St. Paul speaks of filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for His Body's sake, which is the Church. (Col. 1:24.) These experiences are not for Adam's sake.

In St. Paul's own case he had, we believe, weak eyes as a result of his wrong course in persecuting the Church; and that wrong course was, no doubt, largely the result of heredity. When the Apostle speaks of the sufferings he endured on account of his eyes, he does not speak of them as the sufferings of Christ, but says that his affliction was a messenger of *Satan* to buffet him. (2 Cor. 12:7.) We might then say that all physical sufferings resulting from heredity are ministers of Satan opposing us, causing us much difficulty. However, we believe that the Lord is pleased with us if we resist these ministers of Satan.

If we should think of all our physical pains and aches as sufferings for Christ, then we should be obliged to think of our mental defects also as sufferings for Christ. For

instance, a man who had a disabled hand might have a comparatively even temper; another might have a perverse temper, leading him into trouble, leading him to busybody in other men's matters, etc. Thus his disposition causes him to suffer as a *busybody* and not for Christ. St. Paul tells us that our defects in character are works of the fallen flesh. (Gal. 5:19-21.) If the sufferings that come to us because of imperfect mental conditions are sufferings of heredity, the physical sufferings which result from imperfect physical conditions, cannot be counted as sufferings for Christ.

In the case of a Christian, inherited weaknesses and those brought upon himself by the violation of the laws of God previous to his entrance into the family of God as a son, while not sufferings with Christ, will be made advantageous to him. These weaknesses our Father sees fit to leave with us, but assures us that His grace will be sufficient for us. (2 Cor. 12:9.) While the realization of such care for our interests is humiliating in that it forces conviction of our weakness, yet it is refreshing and inspiring in that it proves our Father's love for us. "The Father Himself loveth you."—John 16:27.

SUFFERING TURNED TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW CREATURE

But when one has undertaken to follow in the footsteps of Christ and has been begotten as a New Creature, whatever affliction that *New Creature* undergoes because of following the Lord, is suffering as a Christian; and whatever our experiences in suffering may be, these are not necessarily the portion of the sons of God, for the angels do not suffer; but He permits the Church to have them in order to develop and crystallize character. If we rejoice that we are found worthy to share in the sufferings of the present time, every trial will be turned to advantage as a part of our Christian experience. "They are not of the world." (John 17:16.) Therefore all of our experiences must be regarded as Christian, for correction in righteousness and for educational purposes.

But this is taking a broader, deeper view than ordinary. Certainly a Christian is not to be ashamed of what he may suffer because of his loyalty to the Lord, to the Truth and to the brethren. In these sufferings he is to glorify God and to be thankful for them. He is to be glad for the opportunity of enduring something, to show not only the Lord, but himself also that he has endured something for Christ's sake. Every sacrifice that we make is for the purpose of suffering as a Christian, and we are not to be ashamed so to suffer.—I Peter 4:16.

SUFFERING FOR CONSCIENCE NOT ALWAYS SUFFERING FOR CHRIST

There are others who suffer more or less as Christians suffer, but they are suffering from a worldly standpoint. People sometimes say, "This worldly man has his trials and sufferings, and shows such patience, such resignation, that surely he is suffering as a Christian." But we do not understand that anyone can suffer as a Christian unless he takes the steps necessary to make him a Christian. We are to view matters from God's standpoint. Doubtless many have suffered as Christians from a human viewpoint who

were not Christians. In the Dark Ages many were put to death for the sake of principle. In our own day there are people who give no evidence of being Christians, but who would rather die than have the Bible taken out of the public schools. Although they do not understand the Bible, yet if these were times of persecution, many would die at the stake in order to keep the Bible in the public schools.

We cannot always tell whether suffering is for Christ's sake. But where people have suffered for conscience' sake, they have thus cultivated character, and will get a blessing in the next Age for that suffering. At present there is only the one door into membership in the Body of Christ—obedience even unto death. Suffering with Christ, as we have seen, is not the ordinary suffering common to all in the fallen state, but only such experiences as are the result, more directly, of following Christ's example in advocating unpopular truths and in exposing popular errors. Such were the causes of the sufferings of Christ; and such will be the causes of suffering, persecution and loss to all who follow in His footsteps. Such will have fellowship in His sufferings now, and in the end will be counted worthy to share in the reward given for faithfulness to principle.

Throughout the Gospel Age this course has meant self-sacrificing labor and endurance of reproach in the sowing and watering of Christ's doctrines. Now, in the end of the Age, it means a similar fidelity and endurance in the Harvest work now in progress—faithfulness even to the laying down of life itself, whether it be required by the gradual process of working it out in the Master's service, a dying daily, or by being brought more abruptly to a martyr's death.

SHRINKING BACK FROM SUFFERING

Our Lord forewarns us that in the end of the Gospel Age, many who have a love for Christ will allow their love to grow cold because of the iniquity and sin in the world. (Matt. 24:12.) It will be a test for such to decide whether they will follow the Lord in self-sacrifice as His disciples or whether they will partake of the worldly spirit. We see this test in operation now. A great many people who name the name of Christ, who really love the Lord, who appreciate much of His character, who would like to see the right prosper, nevertheless have no thought of making a spectacle of themselves before men. They would like to do right, to walk honorably, and to have the favor of men as good citizens. But as to being warm and faithful followers of the Lord—through "evil report and good report" (2 Cor. 6:8)—their faith and zeal are not sufficient to endure the test.

The Lord Jesus gives us the invitation to become joint-heirs with Him. He has very clearly informed us that to follow in His steps will mean trials and difficulties in the flesh. He says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (John 16:33.) St. Paul repeats the sentiment, saying, "We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God"; and again in our text he emphasizes the thought, saying, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution.*" (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12.) There is no other way to enter the Kingdom than by self-sacrifice, deadening of the flesh, mortifying it. In proportion as the New Creature grows, the old creature perishes, until the sacrifice shall have been completed in death.

The Lord's people should thoroughly understand the terms and conditions upon which they have been called. They should therefore not think it strange when trials come upon them, no matter how fiery, no matter how severe. The Apostle Peter lovingly counsels the Church: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some *strange* thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on *their* part He is evil spoken of, but on *your* part He is *glorified*." (I Peter 4:12-14.) The Lord is to be not only the Instructor, but also the Refiner to purge out the dross, that we may be made ready to share with Christ in the Kingdom of "glory, honor and immortality."—Rom. 2:7.

TRIALS FROM FALSE BRETHREN

The Scriptures plainly teach that special trials may be expected in the Church, amongst the brethren. And we find it to be true that our severest trials come not from without, but, as the Apostle in substance says, "From among yourselves shall arise false brethren," to injure the flock in general through personal ambition. (Acts 20:30.) This becomes a test not only to the Church, but to all those who are in contact with us, for if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.—I Cor. 12:26.

We are not, therefore, to think it strange if there are trials and difficulties, and if more or less dispute arise in the Church. We are to cultivate gentleness, meekness, patience, loving-kindness toward all. Nevertheless, if a dispute arise amongst the Lord's people, we are to recognize that such things are unavoidable amongst those who have the Truth. Our heads are imperfect, and consequently it requires some time to come into line with the teachings of the Lord's Word. Even disputation makes life an activity, and is better than a dead condition—not to care what is spoken or not spoken. Nevertheless, those who have zeal should be careful that they manifest the Spirit of the Lord, as above indicated—gentleness, patience, meekness, brotherly kindness, love, humility.

Think it not strange that there are fiery trials *amongst yourselves*, arising from one cause or another, that will make it particularly severe for you. Those among whom you are thrown in contact will cause you suffering, because of your zeal and their misunderstanding, their imperfection, etc. Similarly, you may be a cause of trial to others. All of these fiery trials will work out good for you. It is far better to be amongst those who are fervent in spirit than to take a place amongst those who are lukewarm and thus lose the privilege of being one of those who are footstep followers of Christ. Perhaps those who are lukewarm will, in the Time of Trouble, learn a lesson. But the Little Flock are to learn their lesson in the present time—allowing the experiences of life to work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. 4:17.

Our knowledge of God is limited; yet it is only what we should expect of the Heavenly Father, that any whom He accepts as His children will have Divine love and care in the supervision of their affairs, which will make all things work for good to them. Since the

Lord is our Shepherd, no one is able to pluck us out of His hands. (John 10:28, 29.) We are as dear to Him as the apple of His eye. He that began a good work in us is able to complete it in the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6.) So the more faith we have the more we appreciate the text, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) This includes even the things that seem to be very contrary, very evil, very disadvantageous.

Our Lord said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." (John 17:3.) To know the Father means to be in fellowship with Him, to have an intimate acquaintance with Him. Experience corroborates this fact. The more obedient we are as children the more intimate is our acquaintance with Him. And if we are unfaithful, even for a little space, we shall fail to make development along spiritual lines. But in proportion as we are seeking to walk in His ways, we become intimate with Him in the particular sense in which a child knows his father. This knowledge gives us the trust that He cares for us as His children, and makes all things work together for good to us.—Rom. 8:28; I John 1:6, 7.

CO-OPERATION WITH GOD TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY

We note, however, that St. Paul says that all things work together for *good*, not for *best*. God has something to do in the way of His choice of His reward and of our possibilities. The angels of God, however obedient to Him, could not become archangels nor cherubim. Their obedience brings their highest welfare on their own plane. So with us. We cannot get the best for the reason that He has already given it to Jesus Christ, whom He has set next to Himself at His right hand in power and glory and honor.—I Peter 3:22.

Again, this promise is not a guarantee that all things in life will work together for the very best to us as though we had neither will nor choice in the matter. We should not say, "I positively resign myself; the Lord has said that all things will work together for the best, and if I miss opportunities in the service I shall say, 'Oh, well, it is all for the best.'" Thus to think would be a mistake, for it is evidently not at all the thought.

After we have become New Creatures in Christ and children of God, He leaves us with a certain amount of choice. It is very largely in our own control what we shall do, whether we shall make progress or stand still or go backward. We cannot say that if one had lost the High Calling his experiences would be the very best possible; and that if he went into the Second Death, his fate was the best. But we can say that this Scripture means that God stands ready to give us the best that He may have under the terms and conditions of the Covenant which He has made with us.

Ours is a Covenant of sacrifice. There are certain laws and principles which are not to be broken. Along these lines the Lord Jesus tells us that the Father will appoint those next to the Lord who have demonstrated most of the Spirit of the Redeemer. He will not put anyone in such a position or into the Kingdom arbitrarily. His Character, His Words,

stand pledged that He will make the best of us that He is able to do, while at the same time recognizing our wills as paramount.

Jehovah does not seek those as His children who need to be forced. Our Lord said that the Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:23.) We are to work to the best of our ability. But with all of our stumbling the Lord stands pledged that He will not leave us if we are faithful, and that He will make even our stumbling work out for good to us. Those who lose the crown may come up through great tribulation with the Great Company class. This is the best thing possible for them under the Divine arrangement. For those who go into the Second Death, their fate will not be the best for *them*; but it will be best for the entire universe that those should be blotted out of existence who are out of harmony with righteousness.

JANUARY 6

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom—Psa. 90:12.

The Christian, in numbering his days, does not do so with a doleful or disconsolate sentiment, although he does so with sobriety. He counts the days as they go as so many blessings, so many privileges, so many opportunities to "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," to render assistance to others in the pilgrim journey, and to develop in himself more and more of the character pleasing in the sight of God—to become more and more a copy of God's dear Son—Z '01, 333 (R 2895).

The Restitution class under an experience with righteousness will pray that they may be enabled so to study their lives under the experience with evil as to learn the hatefulness of sin and the loveliness of righteousness—the fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom. This prayer will be answered by the Lord in a way that will prove to their eternal good in truth and righteousness—P '26, 189.

Parallel passages: Job 12:2, 3, 7-13, 16, 17, 22; 28:12-28; 32:9; Psa. 107:43; 111:10; Prov. 1:5, 7, 20—2:20; 3:13-26, 34, 35; 4:4-22; 8:1-9; 16:16, 20-24; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30; Jas. 1:5.

Hymns: 74, 296, 136, 79, 22, 44, 49.

Poems of Dawn, 137: *If We Had But a Day*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 151 (R 5688).

Questions: What experiences of this week especially inculcated wisdom? How did I act amid them? What were their effects?

IF WE HAD BUT A DAY

WE should fill the hours with the sweetest things,
If we had but a day;
We should drink alone at the purest springs
On our upward way;
We should love with a lifetime's love in an hour,
If the hours were few;
We should sleep, not for dreams, but for fresher
power,
To be and to do.

We should hold our wearied or wayward wills
To the clearest light;
We should keep our eyes on the heavenly hills,
If they lay in sight;

We should hush our murmurs of discontent
At a life's defeat;
We should take whatever a good God sent
With a rest complete.

We should waste no moment in weak regret,
If the days were but one,
If what we remember and what we forget
Went out with the sun;
We should be from our clamorous selves set free,
To work and to pray;
To be what the Father would have us be,
If we had but a day.

R5688: DEVELOPMENT AS NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST

"Strong meat belongeth to them who are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."—Hebrews 5:14.

THE Apostle here seems to have in mind some who are babes in Christ, some who have immature conceptions of God and His Plan, who lack spiritual development, contrasting them with others who are more developed, who have become men in Christ Jesus—who are "of full age," as St. Paul expresses it, mature in Christian attainment. "Strong meat" belongs to these. The Apostle has given a reproof to some who, considering the length of time they have been in Christ, should have been strong in the faith, in doctrine, in spiritual life, and should be qualified to teach others. Yet still they were children, needing others to teach them again the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, needing still to be fed on milk, even yet not able to assimilate "strong meat."

Beginners who have not long known Christ, who are new in respect to the truths of God's Plan, are not to be choked with strong meat. These may be fed upon the simpler truths, which they can assimilate. They need "the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby." Some of the Lord's people, who have been longer in the way, in talking with the newly consecrated unwisely begin to tell them the truths regarding immortality, trinity, etc., before they are able to digest them. These are giving strong meat to babes, and are liable to drive them away from the table of the Lord, giving them spiritual dyspepsia, so that they are unable longer to eat even of the simpler food furnished by the Lord.

For those who are only beginners in the good way, there is plenty of food in God's Word of the more easily digestible sort; food which should be helpful to New Creatures in Christ who are just beginning to walk in the narrow path. We are not to understand, however, that they are to continue for quite a period of time to live exclusively on milk. As they begin to grow and develop on a milk diet, they may be given somewhat stronger food, until after a time they will be able to digest the strongest features of the Truth, and

to draw nourishment from them. Some develop and are able to digest the strong meat much more rapidly than others. Those who have not been falsely taught regarding Scriptural doctrines, who have not been steeped for many years in the errors brought into the Church during the Dark Ages, are often much more ready and able to grasp the truth on these subjects than are those who have been long under the blinding influence of error along these lines.

SYSTEMATIC STUDY NECESSARY

Those who are of humble, teachable mind, seeking a "thus saith the Lord" for all they accept, not trying to uphold any theories of their own, but to follow only the Lord, can generally, by taking the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and their Bible, and taking up the Plan step by step, in a systematic, orderly manner, as it is presented, proving every statement by the sure Word of God, see the truth regarding these fundamental doctrines with little difficulty. In this way they gain a comprehensive view of the whole Plan of God, and can see how its various features fit and dovetail into one another; this would be impossible if they heard first only a portion of the Plan, disassociated from the rest.

For this reason it is well to urge the newly interested one to read and prove for himself, and not endeavor to explain too much through conversation. Much harm is often done thus by well-meaning friends, in their zeal to have the beginner grasp it all at once, which is impossible; and often their efforts result in confusing the mind of the one seeking the Truth.

SPIRITUAL EYESIGHT A MATTER OF GROWTH

As we look at a little babe, we see that it can crawl, can kick a little, can cry somewhat, and to a certain extent can see objects. It has a certain amount of appreciation of things beautiful, of things terrorizing, of things happifying. But it does not see things very clearly nor comprehend them. If we pass our hand before its eyes, it apparently has not a focus. As with young kittens, which cannot tell what is near and what is far off, so with beginners, babes, in spiritual matters. The younger ones in their attempt to study God's Word, are apt to go tripping along through it, and think they see this or that. They cannot be entrusted with important truths at first; for they would be pretty certain to be stumbled.

But as these grow older, they can "rightly divide" the Truth, they can distinguish Truth from error, they can tell what would be hurtful and what would be helpful. Even a child that burns itself at the fire learns to look out for that which will burn, and learns to approach the fire very carefully, very judiciously. As all this is true as relates to temporal matters, and as the sense of appreciation and comprehension develops in the babe, so in babes in Christ, there is a development of the sense of appreciation and ability to comprehend the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of God's Wisdom and Love, and the fulness and grandeur of His great Plan with all its varied features.

NECESSARY FOOD ALWAYS IN "DUE SEASON"

To gain this appreciation, it is necessary, not only to read the Truth, but to think upon it, to make it our own, to strive earnestly to conform our lives to it. It is better, of course, for one to merely read so many pages or chapters of the Bible than to read some worthless thing; but to simply read a certain amount in the Bible without understanding accomplishes little. The Bible needs to be studied; and the Lord has never left His people without teachers of His own choosing, who were able to lead the dear sheep of the great Shepherd's Fold into the green pastures where they could obtain whatever food was needed at that time. As the gradual unfolding of Truth in its times and seasons has added to the quantity and variety of food required by the flock of God for their proper nourishment, it has been supplied by Him through instrumentalities which he has raised up for the purpose in due season.

The real saints of God have never been left without all needed supplies in every age. In our own day more Truth has unfolded than at any previous period of the Church's history. More and richer food is now necessary, to strengthen the Church for the peculiar conditions and testings of this day; and more has been supplied. But as we have stated, and as the Apostle in our text shows, there are various degrees of development in the Church of Christ; and some have been accepted from the world in these latter days to take the places of some who have through unfaithfulness lost their crowns. Hence the wisdom that cometh from above is required to feed and nourish these weaker ones properly.

FIRST LESSONS IN SCHOOL

In a school there are lessons arranged according to the ability and comprehension of the pupils. When the primary lessons in spelling are given, the teacher begins with small, simple words, instead of long words. Such words as c-o-w, cow; c-a-t, cat, are given first. A teacher who is wise and understands her business would not think of starting little children out with such a word as "prognostication," or "hippopotamus." The pupil would first be given more simple and easily comprehensible words. Object lessons, by pictures, etc., are also used at first to attract the eye, and thus to assist the child mind.

And so with religious matters. Those who would give proper instructions to others must be qualified to teach. The Lord has placed the various members in the Body of Christ "as it hath pleased Him." To some He has given Apostles and workers of miracles; to others evangelists and teachers and pastors. In the early history of the Church, in its infantile condition, miracles—object lessons and proofs to the eye, to the ear, the outward physical senses—were necessary, and hence were supplied. As the Church became established, these outward evidences in connection with the Truth passed away.

The Apostle Paul says, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I thought as a child, I understood as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things." (1 Corinthians 13:11). And so with every true follower of Christ. As he grows and develops, step by step, as his senses become exercised to discern good and evil—what is true, what is right, what is profitable, what is comprehended in the glorious High Calling of the Church, what is included in full consecration to Christ—he more and more puts away his childish views, his immature conceptions, and becomes educated and advanced in the

things of God—the deep things. A beginner, who had not learned to study the Word of God, could take it and get out of it things that would be really harmful to him. One must learn to take Bible truths *in their setting*—to see what they *mean*, *how they apply*, to *whom* they apply, etc.—or all will be confusion and contradiction. One can bring sweet music from an instrument only when he learns how to manipulate the keys, how to combine the various chords; otherwise only discord is the result.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THOSE LONG IN THE WAY

There are certain principles laid down in the Bible. We need to get a grasp on these principles and apply them in our daily lives. There is the principle of *Justice*—a *foundation* principle. This principle must be recognized and practised before we are in a proper condition to build upon this foundation the principles of Love, Mercy, Gentleness, etc., all of which must be incorporated into our lives, our characters, as children of God. We need to learn what *justice* means, what *true love* means. The standards of the world along these lines have become much perverted, and we need to be properly taught from the only authoritative source—the Word of God. We must learn *how* to apply these principles.

Those who have been for some time drinking from the Fountain of Truth, and feeding at the table of the Lord, where the food is pure, unadulterated, nourishing, should be fully established in the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. Much of the superstructure of "gold, silver and precious stones" should be already erected, and the good work of character-building should be progressing steadily day by day. We should be firmly rooted and grounded in Christ, so that nothing can move us. We should be able to discern clearly between truth and error on every important point. We should be so loyal to the Lord and His Word that we shall rejoice in the glorious privilege of proclaiming it at every suitable opportunity. We should know *what* we believe and *why* we believe it, and be courageous and uncompromising in declaring the Truth which has so blessed our own hearts and lives.

JANUARY 7

Speak evil of no man—Titus 3:2.

If once the soldiers of the cross would get the proper thought, that slander and evil-speaking are assassinations of the character of another, and that defamation is robbery of another's good name, the sooner they will see this matter in its truly awful light, as it must appear in the Lord's sight; and once seeing the matter from this true, Divine standpoint, it must awaken the new heart, mind and will to the greatest activity possible in the overcoming of such works of the flesh and of the devil. Each will seek to purge out the old leaven of malice and envy and strife and crookedness and evil-speaking, that he may be pure in heart, a copy of the Lord—Z '03, 425 (R 3272).

Each one of us has so many failings and others have so many good qualities, that it is unbecoming in any of us to speak ill of anyone. Our own floors should be cleanly swept before we attempt to sweep the floors of others, and the sweeping will help us better to sympathize with others. Only then may we say uncomplimentary things of others when their telling is prompted by the Golden Rule to prevent sure injury, if they are not told—P '31, 191.

Parallel passages: Ex. 22:28; Psa. 10:7, 8; 34:13; 41:5-9; 64:2-5; Prov. 4:24; 10:11, 19, 31, 32; 12:5, 6, 13, 17-19; 15:1, 4, 28; 16:27, 28; 26:20-23, 28; Eccles. 10:11, 20; Isa. 32:6, 7; Matt. 12:34-37; Eph. 4:25, 29, 31; Jas. 3:5-10; 4:11.

Hymns: 116, 32, 70, 151, 223, 260, 272.

Poems of Dawn, 273: *Three Gates of Gold*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 264 (R 5528).

Questions: Did I this week speak good or evil? Why? What were the circumstances, hindrances and results?

"THREE GATES OF GOLD"

LET every thought thy lips would utter pass three
gates of gold,—
But, if through these it fails to pass, then let it not
be told;
And o'er each gate in silver letters written thou wilt
find,
Above the first one, "Is it *true?*" the second, "Is it *kind?*"
And "Is it *necessary?*" o'er the third one and the
last.
Then guard thy thoughts, let none escape, save those
these gates have passed!

R5528: WHAT IS EVIL SPEAKING?

"Speak evil of no man."—Titus 3:2.

THE Apostle's injunction is very positive; we are to speak evil of none. The question then arises, What does St. Paul mean here? Does he mean that we should speak nothing of any man with an evil intention toward him? Or does he mean, Speak no evil, whatever the intention? We answer, we surely know that to speak evil with a wrong motive, a wrong intention, would be a heinous crime, especially in a child of God. But we think the Apostle meant, *No matter what your motive, speak evil about nobody.* If that be the Apostle's thought—and we believe it hardly controvertible—it places a very stringent requirement upon all of the Lord's people. If the motive for speaking evil were bad, all the worse; but *good or bad, "Speak evil of no man."*

Now another question comes up, What is evil-speaking? We answer, This subject has various sides. To speak evil is to speak that which is injurious; therefore one should say *nothing* that would injure any man. It is very easy to perceive the justice and the reasonableness of this requirement if we apply the Golden Rule. Would we wish any one to do *us* evil? Would we wish any to speak slightly of *us*, to comment on *our faults*, or on what the *speaker* considered faults, and thus lower us in the eyes of others? If the Lord's people would learn to apply the Golden Rule to every affair of life, it would surely be very helpful.

Some of the most conscientious Christians have difficulty along this line. In considering this matter of evil-speaking, some think, Is my motive right? They forget that their motive in speaking derogatively of others has *nothing to do* with the Apostle's injunction. No matter *what* the motive, we are *not to speak evil.* The question is not, Did I have a *good* intention or a *bad* one? but, Am I speaking *evil*? Am I saying anything contrary to the Golden Rule—something that I would not wish to have said of *me*? *We would that we could* instil this thought into the hearts and minds of every reader of this journal.

IS REPORTING VIOLATION OF RULES EVIL-SPEAKING?

Now comes another question, How should we apply the injunction of our text in the case of the home, for instance, or the office? Suppose that we are connected with an office or a home where certain rules are laid down for the government of that office or home. Would it in such a case be evil-speaking on our part to report any violation of those rules? We do not consider this evil-speaking. If we were ourselves violating those rules, the person who would report us would be doing right—not doing us evil or wrong or injury. By not reporting the misdemeanor or violation of rules, the person would be encouraging in us a continuation of the wrong course.

God's people are supposed always to have no other than good motives for any course pursued. To have any but a good motive in dealing with others would be to have a murderous motive. We are not, therefore, to take the motive into consideration. But a

person who accepts a position in an office, a home or an institution accepts also the conditions and sundry rules connected with such a position. Doubtless nearly all rules and regulations in an office or home are made, not with the view of injuring any one, but for the general welfare of the business or the family or whatever it may be. Hence the observance of all these obligations should be considered a *serious* responsibility. One should not report an infraction of rules in an evil way, but merely as a *fact*.

It is not necessary for the one who informs to judge the heart of the one reported. It is not a question of a bad heart. If one has a foolish brain, or is forgetful or inattentive and violates important rules, it is not judging the heart to report such a case—and especially where there is a *rule* that such cases be reported. It is merely a matter of *duty*—a thing that is *required*, and is both necessary and proper. We see this principle laid down in God's workmanship in our bodies. If something occurs in the body—for instance, if a finger is being pinched—the nerves immediately telegraph to the brain. If a foot is hurt, the fact is telegraphed to the brain at once. Suppose there were no means of communicating the injury of a member of the body to the brain. Suppose there were no nerves of sensation to convey the message. One might not know whether or not he had lost a finger or a toe. He would not know when he had lost a foot, until he stumbled and fell.

SUBJECT NOT TO BE DISCUSSED WITH THE OFFENDER

We should not be always looking to see if our own personal matters are being impinged. We know that we, as well as others, have imperfections. If others inadvertently tread upon our toes, we know that we are likely to sometimes tread on others' toes. But personal matters are different from those that belong to the family or to the office. It is not busyboding to report violations of the rules of the house or of the office. It is to the interest of every member of a family or an institution that the interests of the whole body be looked after, in a proper and reasonable way.

It would not be proper for any one in an office to attempt to set straight every one else in the office. It is not for any one to go around and correct others; this is not his business. But if another is breaking rules, it is his business to report the facts—the *facts*, without any coloring whatever. If we would do otherwise, if each one who notes an infraction would go to the one who violated the rules, and thus attempt to settle all the affairs of the office or the family, there would be continual confusion. The one who broke the rule would be disposed to defend himself and to say, "My course was all right, and it is none of your affair whether that gate was left open or shut," etc. But if that gate is left open, it is your *duty* to report the matter to the proper authority, and thus you are relieved of the responsibility of the affair. This is not a personal matter, such as to be dealt with according to Matthew 18:15-18. It would not be our duty to tell Tom, Dick, Harry, Mary or Jane about the matter. There is just one person to whom we should tell it; and the report should be made with all kindly feeling.

One would soon get himself into trouble if he were to try to run an entire house or office by going to various ones to endeavor to set them right. But if there were a new-

comer, and he were unintentionally violating a rule, it might be well to say; It is a rule of the house to do thus and so. But it would not be proper to mention this fact to him more than once. A second violation should be reported, though in a loving spirit.

MISCELLANEOUS CASES

Applying the question to our proper course in the Church, in matters relating to ourselves personally, we see where our *individual* responsibility lies. "If thy brother trespass against *thee*, go and tell him his fault *between thee and him alone*." Our Lord does not refer to what he does against some one else, but against "thee." "Well," some one may object, "I think he was doing something against so-and-so." We have heard some one say: "I think Brother So-and-so does not treat his wife right." We reply, "That is *his business and his wife's business*; it is *not your business*. Your business is to look after your *own* wife or husband, your *own* parents, your *own* children, and let *other* people alone. We advise that you practise on *yourself*. Do your duty in respect to your *own* affairs, and refrain from comments on those of *others*."

But suppose we saw something radically wrong, suppose we were going along the street and saw a man cruelly beating a horse, should we say nothing? In such a case, if we saw a policeman, we might say, "Will you take notice of how that man is abusing that horse?" Or it might be reported to the humane society, if there were one in the locality. If a parent were brutally beating a child, or something of that kind, it would be proper to report the matter to the authorities. But it is not the business of every one to go about attempting to straighten out matters in general. The world is full of evil, and will be until the Kingdom shall take control.

We think that as far as the Church is concerned the number of difficulties we see in the world would better be let alone as a rule; for if we should start out to right everything that is wrong, we would not have any time left for serving the King of kings and Lord of lords. Our time is limited enough, at best. People already misjudge us; therefore we do well not to add unnecessarily to the opposition. If the time ever came when we were through with all our duties to the Church and to our families, then we might see to some of these outside matters. But we have very little time, and it leaves us very small opportunity to attend to any other matters except our necessary duties and our service for the Lord and the brethren. And for this we should be very thankful; for then if there is opposition against us, it will be only because we have been faithful to our Heavenly King.

Our King has not given us authority as yet to set the matters of the world straight. But we are instructed that we should, as we have opportunity, make known the principles of righteousness, without getting into any dispute. When our King comes in and begins His Reign, and we are exalted with Him, we will show the world what a government should be! But, indeed, it seems surprising how good the laws are even now. We are simply amazed as we think of the good laws of the State of New York, for instance. It is wonderful how the State tries to take care of the interests of the majority, and how much is done for the people; we are glad that the poor world has been able to do so well. We

admire what they have done under such adverse conditions. What a grand time it will be, and what a grand world it will be, when everything is under the Law of Righteousness!

ANOTHER PHASE OF THE QUESTION

But coming back to this matter of evil-speaking in the Church; suppose that a brother has been nominated for the position of Elder or Deacon, and suppose that in our judgment he is unfit for such an office, for certain reasons known to us, but not known to the rest of the Ecclesia. What should be our course in the matter? We are admonished to speak evil of no man. Should we then get up and say, "Brethren, I consider Brother A. wholly unfit to be an Elder; I know that he did thus-and-so; that he cheated a woman out of a sum of money"—or whatever the charge might be. Shall we say this? No, indeed! Is it our duty to speak *evil* in the interests of the Church, to do *evil* that *good* may come? Certainly not! But the old creature always wants a chance to speak evil; give him half a chance and he will soon tell all that he knows!

Then what shall we do? Well, if we were ourself a member of that congregation, we think we would go over and speak to the brother thus nominated, and say, "Brother A., there are certain matters which I have learned about you which I do not wish to mention to anybody. I would not wish to speak evil of you at all, dear brother. But I believe that this feature of your life is wrong, and that it would not be right for this Congregation to elect you. I do not wish to tell them about this matter. I wish to ask you if you will refuse to serve. If you promise that you will decline to be elected, that is all that is necessary. Or if you think that my point is not well taken, just state the matter publicly to them. If you do not do this, and do not refuse to be elected, then I must state the matter publicly—I will have to tell what I know; for you know it is as I state it. I have come to you in kindness and have no desire to injure you."

If the brother answers, "Well, Brother _____, I will decline the nomination; and as regards the matter you mention, I am trying to get the better of it"—then we would tell him we are very glad. We believe that we would in this way do that brother good. We would also be preserving the Class from what would be hurtful or contentious, and would be keeping the peace. If, on the other hand, the brother should be disputatious, we would say to him, "You may be sure that I will explain this matter to the Church, if you do not decline the nomination; for thereby you are saying that you approve your course in life and are standing by it."

But if the matter were something that occurred in the brother's life long ago, he might be entirely changed by now—in the matter of a year, or two years, or five years, or whatever. We would be glad if he were changed from the old course. Then we might go to the brother and say, "Brother, I notice that you stood for election. Is your life entirely changed?" If he replied, "Yes, Brother; it is changed entirely," then we would be glad. But if he got angry and told us it was none of our business, we would say, "Now, Brother, I must make a report of this to the Church. You are indicating by your manner that you are advocating the same course that you took before. If I had done such a wrong, and continued to do wrong, I would wish to have my course checked. So I shall report this

matter, that the Class may consider again whether they will have you for an Elder (or a Deacon)." But suppose that the Brother should not be nominated for office in the Church? Then we would consider that his past was none of our affair.

A CONCLUDING WORD OF EXHORTATION

Anything injurious to the real interests of another should never be spoken. We cannot be too careful of our words concerning others. There seems to be a tendency with some of the Lord's children to indulge in confidences with others of the brethren and to relate incidents that *reflect* upon another brother or sister, that *show up* certain manifestations of weakness in that one. The disposition that thus exposes the imperfections of the brethren is *surely not* the love that *covers*. (1 Peter 4:8.) We know some who have been long in the narrow way, who do not seem even yet to have overcome this disposition. Do they forget that they *themselves* have weaknesses perhaps as pronounced as the brother or sister whom they criticize? The very fact that they ignore the Master's injunction along the line of our text proves their *own lack* of development. Yet these would probably resent the implication that they are guilty of evil-speaking.

The *sooner* every follower of Christ comes to see that all this is *slander*, that it is *besmirching* the good name of a brother or sister, that it is a *direct violation* of the repeated injunction of the Word of God, and that defamation is theft of another's reputation, the sooner they will see this subject as it really is, *in all its hideousness*—as it *must appear in the sight of the Lord*. Once seeing the matter from the Divine standpoint, the only true standpoint, the child of God must surely awaken to the greatest possible energy in overcoming *such works of the flesh and of the Devil*. Let *each one* who reads these words search his or her own heart and think over his or her own conduct, and then ask the question, "*Is it I?*"

Let every one who hopes to be accounted worthy of a place in the Kingdom, so soon to come, *purge out the old leaven of malice, envy, backbiting and strife*, if any yet remain, that he or she may become indeed a *copy* of God's dear Son. The flesh is very seductive, and is inclined to make all manner of excuses for itself. Let each one make this a matter of personal heart-searching. There is, we believe, only a *very little while remaining* in which to perfect our characters. Let us pray more earnestly than ever, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth! Keep *Thou* the door of *my lips!*"

JANUARY 8

See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men—1 Thes. 5:15.

According to the Scriptural standard, the true people of God should be the most polished, the most refined, the most polite, the most generous, the most kind, of all the people in the world—and should be all these in the most absolute sense—not in the mere sense of an outward form and appearance of kindness, gentleness, *etc.*, so common in the world; but a gentleness, a kindness, proceeding from the heart, proceeding from an appreciation of the Lord's Spirit and the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of love, and the spirit of justice, also—Z '01, 297 (R 2877).

The spirit of vengeance is the spirit of Satan, as the spirit of meekness and non-retaliation is the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, all who have the Lord's Spirit will constantly be on the alert to do good, whether to friend or foe, doing good according to opportunity to all men, especially to the household of faith. Ever following this course their hearts will more and more approximate the likeness of the Lord's—P '35, 182.

Parallel passages: Lev. 19:18; Deut. 32:25; Psa. 94:1; Prov. 20:22; Matt. 5:38-41; Rom. 12:12-17, 19-21; Heb. 10:30; 1 Pet. 2:23; 3:9; Gal. 6:10; 1 Thes. 3:12; 1 Tim. 6:18.

Hymns: 125, 267, 196, 198, 315, 95, 208.

Poems of Dawn, 114: *Just for Today*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 149 (R 5897).

Questions: Have I this week rendered evil for evil, good for evil or evil for good? What were the circumstances, the motives and the effects?

JUST FOR TODAY

LORD, for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray;
Keep me from any stain of sin just for today.
Let me both diligently work and duly pray;
Let me be kind in word and deed just for today.
Let me be slow to do my will, prompt to obey;
Help me to sacrifice myself just for today.
Let me no wrong nor idle word unthinking say;
Set Thou Thy seal upon my lips just for today.
So for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray,
But keep me, guide me, hold me, Lord, just for today.

R5897: NON-RESISTANCE OF EVIL

"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men." "Resist not evil."—

1 Thessalonians 5:15; Matthew 5:39.

PERHAPS every well-balanced man has a natural disposition to exact justice from those who do him harm. There is a sense of justice apparently in all people, which leads them to feel that, if they have been unjustly treated, some punishment should be meted out to those who mistreated them; and their first impulse is to exact justice. God's Law is based upon justice, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Our minds instinctively recognize this Law of Retribution.

During the existence of the Jewish nation, their Law required that justice should be done. If the ox of Shimei the Benjamite gored the ox of Eliab the Zebulunite, then Shimei's ox was to be killed or the full amount of damage met by him; for the owner of the gored ox must be fully recompensed. And so it was in all matters.

The principle of justice is a proper one. It would be ill for the world if justice were not recognized. In the world's courts there is an attempt to give justice, so that if one's ox is gored the owner could go to the courts and have redress. We see the righteousness of this arrangement, the wisdom of it. But in the case of the Church, the Lord has made a new provision. The Church is called out of the world, and its members are to realize that they are no longer of the world. They are to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. They are to suffer injustice. Jesus gave Himself up to suffer for the unjust. Those who are followers of Jesus are to have His spirit of sacrifice in the interests of others. Whoever does not follow His example in this respect demonstrates that he has not the Spirit of Christ. And whoever has not the Spirit of Christ would better not start to follow in His footsteps; for such will not be sharers in His glory.

CHRISTIANS NOT TO EXACT JUSTICE

"Even Christ pleased not Himself." When He was evil entreated, He did not say, "Do not harm Me or I will retaliate." Such was not the Lord's spirit. He knew that He would be maltreated. He remembered the commission which the Father had given Him. He bore in mind that those with whom He had to do were fallen. He did not seek to get justice from them. He submitted the whole matter to the Father; and on behalf of the whole world, even of those who were doing Him injustice, He died, that by and by all might be reconciled to God through His death.

As followers of Jesus, we, like Him, resign our rights rather than try to get them. So we are different from others. We have a knowledge of God's Plan for the forgiveness of sin. We are suffering as members of the Body of Christ, filling up that which was left behind of the sufferings of our Head, and we are to rejoice in the privilege of doing this. But if we were to render evil for evil and to exact justice from everybody, we would be losing our privilege of sacrificing for righteousness' sake; for the Divine arrangement is that if we suffer with Jesus in the interest of the same truths for which He suffered, if we become dead with Him, we shall live and reign with Him. If, therefore, we should have

the independent spirit of the world, and should say, "If you do injury to me I will surely get even with you," we would not have the Spirit of Christ.

Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that He should be a Sin-Offering, that He should suffer "the Just for the unjust." And He invites us to walk with Him in this way, to be sharers of His sufferings, and thus be sharers in His glory in the Kingdom. It behooves each of the Lord's followers therefore to see that he does not render evil for evil. The Apostle might have been understood to mean, Let no man render evil for evil to the brethren; but he makes it broader and says, "unto any man"—not merely among yourselves follow that which is good, but among all mankind.

APPEALS FOR JUSTICE SOMETIMES PROPER

This does not mean that it would not be proper under some circumstances to appeal for justice to the law, in whatever country we might be living; but it means that when the law has decided the matter against us we should submit. If the law should take away your coat and your cloak, be submissive to the law. To a certain extent we are to permit ourselves to be imposed upon. If the case be one merely of personal feelings, there would be no proper ground for resistance. If the case be one that affects the Lord's Cause, it would seem to be a matter of appeal for relief, that we might get whatever the world is willing to give us which would be for the furtherance of the Gospel.

We see that in our Lord's case, when He was unjustly sentenced, He inquired respecting the justice of the matter. He put the matter to the Court. This was not resistance. In the case of St. Paul, we remember not only that he fled from some places where they persecuted him, but that in other cases he appealed, which it was wise to do, to a higher tribunal. In one instance, perceiving that the whole matter was one of injustice, and seeing that the mob around him were of two kinds—some being Sadducees and some Pharisees, with the Pharisees being in the majority, He called out, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. For the resurrection of the dead am I called in question!" Thus he appealed to the Pharisee element of the crowd, and set them more or less at variance with the Sadducees. He said, I am like the Pharisee in my belief of a resurrection from the dead. He did no evil to the Sadducees, but merely sought to bring to his sympathy and support those who had some faith and interest in the resurrection, that thus he might dissuade them from persecution of himself. In another instance, the Apostle was about to be beaten unjustly; and as they were binding him he said to a centurion standing by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?" This immediately brought the Apostle release from his distressing circumstances. He did not say, "If you beat me, I will make it a sad day for you!" We do not know that St. Paul would even have reported the matter, if he had been unjustly treated. We have every reason to suppose that he would not have done so. On another occasion, when he was beaten very sorely, we have no knowledge that he endeavored to prevent the injustice. He merely accepted it as of the Lord's permission.

In the case in which he referred to his Roman citizenship and asked, Does the law give you the right to do me harm? we are given a clue as to our own proper course under

similar circumstances. We, likewise, could say, if unlawfully arrested or interfered with in doing the work of the Lord, "Are you acting according to the instructions of the law? Am I violating any of its provisions? Have I not the rights of a citizen of this state?" And if the officer was exceeding his authority, the provisions of the law should be pointed out in a reasonable manner, without any manifestation of a retaliatory spirit.

THE DIVINE LAW OF LOVE

Coming back to the matter of rendering evil for evil: we might be asked, Suppose that a burglar entered our house and we could find the burglar, should we put him in prison? One view would be, "Yes; put him in prison Make it a sore day for him." Another view would be, "No; we have no desire for revenge. We do not wish to do him injury in return." At the same time here is a man at large, violating the laws and menacing the safety and interests of the community. So we would feel that we should report the man to the authorities and turn him over to justice. We would wish to shield the public and also to check the evil-doer in his wrong course.

This seems to be the thought of the Scriptures—that so far as our hearts are concerned we are to be perfectly willing to endure evil for righteousness' sake; for we are called to suffer for the cause of righteousness. We are not to return evil for evil. We are not to resist evil, in the sense of trying to retaliate and get revenge for injuries done us. Rather let the evil be repeated. This was the Master's course; and it is a part of our covenant with the Lord to share in the persecution and sufferings of our Head, to endure opposition and injustice for the Truth's sake, for Christ's sake.

The more of this unselfish love we have, the more Godlike shall we be. God is unselfish, whereas the whole world is selfish. It is but natural that mankind should be selfish after six thousand years' experience with sin. Would it not be strange indeed if the whole world were not marked with selfishness, with the desire to advance the interests of self at the expense of others? But this course is contrary to the Divine Law of Love. We, therefore, as children of God, are to endeavor to rid ourselves of personal selfishness and of merely seeking our own good. We are to try to do good to every one as far as possible, according to the course of wisdom and our opportunities, especially to those who are fellow members of the Body of Christ, those traveling the same narrow course of self-sacrifice.

JANUARY 9

Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?—1 Cor. 4:7.

All of the Lord's consecrated people should realize that they have come into the present grace and truth, not by their own wisdom nor by the wisdom of others, but through the wisdom and grace of the Lord. The same thought should be entertained by all who serve the people of God as ministers, servants in any department, in any manner responsible to the Lord for their position in the household of faith, and their opportunities to serve as the Lord's mouthpieces should be felt and confessed. But failure to confess it implies a failure rightly to appreciate it—Z '03, 430 (R 3277).

Our differing from others in the important things in life (whether in talents, station or privilege with respect to God's service) comes not from ourselves, but from God. It is He who makes us to differ one from the other. Humility, therefore, is the proper attitude of mind toward our position in the Lord's service. Boasting is excluded, because all is a favor from Him—P '30, 14.

Parallel passages: Jas. 1:17; John 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:11; Rom. 12:3, 6; 1 Pet. 4:10; Eph. 2:8, 9; Phil. 2:13; Mic. 6:8; Matt. 5:3; Luke 14:11; 17:10; 22:24-27; 1 Cor. 1:28, 29.

Hymns: 95, 11, 46, 99, 121, 176, 293.

Poems of Dawn, 81: *His Way is Best*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 231 (R 5284).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

HIS WAY IS BEST

JUST why I suffer loss
I cannot know;
I only know my Father
Wills it so.
He leads in paths I cannot understand;
But all the way, I know, is wisely planned.

My life is only mine
That I may use
The gifts He lendeth me
As He may choose.
And, if in love some boon He doth recall,
I know that unto Him belongeth all.

I am His child, and I

Can safely trust;
He loves me, and I know
That He is just;
Within His love I can securely rest,
Assured that what He does for me is best.

R5284: WHY THERE IS DIVERSITY AMONGST GOD'S PEOPLE

"Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?"—1 Cor. 4:7.

WHILE it is true that all men are born with inalienable rights and privileges, yet no man is born without sin. The Scriptures very properly declare that the race in Adam was sold under Sin six thousand years ago. In this sense, therefore, we were not born *free*, but slaves of Sin. Neither are we born *equal*. No two persons are exactly alike in opportunity, talent and ability. We differ from one another. God did not create some better and some worse—some more richly endowed and some less richly endowed. We are to take the Bible statement of the origin of humanity, and understand that God made Adam *perfect*. All the imperfections which encumber the human race are the results of the dying process. Sin has made us all to differ, then, from the original image and likeness of God. Satan brought about this difference through Mother Eve.

In our text, however, the Apostle Paul has in mind a New Creation in Jesus Christ—a new order—amongst whose members there is a difference. Some in the Church have many talents, others, few talents; some have special talents, others have ordinary talents. But Satan is not charged with having given the greater or lesser talents to these. The Apostle says that it is God who has set the various members in the Body as it has pleased Him; and that both this setting, or apportioning, of the different members of the Body and the bringing forth of the different degrees of fruitage are manifestations of God's grace in our hearts. Thus we are made to differ from each other.

CAUSE OF DIVERSITY OF ATTAINMENTS

The matter of growth in the Holy Spirit is one that is dependent in large measure upon each one's zeal to know, to do, the will of God. We are put into the School of Christ to learn of Him. Some learn more rapidly, others less rapidly. In proportion as they learn, they have greater opportunities and blessings. All are granted a measure of the Holy Spirit—all granted some blessing. Those who are anxious to know the will of the Lord and to study it grow the more rapidly, and thus have more of the Holy Spirit. These are *zealous* to do the *Lord's* will. Their progress is not attributable wholly to themselves, but especially to the favor of God.

The Apostle goes on to say, Ye are *God's* workmanship; "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." We could not do this work ourselves. The power that is working in us is of God. He is preparing a glorious Temple. He has

provided who shall be the chief corner-stone of this Temple, and who shall be the members of the Temple class. We could not choose the place for ourselves. But in God's providence we each responded to the call to be a living stone. The stones were first cut out of the dark quarry, and now they are being shaped and prepared for places in the glorious building.

DIVERSITY OF ANOTHER KIND

The great Master-Workman is doing a work upon us. He is chiseling and fashioning us. He is making us what we are. Consequently there is to be no boasting. There is a certain amount of personality connected with each one, however, and if there is too much cross-grain in the stone it will be abandoned. As the Apostle Peter exhorts, we are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt us in due time. The same Apostle also reminds us that we should look up to God and give Him praise for all that we have and are.—I Pet. 5:6; 4:11.

We are colaborers with God. We give God the praise that He has made us to differ from our former selves, that He is making us thus to differ more every day, and that He will continue the good work as the days go by and as we seek to do His will. What have we of ourselves? *Nothing!* We were wholly dead through Father Adam's disobedience; we were born in this condition, having no right to everlasting life. But God has a Plan which is world-wide in its scheme of blessing. He has proffered the blessings of the highest feature of this Plan to us, and invited us to come to Him in advance of the world. And this we receive through His grace.

JANUARY 10

Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience—Jas. 5:10.

The right path is still the "narrow path" of *self-abasement* and *self-denial*—the path of meekness and humility—and it will require as much effort and grace to walk it this year as last, or possibly more; for the more we grow in grace and knowledge, the stronger will be the temptations to be boastful, puffed up, heady, high-minded; and the higher we climb in faith and hope and love and activity in the Lord's service, the more the great Adversary will oppose our progress, and the more his emissaries will slander, backbite and generally seek to injure us—Z '95, 3 (R 1751).

God's mouthpieces have ever been the targets of much abuse and the subjects of much suffering, which, like God, they have borne with much patience. Therein they have given an example worthy of imitation by all who would be the Lord's people and mouthpieces. The Lord's true people will be profited by taking them as an example and the Lord's name will thereby be glorified—P '34, 189.

Parallel passages: 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:11; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 2 Tim. 2:10-12; 1 Pet. 3:13-18; 4:13-19; Matt. 5:10-12; 23:34, 37; Luke 6:22, 23, 26; Acts 5:41; 7:52; 2 Chron. 36:16; Neh. 9:26; 1 Thes. 2:15; Job 1:22; 2:10; 42:10.

Hymns: 102, 56, 57, 93, 94, 108, 179.
Poems of Dawn, 177: *Broken Purposes*.
Tower Reading: Z '13, 312 (R 5332).

Questions: What good did the prophets' example in endurance of evil do me this week? In what circumstances? What helped or hindered therein?

BROKEN PURPOSES

My purposes are broken off; even the thoughts of my heart."—
Job 17:11.

MY purposes are broken off,
So be it, blessed Lord;
With wisdom and with wondrous Love
Thy purposes are stored.
The thoughts of my poor heart give place
To Thy great plan for me;
In all Thy ways my soul can trace
Thy mercy rich and free.

My purposes are broken off,
Dear Lord, 'tis better so;
For higher are Thy ways than mine,

Who to the end dost know.
I praise Thee still though broken off
My purposes may be;
For in Thy glory I shall know
Thy will was best for me.

R5332: PATIENCE A CARDINAL GRACE OF CHARACTER

"Ye have need of patience [cheerful endurance], that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the [fulfilment of] the promise.—Heb. 10:36.

THE Apostle is addressing the Christian Church—You who have left the world, who have accepted Christ as your Standard-bearer, as well as your Redeemer, and who are seeking to walk in His steps, and have made consecration of your life to the Lord—"Ye have need of patience." To a certain extent you did the will of God when you made your consecration to be dead with Christ. But that will of God was more deeply impressed upon you when you began to realize more than at first what this *sacrifice* would *mean*, and that only those who *suffer* with Christ shall *reign* with Him.

"After you were illuminated" you saw the matter clearly, and "endured a great fight of afflictions." This was well. But St. Paul goes on to show in the context that some, after having demonstrated their zeal for a certain time, become cold. They become weary in well doing. And he tells us that these thus cut themselves off from the favors, privileges and blessings belonging to the Church of Christ. His exhortation is that those who are still loyal to God at heart continue so and exercise *patience*, remembering that this is one of the cardinal graces of Christian character. Many have naturally a little love, a little gentleness, a little patience, a little meekness, etc. But after we begin to grow in the graces of the Holy Spirit, we need *patience* to control the flesh, the spirit of the world, the spirit of selfishness.

The will of God is in one sense of the word the standard of God—full perfection—that we should be like our Father which is in Heaven. But God remembers that we are fallen creatures, and that we cannot do perfectly. Our text does not mean that we must do the will of God in the perfect and complete sense; but rather, as the Apostle elsewhere says, ours is a *reasonable service*. When we present our bodies living sacrifices to God, it is our reasonable service. God does not expect us to do that which is impossible.

THE PURPOSE OF OUR TESTING

What is this will of God? Stated in concrete form, "This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification." (I Thess. 4:3.) As the Apostle teaches, consecration is a full and complete setting apart. If we do such a setting of *ourselves* apart at the beginning, then the *Father* sanctifies us—begets us as New Creatures, and sets us apart. So we have, first of all, our setting of ourselves apart; and then God's acceptance by our begetting of the Holy Spirit as New Creatures, and His continued work in us.

We are doing the will of God when we fully consecrate ourselves to Him, and attain a place in the New Creation. But He wills to put us to the test. How much do we love God? How sincere are we? A soldier in an army might be loyal in time of quiet, but how would he be in time of stress? Would he desert the flag then, or would he prove himself a good soldier? He would need a great deal of patience. If he says he loves his country, his endurance and faithfulness will be tested in her time of need. He must go on picket duty; he must sometimes do menial work. He must endure wearisome marches, and many privations. All these things are required of a faithful soldier. If he is faithful, he is likely to be promoted, honored, for his faithful service.

So we are tested as to our *loyalty*. What are we willing to *endure* for Christ's sake? How *fully* are we submitted? How *deep* does our submission go? Are we wholly in harmony with the will of the Lord? Is our interest merely superficial, or does it enter fully into our hearts? The question is not merely, Shall we make the consecration?—but after the Christian has taken all of these preliminary steps, to what extent will he manifest patient endurance and obedience and loyalty?

God puts us to these tests because He has great honors to bestow on those who will be overcomers. They are to be a select company, and these will receive the Promise. As the Apostle says, it is after we have *proved* our loyalty to the very last, that we shall receive the Promise; i.e., its fulfilment.

THE ESSENCE OF THE PROMISE

When, where, what is the Promise? Undoubtedly the promise will be received in the resurrection. The promise includes all that God has in reservation for them that love Him—that love Him more than they love houses and lands, or children, or parents, or friends, or husbands or wives, or self, or any other thing.

The particular promise that the Apostle refers to here is *The Promise*. All our hopes and blessings are centered in the original Promise made to Abraham, when God brought him out of the land of Chaldea into the land of Canaan. God promised Abraham that in His Seed should all the families of the earth be blessed. That has been the great Promise for encouragement to the Seed, to give them patience and fortitude. This is the essence of the Promise—that those who receive the Promise shall be the Seed of Abraham to bless the world. The faithful in Christ will be associated with Him in His Kingdom—will have the honor of blessing all the families of the earth under this Kingdom. Every creature of God shall then be brought to a knowledge of His Truth, and shall have the opportunity of being restored, if he will, to perfection, to all that was redeemed on Calvary.

Now the opportunity is *different*. Now the selection is being made of those who will inherit the Promise as the Seed of Abraham. "If ye be *Christ's*, then are ye *Abraham's Seed*, and heirs according to the Promise." The Apostle is in our text urging that we continue to be Christ's and to abide in Him. All those who thus remain in Him to the end

will be glorified with Him. In order to remain faithful, we must have His spirit of devotion.

NOTABLE EXAMPLES OF PATIENT ENDURANCE

St. James exhorts the Church saying, "Take, my brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." Those whom the Apostle addressed already knew of the sufferings of Jesus. They already knew of the faithfulness of the Apostles. And now he was calling the attention of their minds to something *additional*. He is urging, Look back into the past, and see that patient endurance has been characteristic of all who have lived holy lives. These examples should be lessons of encouragement to us, in addition to those we have in the living brethren around us!

Then there is always something to be gained in casting the mind backward. The things close at hand are too near to be seen in their proper light. It was fitting that the Apostle should call attention to those faithful ones of the past, so that we might be encouraged to note what God desires. In those who are His, He desires a willingness to endure patiently and loyally, thus manifesting true character, that which greatly pleases Him.

As we look back over the Old Testament record of the Prophets, we notice that many of them displayed this very quality referred to by the Apostle as loyalty to the Lord, a willingness to suffer afflictions for *His sake*, and not as experiences brought through chance upon them by the people. We see Moses—how willing he was to suffer affliction because of his faith in the Promise made to Abraham and his conviction that the Promise would come true. He preferred to suffer with the people of God rather than to live at ease in the royal family of Pharaoh, into which he had been adopted.

We see in Job another example of patient endurance of tribulation and of strong opposition for a considerable time. We see the same in Jeremiah—how much his faithfulness cost him of hardship, and how patient he was. We see the same in Daniel the Prophet—his faithfulness to the Lord, his patient endurance of whatever God permitted to come against him. And so with others of the Prophets. And we read that their experiences were written for *our* admonition, *our* instruction. Although they belong to one Dispensation and we to another, yet their experiences furnish us good lessons.—I Cor. 10:6, 11.

PERSONAL APPLICATION OF THESE LESSONS

Applying these lessons to ourselves, we may say that to whatever extent we may be privileged to speak the Word of God and to suffer persecution therefore, if we take it with patience, it will bring us a corresponding blessing and commendation from the Lord. But we cannot think it would be pleasing to Him if, when we suffer, we think, Oh, how terrible, terrible, terrible! Such an attitude would not be taking His Word for it, that "*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,*" and that all things shall work out for our good.—2 Tim. 3:12; Rom. 8:28.

When Job was rich, prosperous, God tested him by taking from him all his family, all his wealth, his health, and even allowing his wife to turn against him. Yet in all this Job did not turn against God. He did indeed express wonder, but he looked to the Lord in faith and said, "Though worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." I shall yet receive the manifestation of His favor, and learn what He means by these experiences, these afflictions, coming upon me. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."—Job 13:15.

After his testings had been accomplished, God gave him back children, houses, lands, friends. And these coming in abundance shadowed forth the blessings of Restitution—how the tribulations of mankind will eventually work out for good to those who will love God. If those who are now suffering affliction because of their loyalty to the Lord, because of their trust in His arrangements, will take afflictions and trials joyfully, these will surely work out good to them—"a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

JANUARY 11

His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay—Jer. 20:9.

Let us who are privileged to remain to this time of favor and blessing and enlightenment give glory to the Lord, and see to it that the loving disposition of John is manifested in us, and also his energy, his zeal; for while he is called the loving disciple, we are to remember also that he was, because of his impetuous zeal, styled, with his brother, Boanerges—*sons of thunder*. Let us be full of energy, full of sacrifices which love prompts, that we may glorify the Lord in our bodies and spirits, which are His—Z '01, 151 (R 2806).

Because the Christian believes with intensity of conviction, therefore he speaks. It is as impossible for him to refrain from declaring God's Word, as it is to stay the waters of the Niagara from going over the falls. Those who do not receive the Truth from the love of it might and frequently do without good reason refrain from declaring it; but those who love God's testimonies will and must declare His grace on all suitable occasions—P '33, 191.

Parallel passages: Jas. 1:21-23; 1 Pet. 2:2; Heb. 4:12; 2 Tim. 2:15; Josh. 1:8; 1 Chron.16:15; Job 23:12; Psa. 19:7-11; 40:8; 119:14-20, 46, 54, 93, 97, 111, 143, 157-167, 172; Eccles. 5:1; Isa. 55:10, 11; Ezra 7:10; Mal. 2:6, 7; Luke 12:42-44; Acts 4:20, 31; 20:22-24; 1 Cor. 9:16-23; 2 Cor. 6:3-7.

Hymns: 260, 70, 116, 164, 210, 275, 309.

Poems of Dawn, 261: *Clear the Way*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 197 (R 5489).

Questions: Have I this week been zealous for the Word? How? Why? With what results?

CLEAR THE WAY

MEN of thought, be up and stirring
Night and day.
Sow the seed, withdraw the curtain,
Clear the way.
Men of action, aid and cheer them
As you may.
There's a fount about to stream;
There's a light about to beam;
There's a warmth about to glow;
There's a flower about to blow;
There's a midnight blackness changing
Into gray.

Men of thought, and men of action,
Clear the way!
Once the welcome light hath broken,
Who shall say
What the unimagined glories
Of the day?
What the evil that shall perish
In its ray?
Aid the dawning, tongue and pen;
Aid it, hopes of honest men;
Aid it, paper; aid it, type;
Aid it, for the hour is ripe;
And our earnest must not slacken
Into play.
Men of thought, and men of action,
Clear the way!

Lo! a cloud's about to vanish
From the day;
Lo! the right's about to conquer—
Clear the way!
Many a brazen wrong to crumble
Into clay.
With that right shall many more
Enter smiling at the door;
With the giant wrong shall fall
Many others, great and small,
That for ages long have held us
For their prey.
Men of thought, and men of action,
Clear the way!

R5489: OUR RESPONSIBILITY CONCERNING PRESENT TRUTH

"His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing; and I could not stay."—Jeremiah 20:9.

THE Prophet Jeremiah is here using a very forceful comparison. He had a burning zeal in his heart, a consuming sense of the importance of the message given him to deliver. His previous declaration of the Word of God concerning Israel had been so despised and rejected that he had become disheartened. He himself declared, "The Word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said: I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name. But His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary of forbearing, and I could not stay!" His message

had to be spoken. The Lord had instructed him to tell Israel that they were about to be given over into the hands of their enemies.

This Word of the Lord to the Prophet Jeremiah was given prior to the seventy years' captivity of the Jews. There were false prophets among them who declared that the King of Judah was to gain a victory over their enemies. The people were glad to hear this assurance; and they despised the true Prophet of the Lord, who gave them the real Message from God. Jeremiah told them that they had failed to keep their Covenant with the Lord; that they had failed in their responsibilities to Jehovah, whose people they professed to be, and whom they had promised to serve faithfully; that it was not too late even then for any to be delivered, who would repent; but that the nation was surely to be delivered to their enemies and carried away into captivity.

JEREMIAH'S CRUCIAL TEST

Jeremiah knew that the false prophets would encourage the king, and that he himself would bring the king's wrath upon his own head by reiterating the message which Jehovah had commissioned him to deliver. He shrank from the infamy, the reproach and the persecution which by experience he knew would result from loyalty to the Lord. But he overcame the temptation to hold his peace. He would speak as God commanded him, let the cost be what it would. He would tell Israel again the words which had been given him. He would give them a further warning.

If Jeremiah had allowed his fears to overwhelm him, and had withheld the message, undoubtedly he would have been set aside as the mouthpiece of God, and another would have been commissioned to deliver the message. The burning within the heart of the Prophet would have grown feebler and would ultimately have died out. When a fire is kept shut off from a draft for some length of time, it will become extinguished. This is as true in the realm of moral and spiritual forces as in that of physical nature. This is why the Apostle Paul urged: "Quench not the Spirit." We might let the Holy Spirit of God die out in our hearts by a failure to do our duty, a failure to keep our covenant faithfully. The light within us, the holy fire, would smolder for a time, and finally become extinct. The Prophet Jeremiah could not withhold that which God had commanded him to speak; he could not quench the fire within his soul without losing his relationship with Jehovah.

GOD'S MESSAGE GIVEN US TODAY

Thus it is with us today. God has let us into the secret of His counsels. He has granted us a wonderful spiritual illumination. He has given us a Message of the utmost importance to deliver to His professed people. We have been informed by the Lord that a great change is impending—that the lease of power to the Gentile nations is about to expire. We are instructed that the present religious systems of Christendom are to go down, that the rule of the present order is about to end, and that the dominion is about to be given "to Him whose right it is" to reign. The kingdoms of this world are about to "become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever."

This Message is not to be stated in a rude manner. But it is to be stated, nevertheless. The great King whom God hath appointed is about to come in. In Jeremiah's time, the message was that the Kingdom of God, His typical kingdom, was about to be overthrown. The lease of power to the Gentiles, under the domination of the Prince of this world, was about to be inaugurated. This order of things was to be permitted to run for an appointed time. That time is now about to run out. The King's Son is soon to receive His long-promised inheritance. (Psalm 2:7-9.) We are glad that our Message is not now the *overthrow* of God's Kingdom, but the very *opposite* of this—the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

So we are to tell forth this glorious Message. We are to tell it in our actions, in our words, by the printed page, by pictorial presentations to the eye, and in every way that the Lord shall give us the opportunity. If through fear of persecution, of losing prestige in the eyes of men, for love of ease, or for any reason whatever, we should fail to give forth the Message of God, it will be taken from us and given to one who is worthy. The Lord is seeking those who are valiant for Him, for righteousness, for truth. If we prove ourselves weak, we are not fit for the Kingdom.

ARE WE FULFILLING OUR COMMISSION?

Is this wonderful Message, this Message the like of which was never before granted to men or angels to tell, burning within us? And are we speaking it forth, that its inspiration may cause other hearts to take fire? Can we sing with the poet:

"I love to tell the Story,
It did so much for me!
And that is just the reason
I tell it now to thee"?

If we refrain from telling the Glad Tidings, the result will be that the fire of God's Holy Spirit will become extinguished within us. And if the light that is within us become darkness, how great will be that darkness! The possession of the Truth—God's Message—brings with it great responsibility. Shall we prove faithful to it? Shall we show to our God our deep appreciation of His loving kindness in granting us the knowledge of His wonderful Message of Salvation, His glorious Plan, with its times and seasons?

There is a difference between the operation of the Lord's Spirit in His children now and its operation in the days of the Prophet Jeremiah, and the other holy Prophets. During the Jewish Age the Holy Spirit acted upon the servants and mouthpieces of God in a mechanical manner. Now the people of the Lord have both His Message in His written Word and the begetting of the Spirit, which gives us a spiritual understanding impossible to His people of past Ages. The mysteries of God are now opened up to His faithful children, the watchers; and we are granted a clear understanding of "the deep things of God," some features of which were never revealed until the present time, even to the most faithful of the Lord's saints.—1 Thessalonians 5:1-6.

"THE DAY IS AT HAND!"

We are also told by the Apostle Paul that the things which were written of the servants of the Lord in past dispensations were written for *our* admonition and instruction and comfort, "upon whom the ends of the Ages are come." (1 Corinthians 10:11.) Seeing all these things, dearly beloved, "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?" How earnestly, with what painstaking care, should we give heed to the Word spoken unto us! Let us be faithful in proclaiming the Message of our Lord, now due. Let us tell forth the words which He has put into our mouths, whether others hear or whether they forbear—whether our faithfulness bring us the favor or the disfavor of the world and of nominal Spiritual Israel. But let us speak His Word in meekness and love, leaving the results with our great Chief Reaper. "The Day is at hand"!

"He cometh to His own—our glorious King!
Can human tongue or pen show forth such glory?
Through earth and sky let our glad praises ring!
O Saints of God, tell forth the wondrous Story!

"He cometh now to reign. What wealth of joy
To all the world! Thy matchless name confessing,
O Son of God, we sound Thy glory forth
O'er land and sea—Thy promised Reign of Blessing!"

JANUARY 12

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted—Gal. 6:1.

Let us learn well this lesson of reproofing others very gently, very considerately, kindly, by a hint rather than a direct charge and detail of the wrong—by an inquiry respecting the *present* condition of their hearts rather than respecting a *former* condition, in which we know they have erred. We are to be less careful for the punishments that will follow wrongdoing than for the recovery of the erring one out of the error of his way. We are not to attempt to judge and punish one another for misdeeds, but rather to remember that all this is in the hands of the Lord; we are not in any sense of the word to avenge ourselves or to give any chastisement or recompense for evil—Z '01, 150 (R 2806).

To err is human, hence all commit faults. Helpfully to reprove is Divine, therefore but few can exercise this grace. Only the advanced Christian who has proper knowledge, love and self-control is capable of exercising well this office, and in his endeavor to help others, he must watch himself very carefully, lest while reproofing others he himself should be found in fault—P '32, 197, 198.

Parallel passages: Isa. 57:15; Rom. 15:1, 7; 1 Cor. 8:9, 11; 9:22; Heb. 12:13; Jas. 5:19, 20; Prov. 24:16; 28:5; Rom. 8:9, 14, 15; 1 Cor. 4:21; 2 Thes. 3:15; 2 Tim. 2:25; 1 Cor. 10:12.

Hymns: 198, 78, 95, 105, 125, 166, 267.

Poems of Dawn, 277: *The New Leaf*.

Tower Reading: Z '02, 197 (R 3033).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they accepted? What were the results?

THE NEW LEAF

HE came to my desk with a quivering lip—
The lesson was done—
"Dear teacher, I want a new leaf," he said,
"I have spoiled this one."
In place of the leaf, so stained and blotted,
I gave him a new one, all unspotted,
And into his sad eyes smiled—
"Do better now, my child."

I went to the throne with a quivering soul—
The old year was done—
"Dear Father, hast Thou a new leaf for me?"

I have spoiled this one."
He took the old leaf, stained and blotted,
And gave me a new one, all unspotted,
And into my sad heart smiled—
"Do better now, My child."

R3033: "LOVE—MAKING A DIFFERENCE."

"Keep yourselves in the love of God ... and of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire."—Jude 21-23.

WITH OUR MINDS all unbalanced through the fall, resulting from original sin,—tho not all fallen exactly in the same direction,—it is not surprising that we frequently find ourselves and other brethren in Christ in more or less confusion respecting the application of certain principles laid down in the Word of God. For instance, we are instructed that love is the fulfilling of the divine law; and that love of the brethren is one of the evidences of our having passed from death unto life; and that if we love not our brother, whom we have seen, it is a sure evidence that we do not truly love our Heavenly Father, whom we have not seen. (Rom. 13:10; I John 3:14; 4:20.) In their endeavor to measure up to these requirements of the divine standard, some are in danger of erring in an opposite direction—in danger of manifesting a brotherly love where it should be withheld, and that in the interest of the brother. Let us note the different kinds, or degrees of love which the Heavenly Father exercises and manifests.

First, we have the love for the world. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" to die for us. (John 3:16.) Second, in a much higher and special sense, "The Father himself loveth you"—you who have accepted Jesus Christ as your Redeemer, and who, in his name and strength and merit have consecrated yourselves to him—you are seeking now to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. (John 16:27.) But that this special love of God can be lost in part, or eventually wholly, is clearly set forth by the Apostle's statement, "Keep yourselves in the love of God". (Jude 21.) If any, after having tasted of the good Word of God, the powers of the world to come, and being made partakers of the holy spirit, etc., shall walk after the flesh and not after the spirit, we may be sure that such will proportionately lose the love of God;—and, if he persist in this course, as a result will ultimately be "none of his." For, instead of loving such, who through their knowledge and attainments and disobedient course have become wicked, the Lord declares that he is "angry with the wicked," and that "all the wicked will he destroy."—Psa. 7:11; 145:20; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29.

As sons of the Highest, who are seeking to be like unto our Father in heaven, and like unto the copy which he has set before us in his dear Son, our Lord, we are to have for the world in general that broad sympathetic pity and mercy-love which would delight in doing any and everything possible to be done for their uplifting, in accord with the divine program, in the divine time and order. Like our Father and our Elder Brother, we are to love the brethren "with a pure heart, *fervently*"—with sincerity. This love for the brethren

is nothing like the love for the world. It is not the pity-love, nor mere generosity. It is far more; it is brotherly love. All of the children of God are brethren, as new creatures; all these brethren have hopes, ambitions, interests and promises linked together in the Lord Jesus and in the heavenly Kingdom in which they hope to share. All these brethren are joint-heirs, fellow-heirs one with the other and with the Lord. They are partners; their interests are mutual and co-ordinating.

Additionally, they have a special mutual sympathy of compassion; for while, as new creatures, they are rich in divine favor and promises, they all have serious weaknesses, according to the flesh—draw-backs; altho the Lord is not reckoning with them according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, the intention, the heart desires, nevertheless, they each and all have besetments arising from these weaknesses and imperfections of the earthly tabernacle, which cause them to "groan," and to sympathize one with the other in their groanings. As the Apostle says, "We which have the first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our *body*"—the complete Church. Thus the sons of God have a further mutual sympathy and love and care for each other, an interest in each other, helpfulness toward each other, which is entirely beyond and above and outside of any feelings which could possibly be appreciated by the world or exercised toward it;—because the world has no such conflict between the old nature and the new; no such covenant of sacrifice; no such acceptance in the Beloved; no such union of heart and purpose and aim and spirit. Oh, yes! the exhortation to love as brethren, fervently, is one which appeals to us specially.

But now we come to another point. Our love for the brethren cannot be exactly of the same measure and exactly of the same intensity or fervency toward all. There is something which gauges or regulates it. What is it? It is that we love God and the glorious principles of righteousness, which are represented in his character; and we love our Lord Jesus from the same standpoint, as being the very exemplifications of all that is good, noble, true, just, generous, loving; and our love for the brethren must, of necessity, be in proportion as we find the brethren to be copies of our Lord. We do not mean copies in the flesh, but viewed from the Lord's standpoint; copies in spirit, copies in heart, copies in motive, copies in intention, copies in loving zeal for righteousness, truth, etc. Thus, as we grow in the love of God and in the love of Christ and in the love of the principles which they represent, we grow also in love toward all men and toward the brethren, but particularly toward those who are growing most in likeness to the Lord. This is not partiality; this is not doing to others different from what we should wish them to do to us. This is following the Lord Jesus' example; for we find that amongst his apostles, even, all of whom were chosen, there were three specially beloved; and of those three one is specially noted as "that disciple whom Jesus loved." He was specially loved, because he was specially lovable; and so with us and the brethren. We should love them all warmly, fervently, but of necessity with varying degrees of fervor, and the fervor should increase with each in proportion as we note his growth in heart-likeness to our Lord.

And if this be so, what shall we say of those who, after having come to a knowledge of the truth, and after having tasted and appreciated its goodness, fall away into sin?—of

those who cease to walk after the spirit, and begin to walk after the flesh? Can our love for them burn with the same fervency as before? By no means; it should not do so. As the Apostle says in our text, we should make a *difference*. In doing so we are following the example of our Heavenly Father; for we have just noted that only by walking after the spirit can any of us keep ourselves in the love of God. Only by following the same course, therefore, should any be able to keep himself in the love of the brethren. Any deflection should bring corresponding loss of brotherly love and fellowship.

This making of a difference is really essential to the purity and progress of the Church. If we make no difference between those brethren who walk after the spirit and those who walk disorderly, or after the flesh, we are taking away the very premium and blessing which the Lord intended should go to those who walk after the spirit; and we are giving a premium, which the Lord did not intend should be given, to those who walk contrary to his Word, after the flesh. It is as much our duty to withdraw fellowship from those who are unworthy of it as it is our duty to grant fellowship, and that with fervency, to those whom we see to be walking in the footsteps of Jesus. We are not to think that it is love that is prompting us to take the wrong course of encouraging wrong-doers,—it is not love, but ignorance; and the remedy for ignorance is to learn of the Lord, from his Word and from his example.

The Apostle Paul calls our attention to our duty respecting the brethren, and how we should conduct ourselves toward them under varying circumstances, saying that faithful brethren should be esteemed very highly in love for their works' sake; that other brethren who are unruly should be warned; that those who are feeble in their mental comprehension of the truth should be strengthened; that those who are weak should be helped, supported; and that we should exercise patience toward all.—I Thess. 5:12-14.

We are at present specially referring to the proper attitude to be observed toward unruly brethren—they are not to be treated as those who are esteemed very highly in love for their works; otherwise they would be encouraged in being unruly. On the contrary they are to be warned, cautioned,—in love, truly, and with patience, but not with marks of the same love and esteem as tho they were walking orderly in the footsteps of Jesus and in harmony with the directions of his Word. The marks and evidences of our love and esteem must be sincere; and must be in proportion as we see in the brethren evidences of the right desires of heart,—to walk after the spirit of the truth. The Apostle Paul intimates how our disapproval ought to be shown, in cases which seem, in our judgment, to be of sufficient importance to demand a manifestation of disapproval.

Evidently the Apostle did not mean that the brethren should be watching each other for an occasion of fault-finding in every word and every act; but that, on the contrary, they should be so full of love one for the other that trivial matters would be entirely passed over, as merely of the weakness of the flesh, and not at all of intention, of the heart. The matters to be considered worthy of manifestations of disapproval and warning are, rather, those which are so open and manifest on the surface as to leave no room to question the fact that they are displeasing to the Lord, and injurious in their influence upon the brother or upon the household of faith. For instance, if the brother had been seen

under the influence of liquor; if he had been heard to utter vile or otherwise improper language; if it were a matter of general knowledge that he was living in sin; these would be such grounds as we believe the Apostle had in mind. But evidently the Apostle had no intention of cultivating a spirit of fault-finding and judging one another as respects the heart and private affairs,—use of time or money, etc. These belong to our individual stewardship and none should endeavor to interfere with the proper liberties of conscience and conduct which the Lord has granted to each. The Apostle is very stringent in his condemnation of such judging of one another, which so often leads to roots of bitterness, misunderstanding, disfellowship, etc., and which, as the old leaven, should be purged out of our hearts and lives.—Rom. 14:10, 13.

But now, for those who "obey not our word," the apostolic Scriptural directions in respect to their conduct, etc., is "note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." Nevertheless, knowing the tendency of the fallen mind to go from one extreme to another, either of too great leniency or of too great severity, the apostle continues, "Yet count him not an enemy, but admonish as a brother." (2 Thess. 3:13-15.) To admonish as a brother does not mean to denounce roundly and severely; it means to admonish in a spirit of love, gentleness, meekness, patience, and with a sincere desire to help the brother to see the fault which we are certain exists, and which we are sure is not evil surmising on our part.

The Apostle John shows us that this matter of distinguishing as between brethren that are to be esteemed and brethren that are to be warned, appertains not merely to conduct but also to doctrinal matters. Yet we may be sure that he does not mean that we are to disfellowship a brother merely because of some differences of view on non-essential questions. We may be sure that he does mean his words to apply strictly and only to the fundamentals of the doctrine of Christ: for instance, faith in God; faith in Jesus as our Redeemer; faith in the promises of the divine Word. These will be marks of a "brother," if supported by Christian conduct, walking after the spirit of the truth;—even tho the brother might have other views which would differ from ours in respect to certain features of the plan of God not so clearly and specifically set forth in the Scriptures. But for those whom we recognize as being doctrinally astray from the foundation principles of Christ, the Apostle intimates that very drastic measures are appropriate;—not persecutions, nor railing; not bitter and acrimonious disputes; not hatred, either open or secret; but a proper showing of our disfellowship with the false doctrines held and taught by them; a proper protection, so that our influence shall not be in any manner or degree used to uphold his denial of the fundamentals of the Gospel. This drastic course is outlined by the Apostle in these words: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine [confessing Christ to have come into the world, in the flesh, to redeem our race, etc.] receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds."—2 John 10, 11.

But, as our text intimates, we are to use discretion, judgment,—and of some have compassion, making a difference." Some we may recognize as being merely entrapped of the Adversary, either in sin or in false doctrine, as the case may be, and not wilfully, intelligently, of their own volition. Toward such, still maintaining an attitude of firmness,

we are nevertheless to express freely our trust that they are only temporarily wrong; and to seek to restore them, either doctrinally or in respect to their perverse moral course, to the position of fellowship with the Lord and with all the brethren who are in fellowship with him. Others we are to "save with fear, pulling them out of the fire." We may be obliged to speak very plainly to them; we may be obliged to tear open and expose before their eyes the sores of their own immoral course, showing them, as the case may be, the grossness of the sin or the grossness of the error in which they are involved; and doing so perhaps in strong language, if we realize that nothing short of this has availed to arouse them from their lethargy. In pulling them out of sin we are "pulling them out of the fire"—out of the Second Death—as the Apostle James says, speaking of this same class: "Let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death"—a brother who is a sinner, a brother, he explains, who has "erred from the truth."—James 5:19, 20.

Finally, we remark that the dealing of the brethren with the disorderly is not to be in the nature of a *punishment*; for it is not with us to punish. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Our warnings or reproofs or withdrawals of fellowship, are to be merely in the nature of correctives, with a view, as the Apostle says, to the restoring of such an one. "Ye that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted";—if not in the same manner, possibly in some other manner, in which you are weaker.—Gal. 6:1.

As to what would be a sufficiency of *evidence* of repentance and reformation, each will require great wisdom and grace to determine. The heart in which brotherly love dwells richly, the heart which loves righteousness and hates iniquity, the heart which realizes its own imperfections, and that it is acceptable only through the Beloved and the New Covenant—that heart will rejoice at the first evidences of contrition and repentance on the part of the disorderly brother. If very full of love, his heart may go out to him almost too quickly; he may need to restrain himself; especially if it be a second or a third offense of the kind, or the circumstances otherwise very grievous. It will be apparently his duty to look for works in harmony with the repentance, and to wait to see some demonstration, in the nature of restitution for wrong done, or such an open and radical change of conduct as will give evidence that the heart has returned to its loyalty to God, to the truth, and to righteousness.

The erring brother, truly repentant, will not be averse to giving such evidences, nor consider it unreasonable that his professed reformation shall be thus attested. Indeed, we may expect that such will feel so humbled in respect to his attitude, and the disgrace which he may have brought upon the cause, that he will feel disposed of himself, either to remain absent for a while from the company of the brethren, in penitence, or, if acceptable to their company, he will feel disposed to take a back seat—a very humble position amongst the brethren. And if the repentant offender had occupied the position of a leader in the company, humility on his part, no less than discretion on the part of the brethren, would seem to indicate that he should not be restored to any official or leading position in the congregation for a considerable time,—until ample evidence had been given of the sincerity of his reformation.

But we close as we began, by urging that facts, evil deeds or evil doctrines, and not evil surmisings, knowledge, and not rumors, are the bases of Scriptural disfellowship. Hence the necessity for the observance of the Lord's rule. (Matt. 18:15.) While we are not to close our eyes to wrong in a brother, love will refuse to keep picking to find fault where none is openly apparent. And if fault is apparently discovered it is not to be "*discussed* among the brethren," but as the Lord directs should be taken direct to the offender by the discoverer and not so much as mentioned to others unless offender refuse to hear;—refuses to correct the fault. Oh, how much trouble would be saved, how many mistakes and heart-aches avoided if this rule were strictly followed!

JANUARY 13

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous—1 John 2:1.

If we find that through lack of faith or weakness of the flesh a wrong step has been taken, contrary to the Lord's will and our best spiritual interests, no time should be lost in retracing the steps and in calling upon the Lord. We have an altar consecrated with the precious blood of Christ, far superior in every way to that which Abraham consecrated with the blood of typical animals; and the Apostle exhorts us, "Let us therefore come boldly [courageously, full of faith] unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16)—Z '01, 233 (R 2847).

It is not right for the child of God to sin; but if he does, on repentance he can depend on the efficient advocacy of Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. As a skillful lawyer says every good thing in favor of his client, and puts the evil in the best possible light, so Jesus our Advocate covers over all our blemishes with His merit, and being in favor with the Court of Heaven, successfully advocates the cause of us, His clients—P '26, 189, 190.

Parallel passages: John 16:7; Rom. 3:20-26; 4:24, 25; 8:34; 10:4; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:18; Phil. 3:9; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 1:7; 2:2; 4:10.

Hymns: 190, 15, 168, 178, 187, 290, 207.

Poems of Dawn, 155: *My Companion*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 201 (R 5491).

Questions: What experiences of the week have sent me to the Advocate? What was the effect?

MY COMPANION

WITH me there walks a presence
Unseen to mortal view;
Hearing each word I utter,
Looking at all I do.
Watching to see what power
The Truth to my life imparts,
Longing to see His image
Growing within my heart.
Oh! does my conduct please Him?
Can He my words approve?
Or do I daily grieve Him
By woeful lack of love?
How all my heart is yearning
More like my Lord to be;

Oh! Friend, of unseen presence,
Help me to grow like Thee!

Before me goes my Captain;
Close must I follow on.
Even as He proved a victor,
So must I overcome.
Self rises up against me,
Fierce must the conflict be;
Forces of evil try me,
Satan opposes me.

My Captain commands me, saying,
"Comrade, you must not yield;
Gird on the Heavenly armor;
The Sword of the Spirit wield;
None but the overcomer
Shareth My Heavenly home!"
Help me, oh, Mighty Captain,
Ever to overcome!

Beside me stands the Master;
Points to the ripening grains,
Bids me thrust in the sickle,
Reaping what yet remains.
He will accept no idler,
I must work faithfully;
I must pass on to others
Truth that was given me;
Tell of the Heavenly Kingdom,
The blessings that are for all;
Praising the Heavenly Father,
Sounding the Heavenly call.
As each night comes upon me,
Can I rejoicing say,
"Dear Reaper, I've been faithful
To all I have met today?"

Close by me stands my Helper,
Knowing I must be tried;
Even as gold in a furnace,
I must be purified.
Trials alone bring patience,
Hate must be met by love;
Faith is wrought out in darkness
Reaching to things above.
Ah! Could I only trust Him,

His presence and power to aid,
Even 'mid deepest shadows
I would not be afraid.
Though the four winds be loosened,
And tempests around me roared,
I'd welcome the glorious privilege
Of dying with my dear Lord.

R5491: "HE THAT IS BEGOTTEN OF GOD DOES NOT PRACTISE SIN"

"My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous."—1 John 2:1.

ACCORDING to history the Apostle John at the time of writing this Epistle was quite an aged man. He was the last of the Apostles to die, according to tradition. In his ripe age he had naturally a tender, fatherly feeling toward all the Church; he had become very mellow in character through his experiences. According to the original, our text would more properly read: "My darlings, these things write I unto you." The translators have taken the liberty of saying "little children" instead. A little child is always considered a darling.

St. John was especially spoken of as "the disciple whom Jesus loved"; this is the Apostle's own testimony. He seemed to be of a peculiarly loving disposition, combined with great force of character. And now as his pilgrimage neared its close, his heart went out in loving solicitude toward God's "little children." He had, in the chapter preceding our text, been pointing out that sin is a trait or quality of perversity which affects all. The Apostle declared that if any man say that he has no sin, he deceives himself—he is a liar, and makes God a liar. We are all sinners, as facts and Scripture testify. St. John thus impresses upon us that if we say we have no sin, we are displeasing to God, who is pleased to have us acknowledge our sins and apply for cleansing, seeking to put away sin so far as possible.

The Apostle says: "These things I write unto you that ye sin not." He does not say: Yes, we are all sinners—we cannot help it—and must continue in sin. No! But he says: Realizing that you commit trespasses which are contrary to the desire of your heart, remember that there is a place to go, a Mercy Seat, where you may confess your sins and obtain forgiveness. Remember that "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." Remember that He gave Himself a Ransom-price for all, and that the merit of this price was applied by imputation on our behalf. Remember that all the sins of the flesh are forgivable through faith in His blood. Bear this in mind, too, that He knows that with our imperfect flesh we cannot as New Creatures do perfectly, and it is because of this that God has constituted Him our Advocate and Head over all things.

OUR HIGH PRIEST GRANTS ABSOLUTION

Our Father knows that we all come short on account of the weaknesses of the flesh. Jesus laid down His life to absolve us from sin and to restore us to the Father, and He has appeared in the presence of God as the Advocate for all those who, during this Gospel Age, turn away from sin and consecrate their lives to His service. Thus we see that the righteousness of Christ, through the great offering for sin which He made (His own body of flesh), is the basis for the forgiveness of our sins. And the blessing and privilege of going to the Throne of Grace for mercy and pardon for daily shortcomings is ours because we are the children of God, because we have come into the relationship of sons. We have a standing with the Father through the imputed merit of Jesus. Jesus does not advocate for others than the people of God. It is not the Father's purpose that He shall advocate for the world; God's dealing with the world will be quite different.

The One who is now our Advocate will soon take the Church class to Himself. As the great Priest after the Order of Melchizedek, He will then reign over the world for a thousand years—not as Advocate, but as Mediator between God and fallen man. He will do a work of restitution for the world during this reign of a thousand years, and will bring up to perfection all who will avail themselves of the privileges and blessings granted during that period. At the close of the Millennium, when mankind are perfected, Messiah will turn them over to the Father: they will not need a Mediator after they have become perfect. So we see the difference between the Advocacy of Christ for the Church and His future work as Mediator for the world of mankind.

SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS HARMONIZED

The Apostle John in this same Epistle says: "He that is begotten of God sinneth not." How can this be true? Is the Apostle contradicting himself? Does he here say that "he that is begotten of God *sinneth not*," and does he say in our text that there is danger of our sinning? And again, that we would be lying if we denied that we have sin? What does he *mean* by the statement, "He that is begotten of God sinneth not"?

We reply that that which is begotten of God is the New Creature—the holy will, the new soul. But this New Creature has only the mortal body in which to operate; God promises to give a new body to the New Creature in the resurrection. In the meantime, however, he is required to live under the present imperfections of the human body, and by his good fight against the weaknesses and sins which are entrenched in his flesh he will show either his loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness or his disloyalty. If he be overtaken in a fault, either through ignorance or through temptation which he cannot control, it will not be sin on the part of the New Creature, but an infirmity of the flesh. Nevertheless, he must go to God for forgiveness for these trespasses.

But the New Creature sinneth not—he "does not practise sin"—as the *Emphatic Diaglott* translates this passage. He who *loves* sin will *sin*; he who does not love sin will not sin *wilfully*. He might be entrapped through his weak flesh, or fall into a snare of the Adversary, but this would be unintentional on his part. And Jesus, our Advocate, will intercede for such sins, but not for deliberate sin. Jesus did not die for wilful sins of the New Creature, but for sins due to the fall—Adamic sin. So if any sin wilfully as a New

Creature, he perishes thereby. Our first life was in Adam; our first death was the Adamic death. When we accepted Christ and the New Creature was begotten, our second life was begun. Now if such a one should be guilty of wilful sin, he would no longer have any standing whatever before God; he would again come under the sentence of death—the Second Death.

SLACKNESS IN THE NEW CREATURE

We might remark here, incidentally, that sometimes there is a kind of mixed condition; the New Creature has been slack in guarding against temptation, and has yielded with some degree of culpability. To the extent that the New Creature has been derelict, negligent, the face of the Lord will be darkened to him. If the flesh start to do wrong, the new will is not to consent to, or allow the wrong. The New Creature is to mortify, put to death, the flesh. To whatever extent he is slack in this matter, to that extent it is sin. A full sin would be a *full* consent of the new will, a full turning away from God.

But the flesh might have certain desires and temptations, and there might occur a partially wilful sin. In such a case stripes would be administered in proportion to the wilfulness. Such an individual might get into a place where he would be spiritually sick, so that the Lord would entirely shut him off from the light of His countenance. The Apostle James points out that the only proper action then would be for the individual to apply to the Elders of the Church, the seniors of the Church, the spiritually minded ones, that they go with him to the Throne of Grace in order that he might obtain mercy and be reinstated.

Seniors, spiritually minded ones not Elders, might do this service for the one who is sick, but preferably it should be the chosen Elders of the Congregation. This course would be a very humiliating one for the sin-sick brother, but such action might save that soul from death by a proper humbling of *self* "under the mighty hand of God." Thus such a one might be recovered and become again a true child of God.

CHRISTIAN, WALK CAREFULLY!

If we realize that through lack of proper watchfulness, or through some infirmity of the flesh, we have taken a wrong step, contrary to the Lord's will and to our interests as New Creatures in Christ, let us lose no time in retracing the step and in calling upon the Father for forgiveness. "We have an altar whereof they have no right to partake who serve the [typical] tabernacle"; an altar not sanctified by the blood of bulls and goats, but by the precious blood of Christ; and we are urged to "come boldly [with holy courage and confident faith] to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 13:10; 4:16.) How blessed this Throne of Grace, this Mercy Seat, provided by our Father's love! How undone we should be without it! Yet, beloved, let us walk with great carefulness—let us never presume upon the mercy of our God by being careless of our steps. Let us, instead, with earnest prayer and watchfulness, "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," while our Father "worketh in us both to will and to do His good pleasure."—Philippians 2:12, 13.

"Christian, walk carefully! oft wilt thou fall,
If thou forget on thy Savior to call.
Safe shalt thou walk through each trial and snare,
If thou art clad in the armor of prayer!"

JANUARY 14

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air—1 Cor. 9:26.

It will be found a great help to the weaknesses of the fallen nature to have understandingly made a full consecration of the will, a full enlistment of every power and talent of mind and of body. He who takes this proper view of his consecration to the Lord and enlistment in the Lord's army, realizes that he has nothing more to give to the Lord, and hence, whatever struggle of the will he may have is all ended when he has finally decided: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." How important it is, therefore, that all the soldiers realize that the term of the enlistment is until death, and that there is no room for even considering any suggestion to withdraw from the battle and cease even for an hour to fight the good fight of faith—Z '03, 421 (R 3272).

In order successfully to prosecute the Christian life, knowledge of the things to be done and the constant appreciation and keeping of the end in view, are indispensable. As nonsensical as it would be for people to expect a reward for a race whose conditions and course they did not know or follow, so nonsensical would it be for people to expect to receive the Kingdom reward promised with Christ, if they do not know and observe the conditions under which, and the purpose for which it is offered, as well as the course to run—P '31, 191.

Parallel passages: 2 Chron. 20:15, 17; Psa. 19:5; Eccles. 9:11; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Gal. 5:7; Phil. 2:16; 3:14, 15; Heb. 6:20; 12:1, 2; Eph. 6:11, 17; 1 Cor. 16:13; 2 Tim. 2:3, 4; 4:7; Heb. 12:10; 10:32; 11:34; 1 Tim. 6:12.

Hymns: 20, 13, 78, 154, 145, 266, 273.
Poems of Dawn, 154: *Nearing the Goal*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 136 (R 4809).

Questions: Have I this week been definite and purposeful in my Christian race and warfare? Why? How? In what circumstances? With what results?

NEARING THE GOAL

WITH eyes aflame, with panting breath, they come,—
The runners,—every nerve and muscle tense,—
Urged forward by a thousand deafening cries,
On, on, they rush, when one, close to the goal,
For but one moment glances back in pride
To note how far he hath outrun the rest.
Alas! tripped by a pebble on the course,
He stumbles, falls, arises, but too late,—
Another sweeps ahead with blood-flecked lips

And bursting heart! One final, awful strain,
With superhuman effort, grand, supreme,
He leaps into the air,—and falls in death
Across the line,—a *victor*, but at what
A fearful cost!—*he gave his life, his all!*

I ponder o'er this tragedy of days
When Greece was mistress of the world, and say,
"Hast not thou also entered on a race,
My soul, in contest for a 'Crown of Life,'
A prize thou canst not win except thine *all*
Thou givest! Then, be wise, and *watch and pray*,
Turn not thine eyes one instant from '*the mark*.'
For fear thou dash thy foot against some small,
Well-rounded truth, which in thy pride thou hast
O'erlooked, and thus thou stumble, fall, and though
Thou shouldst arise, 'twould be *too late to win!*"

"Ah, then, consider thy 'forerunner,' Christ,
Yea, call to mind the 'cloud of witnesses'
Around,—those noble, faithful ones of old,—
And strip thyself, my soul, of every weight;
Gird up thy loins, make straight paths for thy feet;
Breathe deeply of the Spirit's conquering power,
And run with patient, meek, enduring zeal!
Almost thou hast attained, my soul, my soul!
Shall angels, principalities, or powers,
Or height, or depth, or *other creature*, draw
Thee from the goal so near? Ah! Yes, *so near*,
The glory-light streams through the parting veil;
Have faith, press on, one effort, grand, supreme,—
And thou hast won in death Love's blood-bought crown!"

R4809: KEEPING THE BODY UNDER

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air."—I Cor. 9:26.

THE Apostle Paul had definite knowledge as to what constitutes the prize. He was not uncertain about it; it was not a question with him as to its being one thing or another. St. Paul knew that the "high calling in Christ Jesus" is that we may be heirs with him, if we suffer with him—that we shall be with him in glory. Neither was the Apostle uncertain as to the terms and conditions of the race. He knew that they were even unto *death*; and that if he should seek to save his life he would lose it. Neither was he uncertain as to his own determination. He knew positively that he had entered the course. He was not of those

who merely say, "I hope to do so some time." He had made with the Lord his covenant of sacrifice unto death.

Nor was the Apostle uncertain as to his opportunity to gain the prize. He knew that it remained with *him* to will and to do in harmony with God's good pleasure. He knew that nothing impossible was required of him in this race; that the terms and conditions of the race include "grace to help in every time of need"; and that this grace and help would come from the Lord. Hence, the Apostle's expression that, for the runners in this race-course, there was no uncertainty, from first to last.

Thus it may be with all under the guiding eye of the Great Redeemer. We may each make our calling and election sure: "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 1:10, 11.

"I KEEP MY BODY UNDER AND BRING IT INTO SUBJECTION"

The Apostle tells us that he *kept his body under*, lest, having preached the good tidings to others, he himself, should be a castaway. "I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection, ... lest I myself should be a castaway," he declares. (I Cor. 9:27.) One translation has this, "I brow-beat my body"; that is to say, I use coercive measures upon my body.

The body originally belonged to the natural man, the natural will. When the old will gave place to the new will, the latter became the owner of the body. The new will cannot properly be served by the old body, because the new mind is perfect and the body imperfect. When the new mind, the mind of God, the mind of Christ, therefore, takes into possession the mortal body, it has more or less difficulty. The mind is not suited to the body, nor the body to the mind. It is the work, therefore, of the new will to show its obedience to the Lord, its full loyalty to the Divine will, even though the body should be, in some respects, treated shamefully, its claim, its supposed necessities, etc., being ignored.

Not only are we all thus to mortify and brow-beat the body, but, additionally, we are to bring it into subjection. We are to make it serve the New Creature. The Apostle says, "But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit." (Rom. 8:11.) The holy Spirit, which comes to us more and more as we feed upon the Lord, assists us to conform our lives to his will, and also quickens or makes alive our mortal bodies to the service of the Truth.

There are not two creatures, but one; we cannot be two creatures at once. It is not until the old creature submits and we are transformed, so far as the will is concerned, that we become New Creatures, so that, henceforth, we really are New Creatures. But the New Creature has not its new body as yet. In our text the Apostle evidently refers to the New

Creature, the New Man. There is an outward man, which the world may think is the individual, but in proportion as the outward man is brought into subjection and service, the New Creature is growing stronger, until eventually, with the death of the human body, God will give the New Creature a new body, in the resurrection. Then the new Creature will be satisfied, when it shall be found in his likeness.

There is a tendency for the body, the flesh, to arise from its condition of reckoned deadness. Hence the New Creature needs to be continually on guard in the good fight of faith. These battlings of the new mind against the flesh are a "good fight," in the sense that they are fightings against sins and weaknesses that belong to the fallen nature. The entire course of the New Creature is the course of faith. It would be impossible for one to keep up this battle against the flesh and its propensities and desires, unless he exercise faith in the promises and in the Lord as his Helper.

THE APOSTLE HAD NO THOUGHT OF HIS COMING SHORT

There is another passage in which St. Paul says that we should "fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of *you* should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1.) He had no thought of coming short of it *himself*, but he urged those to whom he was writing to make their "calling and election sure."

It will be a great help to the overcoming of the weaknesses of the fallen nature to have rightly made a full consecration of the will, a full enlistment of every power and talent of mind and body to the service of the Lord. He who takes this proper view of his consecration to the Lord and of his enlistment in the Lord's army, realizes that he has nothing more to give to the Lord. Hence, whatever struggle of the will he may have had, is all ended when he has finally decided to give himself to the Lord. How important it is, therefore, to realize that the service is until *death*, and that there is no room even to consider any suggestion to withdraw and cease to fight the good fight of faith!

We are to remember that it is *not the flesh*, the old creature, which has entered the School of Christ, and is under instruction and preparation for the Kingdom, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." (I Cor. 15:50.) Our acceptance of the Divine call to the spirit nature means, not only the renunciation of the earthly nature *in every sense of the word*, but also our begetting as New Creatures, "sons of God." The New Creature, the new mind, the new will, is in the School of Christ, to be perfected, to be brought into full accord with the Divine will, to become a copy or likeness of the Lord. We shall never succeed in bringing our *flesh* into absolute harmony with the Divine Law, because of its imperfections, inherited and otherwise. Hence, the necessity that it be covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness. He who looks for perfection of his flesh, and who rests his faith therein, must of necessity have a poor hope of ever attaining to the likeness of Christ—of ever becoming one of the predestinated class—of becoming "the image of his Son."—Rom. 8:29.

**"WE DO THOSE THINGS WHICH WE OUGHT NOT AND
LEAVE UNDONE WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO"**

In joining the Lord in faith and consecration we are proclaiming ourselves, *not* as graduates and heirs, but as *students*, disciples, who *desire to be prepared to inherit* "the things which God has prepared for them that love him." (I Cor. 2:9.) If this thought be kept in mind as the Divine teaching on the subject, it will tend to prevent our discouragement with ourselves when we find that, unavoidably, we do those things which we ought not to do, and leave undone those things which we ought to do; for in our flesh dwells no perfection.—Rom. 7:15, 18, 19, 25.

It is unnecessary for us to point out that the new mind, in proportion as it develops in likeness to the mind of Christ, will relax no efforts to keep the body under, with the motions of sin—to keep the will of the flesh dead. Surely no spirit-begotten son of God could allow sin to *reign* in his mortal body. Should sin to any degree control him, it will not be willingly, and hence could be but momentarily—until the new mind, the New Creature, seeing the uprising of the flesh, would conquer it, obtaining the promised grace and help in every time of need, from the heavenly storehouse of grace—Christ.

This thought, rightly entertained, will help true disciples to appreciate their own position, and not to be utterly cast down if overtaken in a fault of the flesh, so long as they realize that their *hearts* are not in sympathy with the sin and unrighteousness, but, on the contrary, in full sympathy with the principles and instructions of our Teacher, and longing to be cleansed and acceptable in his sight. Moreover, this thought will also help all such to exercise fervency of love amongst themselves, toward the brethren who similarly are *disciples, pupils in this School*—New Creatures, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit of their mind. If, therefore, each should see blemishes in the flesh of the brethren, disapproved and striven against, he should remember that the evil which he sees is his brother's enemy, and not the brother himself, the New Creature—if so be that he gives us the assurance that his heart, his will, is in harmony with the Lord and his law of Love; and that he is daily seeking to fight a successful warfare against the weaknesses of the flesh.

"A MAN IS TEMPTED WHEN HE IS LED AWAY OF HIS OWN DESIRES"

When studying this subject we must keep two facts in mind: (1), The Scriptures ascribe *no sin* to the New Creature, and (2), *no perfection in righteousness* to our fallen flesh. The New Creature (whose flesh is reckoned dead), which is represented by the new mind, and which is begotten of God, CANNOT SIN; for in its very essence, as the seed or germ implanted by the Truth—"the *spirit* of the Truth"—it is opposed to sin. This New Creature is so fully in accord with righteousness, so fully imbued with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, that it delights in holiness and not in sin; and this must be the case so long as this begotten or Holy-Spirit-condition continues. "He that is begotten of God sinneth not [willingly—neither approves of sin nor takes pleasure in it]; because his seed remaineth in him" [the holy seed of the Truth, the spirit of Truth with which he was begotten]; "and that Wicked One toucheth him not."—I John 3:9; 5:18.

We are not to suppose that every trial or difficulty which besets us is of the Devil; but rather to remember the Apostle's words, "A man is tempted when he is led away of his own desires and enticed." (James 1:13, 14.) Such temptations, then, are of the flesh, and the result of our being members of the fallen race, whose weaknesses and imperfections have been aggravated and intensified for now six thousand years. So, then, we are to recognize as among our chief foes our own inherent weaknesses and predisposition to things selfish, depraved, sinful.

The whole world, thus depraved and under the control of the spirit of selfishness, are largely, though unconsciously, the tools of Satan, "who worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2.) To the children of God the world has become an enemy and a tempter by reason of the fact that we [the Church] have been "begotten again" to *new* hopes, *new* ambitions, *new* aspirations, *new* desires, which are along radically different lines from anything the world knows or has sympathy with.

"THE FLESH DESIRES CONTRARY TO THE SPIRIT, AND THE SPIRIT CONTRARY TO THE FLESH"

Our begetting is of the Holy Spirit, and its tendencies are heavenly and spiritual, in harmony with righteousness and love. Yet it is only our *hearts* that are thus changed—our *flesh* is much more in harmony with the *world* than with the new order of things *established in our hearts and wills* by grace and truth, through Christ. Consequently, when the world, through the words or writings or general spirit of any of its children, comes into contact with the Lord's people, immediately they—the Lord's people—find that, although their hearts are loyal to the Lord and loyal to all the gracious things which he has promised them, and to the spirit of righteousness, love and truth, yet nevertheless, their flesh has an affinity for and an attraction toward the world, its views, its arrangements, its pleasures, etc.

For this reason the Christian is called upon to reckon himself *dead*, not only to sin, but to his own natural desires, appetites, inclinations, and also to the world, which is in harmony with sin and has perverted tastes and appetites. As the Apostle intimates, there is a constant battle between the New Creature, the new will, and the old creature, the fleshly and depraved disposition. He says, "The flesh desires *contrary* to the spirit, and the spirit *contrary* to the flesh." (Gal. 5:17.) And even though the advanced Christian has reached the place where he is enabled to reckon his flesh and will completely dead and buried, nevertheless, he has need continually to re-examine himself lest the flesh should become alive again. This was the Apostle's method. He says, "I keep my body under [dead, buried] and bring it into subjection [to the new mind]; lest having preached to others I myself should be a castaway." (I Cor. 9:27.) This keeping of the body under, this watching it lest it should become alive again, is a constant necessity to those who would be overcomers; for it is the victory of the new mind, the new will, over the old will, the will of the flesh, that constitutes us victors, by developing in us strong, holy character—character like unto that of our glorious Lord and Redeemer.

JANUARY 15

What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?—Micah 6:8.

That these are very reasonable requirements will be conceded by all. That God could not require less from those whom He is educating for the future judging of the world, is evident; and yet, all three of these qualities specified through the Prophet, are comprehended in the one word, Love. Love requires that we shall deal justly with our neighbors, with the brethren, with our families, with ourselves; that we shall seek to cultivate our appreciation of the rights of others—their physical rights, their moral and intellectual rights, their liberties; and that, appreciating these, we shall in no sense of the word abridge or deny them—Z '02, 172 (R 3020).

The sum of the Christian's duty is the fulfillment of the law of love toward God and man. To give every man his due, to exhibit the love of compassion for the weak, the unfortunate and the afflicted and deeply to appreciate the Divine character based upon a knowledge of our weaknesses and limitations in contrast with God's perfection, go a long way toward a proper comporting of oneself toward God and man—P '35, 183.

Parallel passages: Matt. 22:36-40; Deut. 10:12; Psa. 41:1; Mark 11:25, 26; Eph. 4:32; Col. 2:13; Deut. 5:33; Matt. 11:29; John 13:4-17; Phil. 2:5-8; 1 Pet. 5:5, 6; 1 John 1:7.

Hymns: 1, 198, 267, 95, 13, 196, 20.

Poems of Dawn, 93: *Bearing God's Burdens*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 59 (R 5407).

Questions: What have I done with justice, mercy and humility this week? What prompted my actions therein? What resulted therefrom?

BEARING GOD'S BURDENS

I LONG had borne a weary load
Along life's rough and thorny road,
And oftentimes had wondered why
My friend walked burdenless, while I
Was forced to carry day by day
The cross which on my shoulders lay.
When, lo, one day the Master laid
Another cross on me! Dismayed
And faint, and trembling and distressed,
I cried, "Oh, I have longed for rest
These many days. I cannot bear
This other heavy load of care.
I pray Thee, Lord, behold *this one*—
Shall I bear both while he hath none?"

No answer came. The cross was laid
On my poor back, and I was weighed
Down to the earth. And as I went
Toiling along and almost spent,
Again I cried, "Lord, have I been
Untrue to Thee? Is it for sin
That I have done, that I must still
Carry this cross against my will?"
"My child," the Master's voice returned,
"Hast thou not yet the lesson learned?
The burden thou hast borne so long
Hath only made thee grow more strong,
And fitted thee to bear for Me
This other load I lay on thee.
Thy brother is too weak as yet
To have a cross upon him set.
God's burdens rest upon the strong—
They stronger grow who bear them long,
And each new burden is a sign
That greater power to bear is thine."
So now no longer I repine,
Because a heavy cross is mine,
But struggle onward with the prayer,
Make me more worthy, Lord, to bear!

R5407: WHAT DOTTH JEHOVAH REQUIRE?

"What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah 6:8.

JESUS sought to impress upon His hearers that it was not sufficient for them to hear that a Kingdom of God was coming, and that it would bring certain blessings to the world. It was not sufficient that they should know that a Kingdom class was being called out of the world to be Messiah's joint-heirs in that Kingdom. Action would be necessary on their part if they would attain to this high privilege which God had granted to them. "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works," wrote St. James. Not that we are to attain the Kingdom by our works; for, imperfect through the fall, we are unable to do perfect works, acceptable to God. It will be our faith in God and in the Lord Jesus that will bring us the victory, if we gain it; but the victory will be accounted only to those who shall, to the best of their ability, work out their salvation with fear and trembling. God will work in such, and through Christ bring them off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors.

Jesus gave an illustration, or parable, declaring that those who heard His Message and rendered obedience thereto would be like a wise man, who built his house upon the rock,

where the descending rains would not wash away the foundation from underneath, nor in any wise harm it. The storms of life are sure to come; and the great crisis of life, death, is sure to come. Amidst those trials there will be calmness, confidence and security for such as have accepted the Lord's arrangement and have been walking to the best of their ability in the footsteps of Jesus. To them death will be merely a transition from the earthly state to the Heavenly, by the power of the First Resurrection—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 15:50-52.) Their faith and confidence, built upon God's promises, can never fail them. For such there is laid up a crown of life, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give them at that Day.—2 Timothy 4:8.

On the other hand, Jesus intimates that many who heard His words and expressed great appreciation of them, would fail to take the proper steps to attain the glorious Kingdom privileges which He presented. They would allow custom, habit, love of pleasure, love of ease, the spirit of the world, to hinder them, either from making the proper, full devotion of themselves to God, or from carrying out that purpose. Such indeed might to some extent encourage themselves with hopes of the Kingdom which would never be realized, because they never took the proper steps. They did not build their faith upon the proper foundation. Perhaps some of them built upon the Law, and thought that they could commend themselves to God by their own endeavors, without the imputation of the merit of Christ. Such would be greatly mistaken. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which God has laid—Jesus Christ." His death is our redemption-price, and His appearance in glory as our Advocate is to make good for our unintentional shortcomings.

With all such, the day of stress and trial will surely come; and their faith structure, being without a proper foundation, will give way. They will suffer the loss of all their hopes. This, however, does not signify, as many of us once supposed, that they will go to eternal torment. Evidently nearly all Christian people, misled by the creeds of the Dark Ages, read into the Word of God many things which it does not at all contain.

COMPARE ST. PAUL'S PARABLE

The Apostle Paul used a similar illustration, saying, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid—Jesus Christ." "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon"; for the Day that cometh shall try every man's work of what sort it is. Those building with the gold, silver and precious stones of Divine Truth, developing their faith and character in harmony with the Divine requirements and arrangements, will suffer no loss in the great trial day at the end of this Age. But others who build with the wood, hay and stubble of human tradition and self-complacency, will find that their entire faith structure will be consumed; for the fire of that Day shall try every man's work of what sort it is.—1 Corinthians 3:10-15.

Nevertheless, the Apostle tells us that even those who will suffer the loss of their faith structure, if they have built upon Christ, will themselves be saved, though so as by fire. They will be what is sometimes termed a tribulation class, described in Revelation 7:14-

17: "These are they that have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and serve Him in His Temple day and night." On these, God has various blessings to bestow. These will be in proportion to their obedience and loyalty and faith.

The class that the Apostle mentions as building with gold, silver and precious stones, will be a Little Flock, a Royal Priesthood, who will sit in the Throne, wearing the crowns, and be joint-heirs with Jesus in the Kingdom. But the class building upon the Rock without proper materials, yet saved so as by fire, will be the Great Company class, the antitype of the Levites, who instead of being in the Throne, will before the Throne serve those in the Throne; instead of wearing crowns, they will be granted palm branches, indicating a victory of an inferior kind. The priestly class will be the antitypical Temple of God; the Levite class, the Great Company, will serve God in and through that Temple class.

Nor is this all of the salvation which God has purposed. These two classes include merely the spirit-begotten ones of this Gospel Age. The Ancient Worthies are to constitute another class of saved ones—saved to an earthly perfection, to be princes in all the earth, glorious representatives of the invisible, spiritual, Heavenly Kingdom class. Then finally will come the blessing of all the families of the earth who shall prove willing and obedient during the thousand years of the Kingdom Reign, and who will be gradually lifted up, up, out of sin and degradation, by resurrection power, back to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed through the precious blood of Jesus. On the other hand, all intelligent, wilful opposers of God and righteousness, after a certain period of opportunity, will be destroyed in the Second Death—whether they belong to the class that is now on trial, a class of spirit-begotten ones, or to the class which will be on trial during the period of Messiah's Reign. "All the wicked will God destroy."

THE PEOPLE WERE ASTONISHED

No wonder the people were astonished at such doctrines as Jesus gave forth, even though they but imperfectly understood these, for none could perfectly understand except through the enlightening influence of the Holy Spirit, which was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:39.) The teachings of Jesus had a positiveness quite different from the various speculations and wonderings of the scribes. So it is always with the Truth. Wherever there is confusion and mysticism, we may be sure there is error and ignorance. Hence the necessity that all who preach Christ should have the anointing, or ordination, to preach, which God alone gives through the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

OUR GOLDEN TEXT

"What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" At first one might be inclined to say, Why, that is different! There is nothing in that text of Scripture to say that in order to be an heir of the Kingdom one must take up his cross, deny himself and follow in the footsteps of Jesus, self-sacrificingly!

This is true; but we should notice that the one is a requirement and the other a privilege. God does not require sacrifice. What He requires is loyalty and obedience, but not sacrifice. Whatever is sacrificial is so much more than the Divine Law requires. Thus in the case of Jesus, the Divine Law could not require Him to do more than to obey it—to love God with all His heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love His neighbor as Himself. But could not all this have been done by Jesus without the laying down of His life at all! Surely! Hence the Scriptures represent that when Jesus presented Himself at Jordan, He consecrated all that He had to do the Father's will, even unto death—not merely to keep the Law. He delighted to do the Father's will, even beyond what the Father demanded in the Law. (Hebrews 10:5-7.) And so must it be with all who would be acceptable footstep followers of Jesus and attain with Him glory, honor and immortality on the Heavenly plane.

The Prophet Micah addressed the Jews, and his message was from the standpoint of the Law. He was encouraging the Jews to do their best to fulfil its requirements. Nevertheless, we know that no Jew ever fulfilled the Law except Jesus, because all except Him were fallen, imperfect. He alone was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners."

During the Millennial Kingdom of Messiah, this same Law of God, given to the Jews through Moses, will be given to the whole world of mankind through Messiah. The requirements will be to do justly, to love kindness, to walk humbly with God. The reason why Messiah's ministration of this Law will be a success, while Moses' ministration of it was a failure, so far as bringing any to perfection was concerned, is that Messiah's Kingdom will be fully prepared and authorized to forgive sinners and to help them up out of their imperfections—back to the image and likeness of God as it was originally represented in Father Adam.

The privilege and right to thus forgive sins and to thus lift the sinner out of degradation belongs to Messiah, by virtue of His sacrifice for sins which He finished on Calvary. The right to life which He there laid down without forfeiting He will be prepared to give to mankind during the Millennium; and only the wilful rejectors will perish in the Second Death.

"O! we long to see Thy glory
Streaming wide o'er all the earth;
Every error, old and hoary,
Flee to realms that gave them birth.

"For this glorious culmination,
Not for long shall Zion wait:
Soon will come her coronation;
Lo, her King is at the gate."

JANUARY 16

Instant in prayer—Rom. 12:12.

What a blessed privilege, dear fellow-disciples of the Lord, is ours, to be instant in prayer, to pray always—to lift up our hearts and minds to God at any time and in any place and to realize thus daily and hourly that the Father and our dear Lord Jesus continually abide with us. And then, when the active duties of the day have been performed under His eye and supervision, or at any time when the soul realizes its necessity, how precious is the privilege of entering into our closets and there, alone with God, unburdening our hearts—Z '95, 215 (R 1864).

Prayer is communion on the part of man with God. God, unlike human beings, is never wearied with believers who come to Him. Therefore such always have access to Him in prayer in Jesus' name. How gratefully, therefore, should we always appreciate and use this privilege! It will uplift us and gain for us blessings otherwise unobtainable. These blessings will be of a twofold kind: those coming from our exercising the prayer spirit (*i.e.*, the reflex effect of prayer) and the answered gifts—P '30, 14.

Parallel passages: Luke 18:1-8; 1 Thes. 5:17; Col. 4:2; Eph. 6:18, 19; Acts 12:5; 2:42; Psa. 27:8; 145:18; Prov. 15:8; Isa. 55:6; Matt. 6:5-15; 7:7, 8; 1 Tim. 2:8; Jas. 5:16; Jude 20.

Hymns: 274, 35, 69, 115, 219, 239, 323.

Poems of Dawn, 30: *To Jesus Always*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 182 (R 5707).

Questions: Was I instant in prayer this week? Why? How? Where?

TO JESUS ALWAYS

I ALWAYS go to Jesus,
When troubled or distressed;
I always find a refuge
When I with Him can rest.
I tell Him all my trials,
I tell Him all my grief;
And while my lips are speaking
He gives my heart relief.

When full of dread forebodings,
And flowing o'er with tears,
He calms away my sorrows,
And hushes all my fears.
He comprehends my weakness,
The peril I am in,

And He supplies the armor
I need to vanquish sin.

When those are cold and faithless,
Who once were fond and true,
With careless hearts forsaking
The old friends for the new,
I turn to Him whose friendship
Knows neither change nor end:
I always find in Jesus
An ever faithful Friend.

I always go to Jesus;
No matter when or where
I seek His gracious presence,
I'm sure to find Him there.
In times of joy or sorrow,
Whate'er my need may be,
I always go to Jesus,
And Jesus comforts me.

R5707: PRAYER—ITS USE AND ABUSE

"And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint." "Pray without ceasing."—Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

IN THE first text under consideration, we see that our Lord used a parable to point out the lessons He designed to give. A parable is a word-picture designed to illustrate some truth, but is not necessarily a statement of facts. On the contrary, it seems very rarely to be a statement of facts, but is merely a suppositionary case. More than this, in a parable the thing *said* is never the thing *meant*, literally. The wheat and the tares of one of Jesus' parables were not literal wheat and tares, but were the children of the Kingdom and the children of the Adversary. So the parable here is of an unjust judge, who had no appreciation of justice. Notwithstanding this, a poor widow came to him again and again importuning for help. To get rid of her he finally gave her the relief desired.

The Lord uses this parable as an illustration of our coming to the Heavenly Father—not that the Heavenly Father is an unjust Judge nor that the Church is a widow, but that the parable is merely an illustration of the reward of importunity in prayer. The woman's persistency in continually coming to the judge illustrated what Jesus wished to emphasize. In concluding the parable, He says that if an unjust judge would grant this poor widow her petition because of her continued asking, what might we expect of our Heavenly Father? When His children cry unto Him day and night, He is sure to hear their prayers. This implies that the prayers are proper ones for the Lord to answer. We cannot think that God would do anything but that which is just and right and proper, and in

harmony with this thought the instruction to the Lord's people is that in coming to the Lord in prayer we should make sure that we ask only for the things pleasing to Him. Therefore Christians who live near to God are the best qualified to offer prayer that would be acceptable and would be answered.

"ABIDE IN ME, AND I IN YOU"

Our Lord Jesus was thoroughly informed regarding proper prayer. We have His own testimony, "I know that thou hearest Me always." He never had a refusal, because he always asked the things in harmony with the Father's will. There must be two conditions met in order that our prayers may be answered. We must first have accepted Jesus as our Savior, and then have made a consecration to God in His appointed way. These steps must both be taken before we can be in Christ at all. When accepted of the Heavenly Father in Christ Jesus, we become New Creatures in Him. It is to the New Creature that all God's promises apply. Whoever has not become a New Creature by being begotten of the Holy Spirit is outside of all these promises—but not outside of hope; for we see that, in God's Plan, there is a broad hope for all the world. But in this "acceptable time," none can offer acceptable prayer except in this special appointed way.

There is but one sheep-fold in the present time. Only those who are in this fold are in God's favor. These have a right to pray. But there is a second consideration, after consecration has been made; namely, Are these *abiding* in Christ or are they going out of harmony with Him? God's Word must *abide* in us—not merely that we should once have read the Bible through, or that we read so many verses or chapters each day—but the Word must *remain* in us, its teachings and principles must be assimilated and incorporated into our lives. Thus we shall be able to see what God's mind is, what is pleasing to Him, what we should ask for and what we should not ask for, under His terms. All who thus abide in Christ, and in whom His Word abides, may ask "what they will." They may ask anything that is guaranteed in God's Word, and this means that they may ask whatsoever they will; for His Word dwells in them richly, and they would not think of asking anything not authorized therein.

BLESSINGS EASILY GAINED NOT APPRECIATED

Our lesson teaches continuity in prayer—not merely that we pray once, and then say, "I have prayed about this matter, and now I will leave it." But the question may arise, "Why *continue* to ask? God knows every need. Why not leave the entire matter with Him?" The Scriptures seem to answer this question by showing us that we need to ask for our own benefit, that we may be ready to appreciate the answer when it comes. If we get things without our realization of our need of them, they would come to us so easily that in our fallen condition they would be unappreciated.

Indeed it is true that the majority of people receive daily many, many blessings that they are never thankful for; they do not appreciate them. God sends the sunshine and the rain, as our Lord Jesus told us, upon the evil and the good; and He intimates that these are great blessings from God. Yet how few people really appreciate the rain as a blessing

from God! How few, when they see the sunshine, appreciate the blessing God is sending to them through the sunshine! Because these blessings are very common, and come without the asking, they are very little appreciated by the majority.

But the Christian, having the eyes of his understanding opened, appreciates more and more all these blessings as from the Lord. Therefore as he comes to realize his needs, and what is promised in the Lord's Word, he knows that he may advantageously go to the Lord in prayer that these needs may be supplied. His heart has come into that receptive attitude where he is ready to receive God's blessings thankfully and profit by them.

What, then, should we ask for as God's children? What do the Scriptures tell us to ask for? In the first place, they tell us *not* to use "vain repetitions." How should we understand this? Our Lord explains that we should not use vain repetitions "as the heathen do," who think that they will be heard on account of the number of times they repeat the prayer. The Chinese, for instance, have praying wheels, by which they can say a hundred prayers a minute. Thus they save time, voice, etc. But such prayers are only vain repetitions. Many professed Christians, we believe, practise vain repetitions; they say many prayers, which we fear often do not come from the heart, but are said over and over from an imaginary sense of duty or obligation.

NOT FOR OLD CREATURE, BUT FOR NEW

The proper heart condition would be one in which we would feel the need of the Lord's blessing and assistance, and would go to Him in a trustful attitude, presenting our petition, and waiting for His time and way to answer. As to the things that we should ask for, the Master points out in one of His discourses that the heathen, the people of the world in general, all not believers, ask for earthly blessings—"What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" So might a child pray for these earthly things in its innocence of mind. But children of God should pray for earthly blessings only to the extent that they would minister to the growth or usefulness of the New Creature.

As the Christian grows in grace and in knowledge he should come to realize more and more that he is a *New Creature*, and that the New Creature is to pray for itself and not for the old creature. The New Creature must take into consideration the needs of the mortal body which is its tabernacle and its servant, but must ask for this body only what will be necessary that the New Creature may properly develop, and may accomplish the work given him to do by the Lord. He may ask nothing merely that the old creature may be gratified; for the old creature is reckoned as dead. He may ask the Lord to supply his real needs according to His unerring Wisdom.

We should pray for strength to overcome the flesh, for wisdom to know how to deal with ourselves, for strength of character and for the development of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. We should pray for spiritual food, for grace and wisdom to keep our garments unspotted from the world and to put on the whole armor of God. We should ask for wisdom as to how to understand the Word of God, and how to appreciate the Spirit of

the Truth. All these things would be proper subjects of prayer, because they are part and parcel of what goes to make up the New Creation.

In these prayers for the higher things, we are not ignoring the body and its needs, though we are not to seek after the things that the Gentiles seek (the name Gentiles including all those who are not in covenant relationship with God). Those who are in this covenant relationship with God should not ask as do those who are not in such relationship. God does not hear the prayers of those who have never come into His family. They have not been instructed to pray. And we are to pray for things different from those for which they would pray. In all the words that Jesus spoke there is no suggestion that His disciples should pray for better shoes or dress or better home or how to pay off the mortgage. Jesus and the Apostles never prayed for such things. What they prayed for is a suggestion of what we should pray for.

We are to distinguish between prayer, petitions to God, and adoration. *Any one* may worship God, may bow down and adore Him. But in the matter of prayer there is a *limitation*. Only certain persons may pray to the Lord with any assurance of being heard. And these are they who have become His people by a definite covenant. Any who have come into such covenant relationship with God have the privilege of prayer. This was true of the Jews under the Law Covenant arrangement; and it is true of us who have made a Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord through Jesus Christ. But even when privileged to pray, we must note the conditions of acceptable prayer. The conditions are that we should pray in harmony with the Divine will and not seek to bend the Divine will to ours. This would lead us to study the Word of God to find out the things which the Lord has promised us, and we should not ask outside of the Divine promises.

BODY CARED FOR AS PROPERTY OF NEW CREATURE

We should appreciate the fact that throughout the Gospel Age the Lord deals with His children as New Creatures in Christ, and that all His promises to us are to the New Creature. The New Creature is interested in the old body, because this body is its property. The body's interests are ours as New Creatures only in so far as these interests are beneficial to us in making our calling and election sure to our Heavenly inheritance, in so far as their consideration will in no wise interfere with our spiritual interests—but no farther. We are not, therefore, to tell the Lord what we prefer, but are to take what He sees best to give; for this will be what is for our best interests. This does not mean that we are not to mention to God our bodily needs. But we are to do so in the way that our Lord indicates to us in His sample prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread," our daily provisions, acknowledging that the daily food comes from Him, whether it is fine or common, bountiful or not. It will all be for the best interests of the New Creature.

The prayer of one who asks only in harmony with the Lord's Word is certain to be answered. Good earthly parents are pleased to give good gifts to their children, gifts that they see are for their children's real interests. But if they see that the child is unappreciative of favors received, they might the next time withdraw the favors until proper appreciation is manifested. And so it is with our Heavenly Father. In bestowing

His best gifts He waits for us to become really hungry for them. He does this that His blessings may do us the more good when they are granted.

PRAYER FOR SPIRIT-BEGETTING UNNECESSARY

In respect to the giving of the Holy Spirit some people have a wrong conception. Many not consecrated pray that the Lord would give them the Holy Spirit; but they have not studied the Scriptures enough. The Lord gives the Holy Spirit without our asking for it specifically, just as with the disciples at Pentecost: they presented themselves before the Lord and waited. They were praying, but they did not know enough about the Holy Spirit to pray for it. But the Lord gave the proper thing at the right time. And so it is with us, irrespective of prayer for the Spirit, provided we meet the required conditions. When we make our consecration to God through Christ, we do not need to *ask* for the begetting of the Holy Spirit—no more than a child in its natural conception. The child does not ask for its own begetting. How could it? But after we have received the spirit-begetting, we should pray that we may have God's sentiment, God's mind, God's will, as our sentiment, our mind, our will.

God loves righteousness and hates iniquity. So we, realizing that we are surrounded by evil and selfishness, need to cultivate the spirit of love, that we may have that spirit which would appreciate and love righteousness. We are to learn gradually to love righteousness and to hate injustice and iniquity in large things and in small. We are to hate unrighteousness so much that we would scorn to do an injustice or an injury knowingly to anybody. The New Creature sees these things but dimly at first—what are just and what are unjust things, what are righteous and what are unrighteous things. We wish to have the Lord's sentiment as our sentiment in everything. Thus by studying the Lord's character as revealed in His Word, and striving day by day to be conformed thereto, we are "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord." And thus we become more and more filled with the Spirit.

EVIDENCES OF POSSESSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

As the child of God develops, the possession of the Holy Spirit is more and more evidenced in his meekness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. These are the elements of character, of disposition, that God wishes us to have. These are to rule in our hearts, in our thoughts, and more and more in our outward lives. Anger, malice, hatred, strife, evil-speaking, envy, jealousy, all these are evidences of the unholy spirit, the spirit of the world and the Adversary, which we as children of the Heavenly King are to put away. They are the works of the flesh and the Devil.

Since all of us have a measure of the unholy spirit in our flesh, some more and some less, it is right to pray daily for a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, more and more of the spirit of harmony with His perfect will. But we must *cooperate* with these prayers; for the Lord never arbitrarily fills any heart with His Spirit, even after the begetting has taken place. By coming to the Lord in sincere prayer for these blessings continually, by asking along these lines, we shall be preparing ourselves to look for the evidences of the

Holy Spirit in our life. We shall be enabled to see whether we have more meekness than we once had, or whether we still lack in meekness. We shall perceive whether we are more gentle and more patient, whether we have more self-control, and in what respects we especially need to develop more in spiritual fruitage. Undoubtedly all of these qualities are lacking to a greater or less extent; but as we watch and pray, we shall learn to find the answer to our prayers; and as we grow in knowledge, in love, in Christlikeness, we grow in likeness also to our Father in Heaven.

IMPROPER VIEWS OF PRAYER

Prayer, as we have shown, is very essential, absolutely indispensable, to Christian growth, yea, to spiritual existence. Yet we have never thought of praying in the extreme way that some do. We have never thought of telling the Lord all about His Plan and of our wishes as to how He shall govern the Universe, and when and how to bring to pass our own will. We think there is far too much praying along this line. The sooner it is stopped the better. In answer to the request of His disciples, the Master gave them a sample prayer, which was surely very different from the prayers that the majority of people offer, who seemingly do not heed the example at all.

The proper thing is to hearken to the Word of the Lord and not do too much speaking to Him. We are to do a great deal of listening, while He speaks to us. The poet has well expressed this important thought:

"Master, speak! Thy servant heareth,
Waiting for Thy gracious Word,
Longing for Thy voice that cheereth,
Master, let it now be heard!
I am listening, Lord, for Thee!
What hast Thou to say to me?"

We understand that the Bible is the Divine presentation of the Divine will, purpose, plan, concerning us as His children. It is the Truth that the Lord designs shall sanctify us. "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." So declares our Master. He does not say, Sanctify them through prayer! The Master's prescription is that we study the Word and become sanctified thereby. And who is wiser than He? If we have not written a volume on prayer, it is because we find no Scriptural authority or precedent for so doing.

While prayer is absolutely indispensable to the Christian, as we have said, yet it is the Word of God which teaches us God's will and Plan and which points out the way for us to go. We believe it is the failure to see this that has been largely responsible for the great want of faith of many professed children of God. No amount of praying will make up for a neglect of the study of the Lord's Word, which is the only Lamp to our feet given us as our Guide in this long, dark night in which sin has reigned in the world. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."—Psalm 119:105.

We are to "pray without ceasing." We are to do this in the sense of not being discouraged when the good things promised us and asked for do not come quickly. We are to remember that the Word of Promise is sure. We are to rest in these promises and to continue to ask and to wait for their fulfilment—patiently, hopefully. Thus we pray unceasingly, "Thy Kingdom come," not by repeating the words every moment or every hour, but by continuing the thought, the expectation, the waiting for it, and by laboring in the interests of that Kingdom and in the preparation of our characters in order that we may have a share in it. We have known some to fall into difficulty by supposed communion with God—remaining on their knees for some time beside an empty chair on which they tried to imagine the Lord to be seated, etc., etc. We believe that they were in danger of falling into a snare of the Adversary by such unscriptural proceedings.

For our part we feel that the Lord has already granted so many blessings that we would be ashamed to ask for many more. Our own requests, therefore, must be few. The Editor's presentations at the Throne of Heavenly Grace are thank-offerings, praise-offerings, indications of his devotion to the Lord and trust in Him, petitions for wisdom and grace to guide in life's affairs. We recall the Divine promises all the time, and not merely when on our knees. We seek to live in harmony with our prayers, and would encourage others to do the same. However, we are not all constituted alike; and having stated the matter from the Bible viewpoint, as we believe, also as viewed in the SCRIPTURE STUDIES and in other WATCH TOWER articles, we must leave it, trusting that the Lord's providence will guide His people aright.

THE HOLY SPIRIT THE SPECIAL OBJECT OF PRAYER

The reason why the prayers of so many Christians are unanswered is that their prayers are for things God has not told us to pray for or that they were not offered in sincerity. They have asked for wealth or temporal blessings, or perhaps for the conversion of a specified number of souls at their revival meeting, or something else unauthorized, or they have not really desired what they asked for, if it was for spiritual blessing. The Lord *might* grant a request for some temporal thing to a babe in Christ who prayed in his ignorance, not being properly instructed. But it would be different with an advanced Christian. The little child at the table might ask for something improper and violate the rules of etiquette without blame; while a person of mature age, advanced in education and in knowledge of etiquette, should know better. The things for which the Lord's children should especially pray are specified in His Word. The Holy Spirit is the special gift of God to His children.

When we come to know that the Holy Spirit is the influence, the disposition of God, then we know what we are praying for. We want more and more of the Holy Spirit of God, that it may make us more gentle, more kind, more loving; we want more and more of the mind of Christ (mind and Spirit being used here interchangeably). We realize that we must strive to have this mind of Christ. If we day by day cultivate the spirit of the Devil, we cannot expect ever to attain the mind of Christ. If we determinedly cultivate the Spirit, the mind, of Christ, then the spirit of the Adversary can gain no entrance into our hearts; and we shall become more and more sound in mind. We come to know more and

more the perfect will of God as we are filled with His Spirit. Thus we are being prepared for an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom.

PRAY IN FAITH, NOTHING DOUBTING

The Lord in the lesson under consideration, tells us that we must not "faint," the word faint being used in the sense of faint-heartedness—"Consider Jesus, ... lest ye be weary and faint in your minds"; "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." We may ask for more of the Holy Spirit, feeling that we need grace along some particular line. For instance, we may feel that we need more patience. While praying for patience, we should not say, "I shall never be patient; I was not born that way!" But we are to expect our prayer along this line to be *answered*. We are to ask and then wait for the patience, continuing our petition, knowing that the patience will come, if we strive for it in harmony with our prayers. An excellent and practical way to assist in this is to impose a punishment upon ourselves for every outbreak of impatience.

The Lord's people have long been praying, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth." This prayer has been offered for more than eighteen hundred years, and God's children have not yet seen His Kingdom established. Shall we cease to pray? Ah, no! We are assured that it will indeed come. Even now it is at the very doors! God's Kingdom shall be fully set up; and the time will come when there will be no disloyalty in all the earth, as now there is none in Heaven. Our prayers will not bring God's Kingdom one minute sooner than He has planned, but we pray by way of assuring the Lord that we are waiting for the Kingdom and expecting it in harmony with His sure promise. By so praying and not fainting, the children of the Lord are strengthening themselves. God's glorious Kingdom will be manifested—and *soon!* Then all who have attained the character-likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be exalted to reign with Him in this Kingdom.

JANUARY 17

Keep yourselves in the love of God—Jude 21.

We may daily and hourly keep ourselves in the Lord's love by obedience to, and a growing love for the principles of righteousness. And we are to rejoice in every experience of life—its trials, difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, *etc.*, no less than in its pleasures, if by any or all of these means the Lord shall instruct us and give us clearer insight into our own deficiencies, and a still clearer insight into that perfect law of liberty and love which He has established, and to which He requires our full and loyal heart-submission—Z '02, 173 (R 3021).

The love of God, consisting of disinterested love for the Father and the Son with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, of disinterested love for the brethren more than to self and of disinterested love for mankind in general and even for our enemies as self, does not of itself under the present conditions remain in one's heart. Whoever does not preserve it amid the conditions that would otherwise destroy it will surely lose it. If, therefore, we have attained this love, let us seek to maintain it—P '34, 189.

Parallel passages: Deut. 33:3, 12; Psa. 63:3; 146:8; Isa. 38:17; Jer. 31:3; John 3:16; 14:21, 23; 16:27; 17:10, 23, 26; Rom. 5:8; 2 Cor. 13:11; Eph. 2:4; Col. 3:14; 1 John 3:1; 4:8-19; Matt. 5:43-48; 19:19; Josh. 22:5; Psa. 91:14; John 13:14, 15, 34, 35; 15:12-19.

Hymns: 166, 95, 165, 196, 198, 267, 201.

Poems of Dawn, 79: *Love's Alchemy*.

Tower Reading: Z '02, 171 (R 3020).

Questions: Have I this week kept myself in the love of God? How? Why? In what circumstances? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

LOVE'S ALCHEMY

LOVE is the filling from one's own
Another's cup.
Love is a daily laying down
And taking up;
A choosing of the stony path
Through each new day
That other feet may tread with ease
A smoother way.
Love is not blind, but looks abroad
Through other eyes;
And asks not "Must I give?" but "May
I sacrifice?"
Love hides its grief, that other hearts
And lips may sing;

And burdened, walks, that other lives
May, buoyant, wing.
Brother, hast thou a love like this
Within thy soul?
'Twill change thy name to saint when thou
Dost reach thy goal.

R3020: ABIDING IN DIVINE LOVE, CONDITIONAL.

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love."—John 15:10.

SINCE ALL MANKIND are alienated from their Creator through sin and its condemnation, the application of the text by any individual implies that previously he has come to a knowledge of God's grace in Christ, and has accepted his share of the same through faith and has thus had access to the love of God, as one of the sons of God, begotten by the holy spirit. This is an important matter overlooked by very many who think to keep themselves in divine love and under divine protecting care without first complying with the conditions of admission to membership in the Lord's family. There is but one doorway of entrance "into this grace wherein we stand and [as sons of God] rejoice in the hope of the coming glory," and that is the doorway of faith in and acceptance of the atonement, accomplished for us by our Redeemer at the cost of his own sacrifice at Calvary. Anyone attempting to climb into the family of God otherwise "the same is a thief and a robber"—a rejector of the only way and name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.—Rom. 5:1, 2; Acts 4:12.

But our text, like all of the holy Scriptures, is addressed to the Lord's people, who once were "children of wrath even as others," but have come into divine favor through the appointed way; and it calls our attention to something that is necessary to us beyond, after our full conversion or consecration to the Lord. It implies that getting into God's love is by no means the end of the Christian way, but merely the beginning of it: after we are in the way the Lord gives us commandments as his sons, and expects us to manifest the spirit of loyal sonship by obedience;—full obedience so far as the heart or intention is concerned, and as complete obedience as possible so far as the control of the flesh is concerned. Whoever neglects either to learn or to obey the commandments of the Lord, thereby manifests a lack of the true spirit of sonship, and thus condemns himself as unworthy to be longer reckoned or treated as a son of God. Thus seen the commandments of the Lord to those who have consecrated themselves and enter his spirit-begotten family, are tests, proving them either worthy or unworthy of the divine favors and promises assured to the faithful overcomers.

The object of these tests is manifest from the time we come to understand the divine plan of the ages—to comprehend how the Lord is now making selection of a royal priesthood to be joint-heirs with Christ the great King, and to join in the work of succoring, ruling, blessing and uplifting the world of mankind in God's due time, the

world's "day of judgment," the Millennial age. We can readily see that divine law is necessary, in heaven and in earth, in order that God's will may be done—that righteousness, truth and love shall prevail; and it is manifest that whoever is not sufficiently in sympathy with the principles of righteousness expressed in the Lord's commandments, so as to will and to strive to obey them, would not be a fit person to be used of the Lord in enforcing the divine laws during the Millennial age, and assisting mankind in discerning their righteousness and the blessing which will follow their observance.

WHAT ARE THESE COMMANDMENTS?

Properly, we inquire, What are these commandments, the keeping of which is attended with such momentous results, and the neglect of which would mean the loss of our Redeemer's love and favor,—and hence, the loss of all the blessings specially prepared for those who love him? We answer, that our Lord's statement of these commandments briefly comprehends them all in one word, Love. Dividing the matter, we find that it has two parts—love for God and love for our fellows. Without this quality or characteristic, of Love, being so developed in us as to be the controlling influence of our minds, we cannot hope to abide in the Lord's favor. True, he does not expect to gather ripe grapes from the new vineshoot when first it makes its appearance; rather, the great Husbandman (I Cor. 3:9) waits for the gradual development of the fruit, if after the shoot has come forth he sees upon it the bud of promise, which quickly develops, manifesting itself as the flower of the grapes. Nevertheless, manifestations of a coming fruitage of love are expected of the Lord, quickly after our union with him; and any smallness of development of this fruitage would indicate a corresponding lack of love and appreciation on our part, and would mean correspondingly small love for the truth and its principles: hence, the Lord's love for us would be correspondingly less than if more rapid progress were made.

Love would, necessarily mean the according of justice; because the law or requirements of the Lord are based upon justice, "the foundation of his throne." We are to view the commandments of the Lord from this standpoint, therefore, and to see first that our love for God is just,—must recognize that we owe him love, devotion, appreciation, because of what he has done and promises yet to do for us. Justice calls for our loving, reverential obedience to the Lord. It is the same with respect to our love for our fellowmen. Justice, as well as respect for our Heavenly Father's regulations, calls on us to do right to our neighbor,—to do toward him as we would have him do toward us. This is not more than absolute justice, and yet it is the very essence and spirit of the divine law of love. But while justice is the first feature of the commandment of love, it is not the end of its requirements: it requires that going beyond strict justice, our love shall prompt us to the exercise of mercy and forgiveness. And in thus exercising mercy, we are again but copying divine love; for our Heavenly Father not only deals with all his creatures according to justice but going beyond the lines of justice, in great compassion and mercy he provided in Christ Jesus a Redeemer for sinners. True, he did not provide this in violation of his justice; yet so far as we are concerned it is just the same as though, out of love and compassion, he had overridden justice in our assistance. Hence in our dealings

with others, who like ourselves, are fallen and imperfect, we are to remember this feature and not only be just toward them but additionally to be merciful, generous, kind, even to the unthankful,—that thus we may be children of our Father in heaven.

The Lord through the Prophet expresses this thought of how the law of love is divisible and covers all the requirements of Christian character; he says, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8.) That these are very reasonable requirements will be conceded by all; that God could not require less from those whom he is educating for the future judging of the world, is evident: and, yet, all three of these qualities specified through the Prophet, are comprehended in the one word love. Love requires that we shall deal justly with our neighbors, with the brethren, with our families, with ourselves; that we shall seek to cultivate our appreciation of the rights of others,—their physical rights, their moral and intellectual rights, their liberties; and that, appreciating these, we shall in no sense of the word, seek to abridge or deny them.

To "love mercy" is to go even beyond loving justice, and signifies a delight in yielding personal rights and privileges in the interest of others, where no principles are involved. It implies readiness to forgive the faults of others—a disinclination to be too exacting in respect to others, as well as a desire to be very exacting in respect to our treatment of others. The humble walk with God is included, also, in the commandment of love; because, whoever loves his Creator and appreciates his provisions for his creatures, in natural and in spiritual things, will love and appreciate God in return. And having such a proper conception of the greatness of the Almighty and of his own littleness and insufficiency, except by divine grace, he will be disposed indeed, to walk humbly with the Lord—not seeking paths of his own, but, trustingly, seeking to walk in the path which the Lord has marked out—in the footsteps of Jesus.

The same Apostle John who recorded our Lord's words of our text, commented further upon this subject of the love of God and of Christ, saying, "This is the love of God [i.e., proves or demonstrates our love of God], that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." (I John 5:3.) This gives us the suggestion that the Lord not only expects us to keep his commandments of love to him and to the brethren, but that he expects also that in keeping these we should become so filled with an appreciation of the commandments and the principles that underlie them, that we would delight therein; not merely because they are God's commandments, but, additionally, because they are right, good, proper. This thought the Apostle expresses in the words, "And his commandments are not grievous." It is one thing to keep the divine commands or to seek to do so, all the while feeling more or less of restraint, lack of liberty, compulsion, duty, etc.; it is another thing to obey joyfully.

It is not improper to expect something of this spirit at the beginning of our experience as the Lord's people, seeking to keep his commandments; but we should expect, also, that as we grow in grace and grow in knowledge and grow in love, all these feelings of constraint, duty, etc., would disappear; so that, instead, we should delight to do the Lord's will, delight to keep his commandments of love, delight to do justly, to love mercy, to

walk humbly with God,—and that there should be a total absence of the feeling that the Lord's commandments are grievous, burdensome, irksome. This is the higher Christian development, and can only be found where the individual has become truly "a copy of God's dear Son," where the Father's spirit has developed and brought forth the ripe fruits of the spirit in abundant measure—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love.

Recurring to our text, we note that our Lord's words also imply the same thing;—the necessity for obedience to the commandments of love, and to such a growth ultimately as would separate them from any feeling of bondage or grievousness. Our Lord's words, showing this, are in the latter part of the text—"*even as* I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love."

As we look back at the beautiful character of our Lord Jesus and see his love for righteousness, for truth, and his willingness to be obedient to his Father's arrangements—even unto death—we can perceive readily that our dear Master had a love for the principles which lie back of the Father's commandments. He obeyed the Father, not through restraint, not through fear, but from a perfect love. Recognizing the Father's commandments, but not as being grievous, using the language put by the Prophet into his mouth, his sentiment was, "I delight to do thy will, O my God, thy law is in my heart." (Psalm 40:8.) We are to understand the Lord, therefore, to mean, that in order to abide in his love we must reach such a heart condition as this which he had;—a love for the Father's ways, for the principles of righteousness and truth. We may abide in his love at first under other conditions, feeling through our love the restraints of his commandment of love, but as we grow in knowledge, we must grow in grace, and outgrow those sentiments, and grow up into the Lord's spirit and sentiment in this matter; so that obedience to the Lord will be the delight of our hearts, and any failure to do his will would cause a pain, a shadow, an earth-born cloud, to hide us from the Father's smile.

Seeing the depths of our Lord's requirements, many will be inclined to say, Ah, yes, it is true that we must attain to such character-likeness of our Lord, but that transformation and renewing of the mind is not our part of the work but the Lord's: He must do this for us, else it will never be done. Partly right and partly wrong, we answer. It is true that when we consider ourselves, how weak and imperfect we are according to the old nature, according to the flesh, we have good cause for despairing and deciding that we never could accomplish such a great transformation from selfishness to love, in our own strength. It is true, also, that the Lord proposes to work in us—"both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13.) But it is just as true that we have a burden of responsibility in respect to this matter of overcoming. It is the Lord's part to provide the way, the truth, the life,—the means by which we may attain unto the condition to which he has called us; but it is our part to use the means and thus to attain the prize.

The Lord has provided for our justification, our reconciliation to himself, our acceptance to sonship, our anointing with the holy spirit, our instructions with the word of his grace, the word of promise: He works in us, to will and to do, through these exceeding great and precious promises and the glorious prospects and rewards that attach

to them; but the amount that he will work in us and the results that will be worked out through these promises, depend upon us. As it depended upon us whether or not we would come into the grace which he has provided for us, and as we could have kept ourselves out of the love of God by refusing or neglecting the offer of his mercy and love, so we could neglect the word of his promise, neglect the various means of grace which he provides for our strengthening, establishing and upbuilding in the knowledge and grace of the truth. And thus neglecting his provisions we would proportionately fail to abide in his love—fail to obtain the promised favors. The Apostle intimates this, saying:—

"KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD."—JUDE 21.

What, then is the essence of what we have foregoing found to be the divine instruction upon this subject? It is this. (1) Our hearts from the very beginning are to appreciate the imperfections of our own flesh and to look away to the Lord for the needed assistance to abide in his love.

(2) The exceeding great and precious promises must be studied, earnestly, that we may thus have them constitute in us "the power of God" for good—keeping us in the knowledge of the Lord and, through obedience, in his love.

(3) This knowledge will profit us only as we put it in practice and seek to regulate our minds, our thoughts, our words, and so far as possible all our actions of life, according to this standard which God through his Word, established before us as an ideal. We are to remember that if we had all knowledge yet had not love, it would profit us nothing, but we are to remember, also, that in the divine arrangement it seems to be impossible that our knowledge should progress much in advance of our obedience to what we already know.

(4) We are to appreciate every evidence which we find, in ourselves or others, of such growth in obedience to the law of God,—the law of love with its connections of justice and mercy and reverence.

(5) We are not to expect the full results of joy in doing the Father's will in the beginning of our experiences, nor are we to feel discouraged if in the beginning the motive be, to a considerable extent, duty-love instead of a love for principles. We are to seek at the Lord's hand further blessing and further filling of his spirit of love. We are to seek to study and to appreciate the basic principles upon which the Lord governs the universe, and are to seek to bring our hearts into sympathetic accord with that law and principle and spirit of righteousness. We are to remember that much of our lack of appreciation of the principles of righteousness is due to our ignorance; and we are to expect that as we come to know the Lord and to understand his plan better, the eyes of our understanding will open the wider so that it will be possible for us not only "to comprehend with all saints," but to appreciate with all saints, the principles underlying and constituting the divine law of love.

Thus we may daily and hourly keep ourselves in the Lord's love by obedience to, and a growing love for, the principles of righteousness. And we are to rejoice in every experience in life,—its trials, difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, etc., no less than in its pleasures, if by any or all of these means the Lord shall instruct us and give us clearer insight into our own deficiencies, and a still clearer insight into that perfect law of liberty and love which he has established, and to which he requires our full and loyal heart-submission.

JANUARY 18

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord—Rom. 12:11.

Let all who would run the race successfully look well to their zeal and activity in the Lord's work. If we bury our one or many talents under a weight of worldly cares and encumbrances which might be avoided or set aside; if we bury them under worldly ambitions for either self or family—whether this be by wasting consecrated time upon science, philosophy, music, art, business, politics, pleasures, or in pampering pride and appetite—then as unfaithful servants we shall ultimately go into outer darkness—Z '91, 9 (R 1281).

Activity in the affairs of life, particularly in the Lord's service, is indispensable to success. When a zealous spirit burning with enthusiasm is added thereto, the conditions of success are better fulfilled; and when this activity and zeal are given to the Lord under the direction of wisdom, His cause is much benefited; and the one exhibiting these qualities is greatly developed—P '33, 191.

Parallel passages: 1 Chron. 29:17; 2 Chron. 15:15; Ezra 7:23; Psa. 42:1, 2; 119:139; Eccles. 9:10; Isa. 62:6, 7; John 9:4; 1 Cor. 13:3; 14:12; 2 Cor. 4:8-10, 13, 16-18; 9:2; Gal. 4:18; Col. 3:22-24; Titus 2:14; Jude 3; Rev. 3:19.

Hymns: 277, 20, 13, 266, 272, 208, 78.
Poems of Dawn, 280: *The Clock of Life*.
Tower Reading: Z '13, 314 (R 5334).

Questions: Have I been zealous this week? Wherein? With what results?

THE CLOCK OF LIFE

OUR Clock of Life is wound but once,
And no one has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop,
At late or early hour.

Now is the only time you own;
Live, love, toil with a will;
Place no faith in tomorrow, for
Your Clock may then be still.

R5334: FERVENCY OF SPIRIT NECESSARY TO OVERCOMING

"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."—Romans 12:11.

THIS text might very properly be transposed to read: "In serving the Lord, be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit." The primary thought, the central thought, is that the Lord is to be served, and on this account we are to be careful to learn what kind of service is acceptable.

We ask first, Why should the great Creator of all things, the Upholder of all things, need our service? And the Bible answers us that God needs no service whatever, that He is quite competent to carry out His own Plan, but that He is pleased to have the co-operation, the sympathy, of His own servants—not only of the human family, but also of the spiritual family—that God is not making an exhibition of His own power, but that all of His intelligent creatures are permitted to become more or less participants in the one Plan of which He is the Center.

This is particularly true of the earth. God permitted the Adversary to overturn things, and has permitted sin to have its course, in order to illustrate certain great principles that operate in the universe, according to certain laws. Whoever violates the principles of righteousness will have proportionately an unsatisfactory experience, as sin is contaminating and contagious. And so what might appear as God's inability to control sin and its evil influences will ultimately be seen from a different standpoint—illustrating His Justice, Wisdom, Power and Love.

As some great business firm might say, Now we do not need any capital, but we will hold the balance of stock, and allow some to go out amongst the employees, so that each one may be associated in the business—have an interest in the business; just so God makes use of capital, having plenty otherwise Himself. God therefore arranged the Plan just as it is.

In God's Plan, the Logos was to have the first opportunity of becoming man's Savior and of bringing everything earthly to a condition of full perfection. God so arranged the matter that it would require a *death* to redeem mankind. God could have imposed a different penalty. He *could* have put a penalty of ten years of disfavor, or what not, for the first act of disobedience. But *He did not*. He put the penalty of *death*. And then He made the proposition to the great Logos that if He would carry out His Plan of being the Redemption-price for Adam and his race, which would cost Him His life, He would be granted still greater honors.

So the Logos left the glory that He had with the Father and humbled Himself to become a man and to die, even the death of the cross. "Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him." In this way our Lord Jesus was permitted to be a co-laborer with God. He was required to be faithful, zealous in spirit, fervent in spirit. And we read of Him, "The zeal of thine House hath consumed Me." He was to be self-*sacrificing* and not self-*seeking*.

The pictures of these things were given aforetime—before He came into the world. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so should the Son of Man be lifted up, etc. It required a great deal of fervency of spirit to carry our Lord through all the bitter

experiences of His earthly existence. He needed to have a great deal of faith in the Father and a great deal of devotion to the Father. And the fact that He overcame the difficulties shows that He had the faith and the fervency.

WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO STAND?

But our Heavenly Father's Plan is even broader than this. He planned that Jesus should have associates. And so the Apostle declares that God, who foreknew our Lord Jesus as the great Shepherd of the sheep, foreknew us also by Him—with Him. And if we partake of His sufferings in this present time, we shall also share with Him in the glories to follow. This was premeditated in God's Plan from before the foundation of the world.

This feature of the Plan began to operate at Pentecost. Those who had already believed in God as a Savior, and who had tendered their hearts to the Lord, could not be accepted until Jesus ascended up on High and made application of His merit for them—on behalf of all such. The Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost. Immediately they were privileged to begin a service for the Lord—a service that was made necessary in God's arrangement. He could have *done without* this service, but *He did not*—He arranged to have this very service. He purposed that a witness should be given to the world, to gather out a people for His name, and that those who should give the witness should show their faithfulness in the trials and tests that would come to them.

The Father is seeking such to serve Him as serve Him in spirit and in Truth. Therefore He allows the way to be made narrow by the opposition of the Adversary, the flesh and the world, so that none but those who are fervent in spirit will stand the tests. Others will not enter this work, or will fall out by the way. They will say that it is too hard. If you are God's servant they will say all manner of evil about you. They will say that you are a hypocrite, etc. God does not cause the Adversary to do this, but He permits it, not because He is limited in Power and could not cause it to cease, but because He is testing all who would be followers of Jesus. And He wishes to have no others in that Elect company than those who are fervent in spirit. Therefore are there such services and such tests.

THE CAUSE OF OPPOSITION

The great business in life of those who would honor and serve the Lord is to serve the brethren and the Truth. Everything that represents the Truth these soldiers of the cross are to uphold—everything that is right, just, true. They will give their approval to such things and their disapproval to other things. This is what causes the opposition of the flesh and of the world and of the Adversary.

So, then, Christians have become dead to the world and alive toward God. Having thus been received and counted in as a member of Christ, every such one has as his special business the service of the Lord, the brethren and the Truth. And according to his abilities and opportunities is he to engage in this business. And this is to be his mind or disposition—to serve the Lord. And he is to be fervent in spirit, not indifferent, not

lukewarm. As the Lord Jesus was fervent in spirit, even so are we to be. The fervency of His spirit for God and His arrangements consumed His life. So it must be with all those who serve God—those who walk in the Master's footsteps. This must be, necessarily, the chief business in life for these people of God.

HOW TO REDEEM THE TIME

It is necessary for us to engage in some kind of occupation in order to secure a livelihood. God has so arranged in order to prove our faithfulness. Further, as other people are engaged in these same occupations, laboring for the comforts of life, we are compelled to compete with these to some extent. But as we see that we have a nobler business, we shall see to it that all these secular things in life are cut off, as far as possible, in order that we may have the more time for the Lord's service. The old ambition to gain earthly things would lead us to lay up treasures on earth. But the hope set before us in the Gospel leads us rather to lay up treasures in Heaven, "where moth doth not corrupt," etc.

So this class do with as few luxuries in life as possible, in order that they may lay down their time and strength in His service. And the more they do this, the more they become copies of God's dear Son. Thus, if any one is engaged in the carpenter business—the same in which our Lord engaged when He was a youth—he will say, How can I minimize the affairs of life so that I can give more of my time to the Lord and less to earthly matters? And so it will be his endeavor to cut off the desire for earthly luxuries. More and more he will count the affairs of this life as loss and dross in comparison with the glory of the life beyond.

In proportion, therefore, as we imbibe the Truth, in that same proportion will be our desire to be fervent in spirit—in that same proportion we shall be striving to sacrifice, to cut off, to devote to the Lord this time and talent and energy. We do not think that the Lord would wish us to be too particular regarding earthly things and waste valuable time. For instance, we might say, I will keep this house as *unto the Lord*. And we might give too much of our time and attention to different matters about the house. But the Lord is inviting us to choose the better part and not to give too much time and attention to procuring and caring for ornaments and bric-a-brac. Whoever would give too much time to the housework or to other earthly affairs would show that he did not appreciate the privilege of the Lord's service.

When we look about us, we find that all men need so much and the Household of Faith need so much. "What do they need?" They need the *Truth*. "Is the Truth, then, to go now to the world?" Yes, to all who have the hearing ear. There is a satisfaction and a blessing in having the mind properly sustained. We would rather be without all the luxuries of life, and have this Truth. We would rather suffer the loss of everything else than suffer the loss of our being.

If everything else in life were taken from us, and we were without a penny in the world, we would still be rich toward God if we had the Truth. And so we all are needy in

respect to this intelligence, this knowledge. When we perceive this, how could we be indifferent to the telling forth of the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light! So, then, God has so arranged this matter that all those who believe and become children of God may have a share with Him in His great work. And since we know these things, they become a test of our loyalty and our love. And the Lord seeing or not seeing this character in us will determine whether or not we shall be associated in the honorable work on the other side of the veil.

JANUARY 19

O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day—Psa. 119:97.

It is a great privilege for Christians to study the Lord's Word, yet a great deal of study is done to no purpose. Study which is not put into practice is worse than a waste of time. Every reasonable opportunity should be used by the Lord's people to obtain a knowledge of the Divine Plan—even to the extent of sacrificing; but the child of the Lord will be particular to see that it is his *own* conveniences and comforts that he is sacrificing, and not chiefly the conveniences and comforts of others. The Bible study which is done merely at the expense of others is a sign of selfishness rather than of a rich indwelling of God's spirit of love—Z '99, 156 (R 2488).

God's Word is the most precious heritage of the Christian. Its doctrines, precepts, promises, exhortations, prophecies, histories and types are worthy of, and awaken his love. No themes are so delightful and absorbing for the meditating Christian as those of the Bible. Nor will any yield a richer blessing to those whose meditation on them is followed by a life conforming thereto, because these are spirit and life—P '32, 198.

Parallel passages: Job 23:12; Psa. 1:2; 19:7-11; 40:8; 119:16, 20, 24, 35, 47, 48, 54, 70, 77, 92, 103, 111, 113, 119, 127, 131, 140, 143, 159, 162-167, 174; Jer. 15:16; Luke 4:22; 11:28; Acts 17:11; Rom. 15:4; Col. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:15-17.

Hymns: 22, 49, 79, 238, 296, 311, 315.

Poems of Dawn, 6: *The Word of Truth*.

Tower Reading: Z '02, 265 (R 3070).

Questions: Have I this week delighted in and meditated on the Word? How? Why? With what results?

THE WORD OF TRUTH

THE Word of Truth is like a stained-glass window rare,
We stand *outside* and gaze, but see no beauty there,
No fair design, naught but confusion we behold;
'Tis only from *within* the glory will unfold,
And he who would drink in the rapture of the view
Must climb the winding stair, the portal enter through.
The sacred door of Truth's cathedral is most low,
And all who fain would enter there the knee must bow
In deep humility. But once inside, the light
of day streams through and makes each color heavenly bright,
The Master's great design we see, our hands we raise
In reverent ecstasy of wonder, love and praise!

R3070: THE CLAIMS OF LOVE AND JUSTICE.

THERE IS NOTHING more necessary to the peace and prosperity of the Church of God than that its members should have a clear understanding and appreciation of moral principles, with a full determination to be controlled by them. Even among Christians there are often differences of opinion, with reference to principles of action, which greatly interfere with spiritual growth and prosperity. Such difficulties most frequently arise through a failure to rightly distinguish between the relative claims of love and justice. Therefore we deem it profitable briefly to consider these principles and their operation among the children of God.

Justice is sometimes represented by a pair of evenly poised balances, and sometimes by the square and compass, both of which are fitting emblems of its character. Justice knows no compromise and no deviation from its fixed rule of action. It is mathematically precise. It gives nothing over for "good weight" or "good measure:" there is no grace in it, no heart, no love, no sympathy, no favor of any kind. It is the cold, calculating, exact measure of truth and righteousness. When justice is done, there is no thanks due to the one who metes it out: such a one has only done a *duty*, the neglect of which would have been culpable, and the doing of which merits no favor or praise. And yet, cold, firm and relentless as this principle is, it is declared to be the very foundation of God's throne. It is the principle which underlies all his dealings with all his creatures: it is his *unchangeable business principle*. And how firmly he adheres to it is manifest to every one acquainted with the plan of salvation, the first step of which was to satisfy the claims of justice against our race. Though it cost the life of his only begotten and well beloved Son to do this, so important was this principle that he freely gave him up for us all—to satisfy its legal claims against us.

The principle of love, unlike that of justice, overflows with tenderness and longs to bless. It is full of grace, and delights in the bestowment of favor. It is manifest, however, that no action can be regarded as a favor or a manifestation of love, which has not underneath it the substantial foundation of justice. Thus, for instance, if one comes to you with a gift, and at the same time disregards a just debt to you, the gift falls far short of appreciation as an expression of love; and you say, We should be just before we attempt to be generous.

And this is right: if justice is the foundation principle in all of God's dealings, it should be in ours also; and none the less so among brethren in Christ than among those of the world. As brethren in Christ, we have no right to presume upon the favor of one another. All that we have a right to *claim* from one another is simple justice—justice in the payment of our honest debts to each other, justice in our judgment one of another (which must make due allowance for frailties, etc., because we realize in ourselves some measure of similar imperfection), and justice in fair and friendly treatment one of another. This is all we have any right to *claim*; and we must also bear in mind that while we have a right to claim this for ourselves from others, we are just as fully obligated to render the same to them.

But while we *may claim* justice—though there is no obligation to demand it for ourselves, and we may if we choose even suffer injustice uncomplainingly—we *must*, if we are Christ's, *render* it. In other words, we are not responsible for the actions of others in these respects, but we are responsible for our own. And, therefore, we must see to it that all our actions are squared by the exact rule of justice, before we ever present a single act as an expression of love.

The principle of love is not an exact principle to be measured and weighed like that of justice. It is three-fold in its character, being pitiful, sympathetic or reverential, according to the object upon which it is centered. The love of pity is the lowest form of love: it takes cognizance of even the vile and degraded, and is active in measures of relief. The love of sympathy rises higher, and proffers fellowship. But the love of reverence rises above all these, and delights in the contemplation of the good, the pure and the beautiful. In this latter sense we may indeed love God supremely, as the personification of all that is truly worthy of admiration and reverence, and our fellow men in proportion as they bear his likeness.

Although we owe to every man the duty of love in some one of these senses, we may not demand it one of another, as we may the principle of justice; for love is the overflow of justice. Justice fills the measure full, but love shakes it, presses it down, heaps it up and overflows justice. It is therefore something not to be demanded, nor its lack to be complained of, but to be gratefully appreciated as a favor and to be generously reciprocated. Every one who craves it at all should crave it in its highest sense—the sense of admiration and reverence. But this sort of love is the most costly, and the only way to secure it is to manifest that nobility of character which calls it forth from others who are truly noble.

The love of sympathy and fellowship is also very precious; but, if it come merely in response to a demand, it comes robbed of its choicest aroma: therefore never demand it, but rather by manifestation of it toward others court its reciprocation.

The love of pity is not called out by the nobility of the subject, but rather by the nobility of the bestower, who is so full of the principle of love that it overflows in its generous impulses toward even the unworthy. All of the objects of pity are not, however, unworthy of love in the higher senses; and some such often draw upon our love in all the senses.

To demand love's overflow of blessing—which is beyond the claims of justice—is only an exhibition of covetousness. We may act on this principle of love ourselves, but we may not claim it from others. The reverse of this exhibits a manifest lack of love and a considerable measure of selfishness.

Thus, for instance, two of the Lord's children were once rooming together and, through a failure to rightly consider the relative claims of love and justice, one presumed upon the brotherly love of the other to the extent of expecting him to pay the entire rent; and when the other urged the claims of justice, he pushed the claim of brotherly love, and

the former reluctantly yielded to it, not knowing how to refute the claim, yet feeling that somehow some Christians had less principle than many worldly people. How strange that any of God's children should take so narrow and one-sided a view! Cannot all see that love and justice should work both ways and that it is the business of each not to oversee others in these respects, but to look well to his own course, and, if he would teach others, let it be rather by example than by precept?

Let us beware of a disposition to covetousness, and let each remember that he is steward over his own goods, and not over his neighbor's, and that each is accountable to the Lord, and not to his brother, for the right use of that which the Master has entrusted to him. There is nothing much more unlovely and unbecoming to the children of God than a disposition to petty criticism of the individual affairs of one another. It is a business too small for the saints, and manifests a sad lack of that brotherly love which should be specially manifest in broad and generous consideration, which would rather cover a multitude of sins than magnify one.

May love and justice find their proper and relative places in the hearts of all of God's people, that so the enemy may have no occasion to glory! The Psalmist says, "Oh, how love I thy law [the law of love, whose foundation is justice]! it is my meditation all the day." (Psa. 119:97.) Surely, if it were the constant meditation of all, there would be fewer and less glaring mistakes than we often see. Let us watch and be sober, that the enemy may not gain an advantage over us.

THAT I MAY KNOW HIM.

—Phil. 3:8-10.—

"Lord, let me talk with Thee of all I do,
All that I care for, all I wish for, too.
Lord, let me prove Thy sympathy, Thy power,
Thy loving oversight from hour to hour!
When I need counsel, let me ask of Thee:
Whatever my perplexity may be,
It cannot be too trivial to bring,
To one who marks the sparrow's drooping wing.
Nor too terrestrial since Thou hast said
The very hairs are numbered on our head.
'Tis through such loop-holes that the foe takes aim,
And sparks unheeded, burst into a flame.
Do money troubles press? Thou canst resolve
The doubts and dangers such concerns involve.
Are those I love the cause of anxious care?
Thou canst unbind the burdens they may bear.
Before the mysteries of Thy Word or will,
Thy voice can gently bid my heart be still,
Since all that now is hard to understand
Shall be unraveled in yon heavenly land.

Or do I mourn the oft-besetting sin,
The tempter's wiles, that mar the peace within?
Present Thyself, Lord, as the absolving priest,
To whom confessing, I go forth released.
Do weakness, weariness, disease, invade
This earthly house, which Thou, Thyself, hast made?
Thou, only, Lord, canst touch the hidden spring
Of mischief, and attune the jarring string.
Would I be taught what Thou wouldst have me give,
The needs of those less favored to relieve?
Thou canst so guide my hand that I shall be
A liberal 'cheerful giver,' Lord like Thee.
Of my life's mission do I stand in doubt?
Thou knowest and canst clearly point it out.
Whither I go, do Thou Thyself decide
And choose the friends and servants at my side.
The books I read, I would submit to Thee,
Let them refresh, instruct and solace me.
I would converse with Thee from day to day
With heart intent on what Thou hast to say;
And through my pilgrim walk, what e'er befall,
Consult with Thee, O Lord, about it all.
Since Thou art willing thus to condescend
To be my intimate, familiar friend,
Oh, let me to the great occasion rise,
And count Thy friendship life's most glorious prize!"

JANUARY 20

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?—Heb. 12:7.

Character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant: at first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love; frequent watering with the showers of His grace; much cultivating through the applied knowledge of His character as a good foundation for faith and inspiration to obedience; and then, when thus developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. And, little by little, as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, beauty and grace, until it is finally fixed, developed, established, perfected—through suffering—Z '95, 107 (R 1806).

If from our natural fathers we are chastened for our profit, it should not be considered amiss if our Heavenly Father chastens us for our profit. To be without such chastisement is an evidence that we are not His sons; to receive such chastisement proves His Fatherhood and our sonship. Therefore they should not discourage us; but assured thereby that we are sons of God, let us likewise thereby be incited to betterment—P '26, 190.

Parallel passages: Heb. 12:4-14; Deut. 8:5; 2 Sam. 7:14; Job 5:17; Psa. 94:12; Prov. 13:13-24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13, 14, 24; 29:15, 17; Rev. 3:19.

Hymns: 307, 63, 67, 110, 293, 328, 333.

Poems of Dawn, 186: "*Think it Not Strange!*"

Tower Reading: Z '12, 388 (R 5147).

Questions: What disciplinary experiences did I have this week? How did I bear them? What effects did they work in me?

"THINK IT NOT STRANGE!"

1 PET. 4:12.

THINK it not strange, beloved,
When fiercely burns the fiery flame!
Think it not strange, but praise His name,
Who counts thee worthy to partake
Of painful sufferings for His sake.
Nor think it strange
When loved ones scornful from thee turn,
The Truth reject, the message spurn;
Consider Him who thus endured,
And Immortality secured!

Think it not strange, beloved,

If sometimes every door seem closed,
And all thine efforts be opposed,
But calmly wait in patience till
The master shall reveal His will.
Nor think it strange
When darker grown the "narrow way,"—
Press on, thy Master soon shall say,
"Enough, My child, thou hast well done,
Come, enter in, the Prize is won!"

R5147: THE PHILOSOPHY OF OUR DAILY EXPERIENCES

"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"—Heb. 12:7.

ALL CHASTENINGS are *testings*, but all chastenings are not necessarily *punishments*. We should judge of the purpose of our experiences by self-examination, that we may ascertain whether in our conduct there has been something out of harmony with the Father's will. In every case our experience is a test of our loyalty of heart—as to our willingness to learn the lessons which the Lord is seeking to teach us and our recognition of the source from which they come.

The trials and difficulties of the consecrated child of God are not to be esteemed as the results of Divine carelessness or indifference in regard to his interests, but rather as the outworkings of Divine providence in his behalf. Those who can see the matter from this viewpoint are thus enabled to learn some of life's most helpful lessons, and are thereby prepared for the glorious future which God has arranged for those who faithfully carry out their Covenant of sacrifice.

Ordinarily the word chastisement is used to signify correction for wrongdoing. But in the Bible, it is especially used to convey the thought of discipline or instruction in righteousness. Sometimes we use it in this way in the ordinary affairs of life. If we *sin*, we receive punishment indeed. But those who are trying to do right are continually receiving discipline of the Lord. There is a purpose in this training, or chastisement. The Church is learning how to build character pleasing in the Father's sight, to be well qualified for particular service; and discipline is the means employed for that instruction.

If a man were about to train a dog for the circus, he would first choose the right kind of animal for that special service. He would not think of selecting any chance poodle that might come to hand, but would find a dog that was capable of being taught. In carrying out his course of instruction, he might find it necessary to chastise the dog in order to teach him some trick. This would not mean that the animal was bad, surly or vicious, but that there was no other way by which he could learn. An animal that was being fitted to guard the house would not need the same training that was necessary for the dog that was to perform in public. The watch-dog must know how to guard property; but the animal

that is to jump through hoops, etc., must be trained carefully by those who have in mind his future career.

So with the Church. They need practical lessons in character-development of a very high order, and consequently they are receiving experimental knowledge such as no other creatures in the universe receive. Because they are trying to live righteously, trying to please the Heavenly Father, they are being chastened for instruction, that they may be fully conformed to the Divine will, that they may lay aside their own preferences, that they may not do their own will, but that of the Lord.

Such experiences are not for mankind in general. Such experiences were not given to Adam. He was required to live merely in harmony with his environment and to be obedient to the Heavenly Father. Such experiences are not for the angels. They are required merely to live righteously, to avoid sin and to use their bodies in harmony with the Divine purposes of their creation. They occupy such positions as are natural to them. Therefore the angels have never required chastisements.

SUFFERING DEVELOPS CHARACTER OF A HIGH ORDER

With those, however, who are to be associated with the Redeemer and ultimately to be exalted to the Divine nature and glory, it is necessary that they make special manifestations of loyalty, of self-abasement and of self-sacrifice. What was true of Christ is also true of the Church, which is His Body, and which He purchased with His own precious blood. (Col. 1:24; Acts 20:28.) We are called to follow in His footsteps; hence every son whom the Father receives is chastised.—Heb. 12:6, 7.

Every child of God will need chastening. If we wander from the paths of righteousness, we are chastened to bring us back; but even if we did not wander, we should still need chastisement, that we might learn obedience. Our Lord Himself learned obedience by the things which He suffered. (Heb. 5:8.) Of St. Paul the Lord said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." (Acts 9:16.) The Apostle was put through disciplinary experiences because he was a favored child of God.

We revert to our illustration of the dog under training for a special purpose. The dog must yield himself submissively to his teacher. Another dog that was watching the process by which the one was being trained might think that he was suffering unnecessary hardship, and might feel that if it were himself, he would assert his rights and not suffer so much. But in the end the trained animal would prove to be the more valuable, for the one that had escaped the suffering would remain only a commonplace dog.

So it is with the Church. There are people who say of us, "Those who endeavor to do God's will suffer more than do those who do not try; we do not care to undertake any such experience." These people may succeed in having fewer trials in the present life, but they will have blessings of a lower order in the world to come, when the faithful Church will be glorified with her Lord and Head.

These experiences with trouble are the very tests of character necessary for our development. The reason why some of the consecrated will get into the Great Company is that they have not had enough determination—enough strength of character. In the time of trouble, such will either develop that strength by faithfulness under severe trial or they will go into the Second Death.

The Great Company class are loyal in heart or they would not be in that class. But they are willing to *compromise*; and because of this willingness to do so, they weaken their character. In order to be *overcomers* they must develop this element of character at any cost.

Let us be thankful that we are of those who appreciate the privilege of being trained in the School of Christ—of suffering with Him now and of reigning with Him by and by. In this school we are learning valuable lessons of experience. Here we receive chastisements, many of which are not punishments for sins, but preparation for the work of the next Age. Let us remember that unless we are willing to learn these lessons and to endure hardness, we shall not be prepared to enter into the eternal glory.—2 Tim. 2:3; I Pet. 5:10.

All things are ours; for we are Christ's and Christ is God's, and God called Christ to these glorious experiences. (I Cor. 3:21-23.) Whoever does not appreciate the spiritual joys can hardly be expected to endure the present training with patience and thankfulness. We must see something of "the glory that shall follow" (I Pet. 1:11) in order to realize the necessity of the vicissitudes of the present trial time.

JANUARY 21

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me—Matt. 16:24.

Cross-bearing is closely related to self-denial, and yet a distinction between them may be noted. Self-denial relates more particularly to passive obedience and endurance for the Lord's sake; cross-bearing has to do more especially with activities in the Lord's service, which we find to be contrary to our natural inclinations. Faithfulness in self-denial means courage and zeal; cross-bearing means victory, overcoming. Our self-denials may be victories in our own hearts, of which others may know nothing, and of which they should know nothing, if we desire to have the fullness of the Lord's blessing. Our cross-bearing, however, may be seen, to some extent at least, by those who are in close contact with us, and especially by those who are walking in the same "narrow way"—Z '00, 118 (R 2615).

Self-denial in the Christian sense is not simply abstinence from our rights, but abstinence from our rights *for the Lord's sake*. To bear the cross implies subjection of self to the Lord's will in service, from faith, hope, love and obedience in all life's affairs, especially amid untoward circumstances. Only those who practice such self-denial and cross-bearing are Christ's true followers, and as such shall at the end of their course be acknowledged by the Lord for a share in Christ's glorious Kingdom—P '31, 192.

Parallel passages: Gen. 22:1-12; 2 Sam. 24:24; Matt. 8:19-22; 10:37-39; 13:44-46; 19:12, 21; Luke 5:11, 27, 28; 14:33; 18:27-30; 21:2-4; Acts 20:22-24; Rom. 6:1-11; 14:1-22; 15:1-5; 1 Cor. 8:13; 9:12, 15, 18, 19, 23-27; 10:24; Phil. 3:7-9; Titus 2:12; 1 Pet. 2:11, 16; 4:1, 2.

Hymns: 279, 8, 14, 47, 134, 192, 277.

Poems of Dawn, 41: *The Call Divine*.

Tower Reading: Z '06, 267 (R 3843).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

THE CALL DIVINE

TO-DAY, to-morrow, evermore,
Through cheerless nights without a star,
Not asking whither or how far,
Rejoicing though the way be sore,
Take up thy cross
And follow Me.

I cannot promise wealth or ease,

Fame, pleasure, length of days, esteem—
These things are vainer than they seem—
If thou canst turn from all of these,
Take up thy cross
And follow Me!

I promise only perfect peace,
Sweet peace that lives through years of strife;
Eternal love, immortal life,
And rest when all these wanderings cease.
Take up thy cross
And follow Me!

My yoke is easy—put it on;
My burden very light to bear.
Who shareth this, My crown shall share—
The present cross insures the crown.
Take up thy cross
And follow Me!

R3843: THE NARROW WAY TO LIFE ETERNAL

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."—Matt. 16:24.

THE PICTURE presented in this lesson is that of a young man, a Jew of a prominent family, a ruler, who, seeing Jesus going forth on a journey with his disciples, came to him running, fell on his knees before him, and said, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Jesus did not immediately answer his question, but sought first to prepare the way, so that when the answer was given it would have the greater weight. He therefore inquired, "Why do you call me good?" Is this simply a mark of courtesy, or do you recognize the fact that there is only one standard of goodness, which is represented by God the Father, and that in calling me good, therefore, you are not only recognizing this divine standard but recognizing me as a teacher whom God approves? Thus paraphrased our Lord's language would signify to the young ruler, This teacher claims to be of God: his claim is either true or false; he is therefore either a true or false prophet. I have called him Good Master or Good Teacher. If I have been sincere, if this is the result of my previous investigation of his teachings, I ought to be ready to accept whatever answer he will give me as divine direction, and should promptly obey.

Not waiting for a reply to his query, but content with leaving the suggestion before his mind, our Lord proceeded to answer the original query, saying, "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother." Matthew's account of the incident

informs us that our Lord added the words, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—Matt. 19:19.

THE LAW COVENANT STILL IN FORCE

Some have queried why our Lord did not answer the young man as we today would answer him, saying, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, confess your inability to keep the divine Law perfectly, believe on the Lord Jesus as the one who has redeemed you and whose robe of righteousness you may receive by faith and thus become acceptable to the Father, and then make a full consecration of your life to the Lord. We answer that such a full statement of the matter was not yet due to be promulgated, because our Lord Jesus had not yet finished his sacrifice, and it was not yet possible for anyone to have access to the Father through the merit of that sacrifice. Before any could thus come to God it was necessary that our Lord should finish his sacrifice and rise from the dead and ascend on high, "there to appear in the presence of God for us" as our representative, appropriating to us [believers] his merit, justifying us before the Father.

The Law Covenant which had been given to Israel sixteen centuries before was still in force, because our Lord Jesus had not yet "nailed it to the cross." (Col. 2:14.) Hence it was necessary that our Lord's answer should be in line with the Law Covenant still in force. For this reason he directed the young man's attention to the Law, showing that the way to eternal life was by the keeping of the Law, as God had promised. But we see through the teaching of the New Testament what the Jews as a people had failed to discern, namely, that by the deeds of the Law no flesh could be justified in God's sight, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin. (Rom. 3:20.) In other words, the intention of the Law was first of all to test our Lord Jesus, and to demonstrate his perfection in that he would be able to keep it; and secondly, it was to prove to the Jews and thus to all men the impossibility of any one but a perfect man fulfilling the terms of the Law Covenant. The value of thus proving to them their inability to meet the divine requirements was to show them the necessity for getting eternal life as a gift from God through Jesus Christ, and not as a reward of their own good works, which were short of the divine requirement and could never justify them.

When the young ruler replied, "All these things have I observed from my youth up," the Lord looked lovingly upon him. He was a model young man, such an one as all lovers of truth and righteousness delight in. Our Lord loved him, loved his endeavors to keep the Law, and loved his manifestation of humility and earnestness in coming as he had done in a public manner to ask the way to life eternal. Evidently the young ruler had his misgivings as to whether or not he was up to the divine standard, even though outwardly observing the requirements of the Law. Quite probably he felt fairly satisfied, but perceiving the deep spirituality of the teachings of Jesus he thought he would like to have the confirmation of this great Teacher, his assurance that the Law was all-sufficient, and that his obedience to it in the manner claimed guaranteed him life everlasting.

The conclusion of our Lord's recitation of the Law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," was a part of the usual formula of statement amongst the Jews, and it had

probably lost much of its intense and deep signification because so commonplace. The young ruler evidently neglected to attach to the words their only meaning; he was thinking of the more specific definitions of the Law, neglecting this more comprehensive statement, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Our Lord, always gentle toward those who manifested a right attitude of heart, those who were sincere inquirers after the way of eternal life, did not rudely call the young man's attention to his defects by saying, "You are a liar; you know very well that you do not love your neighbor as yourself, and your wealth indicates this, for there are many poor all about you, and if you love them as yourself you would be endeavoring to do for them." On the contrary, Jesus realized that selfishness had become ingrained in the fallen human nature, that this young man was really far above the average of men in his nobility of character, in his desire to be just toward his fellows.

The young man was blinded by the customs of his time, and Jesus proceeded to open the eyes of his understanding in a most gentle manner, saying, "One thing thou lackest: Go, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me."* Here was the crucial test; every Jew ready and willing to sacrifice his earthly belongings and to become a follower of Jesus would be accounted worthy of transfer from the house of servants under Moses to the house of sons under Christ. The actual transfer of all such took place at Pentecost, when the Father acknowledged them as no longer of the house of servants under the Law Covenant, but as members of the body of Christ, begotten of the holy Spirit to heavenly things and to life eternal.

The young man, so full of confidence a few moments before, found that the great Teacher had probed his heart in its one vulnerable spot—he had not sufficient love for God and for his fellows. During the past eighteen centuries the same test has proven many good, honorable, wise people to be unfit for the Kingdom. In other words, the tests for joint-heirship in the Kingdom are so high that the majority of mankind even amongst the most moral, the most enlightened, the most reverent, fail under the test and miss the Kingdom.

It is proper enough for us to inquire if the test for membership in the Kingdom is too severe. Has God fixed too high a standard—an impossible one—or one impossible at least to the majority of mankind? We reply that to the majority of Christians this whole matter is beclouded by the false doctrines received from the "dark ages," which tell us that this young ruler, because he did not become a follower of Christ, would go to an eternity of torment, notwithstanding his many admirable qualities of heart and life—because although willing to be just and honorable and upright in his dealings with his fellow men and reverential to his God, he was unwilling to sacrifice his earthly possessions and to become by all disesteemed, a follower of Jesus the Nazarene, despised of men. According to that standard would not almost the entire human family be properly considered as surely en route for eternal torment? How few there are who forsake all, consecrating life and time and every interest to the Lord and his service as followers of Jesus!

If these few who are to inherit the Kingdom are the only ones who will get eternal life, then indeed there are few that will be saved. But when we take the Scriptural view of this matter, that the Lord at the present time is seeking out from amongst men a very elect, a very select, class to be joint-heirs with his Son in the Millennial Kingdom as his "Bride," and that the specific work of that Kingdom will be the bringing of order and righteousness and restitution blessings and opportunities of eternal life to all the human family—then and then only can we understand this matter, and see not only the justice but also the wisdom and the love of the divine arrangement in the entire procedure. Then we are prepared to appreciate the privilege we now enjoy of becoming followers of Jesus, forsaking all that we may be his associates and joint-heirs in that glorious Kingdom to come.

"HE WENT AWAY SORROWFUL"

The young ruler had no complaint to make. The one whom he had acknowledged to be the good Master, the great Teacher, had showed him in a few words from the Law just where he stood—the utter futility of his endeavor to justify himself under the terms of the Law Covenant. What he needed to know, but what he did not stop to inquire, was how could he do this? What power or assistance could be rendered him by which he could overcome his innate selfishness, his greater love for himself, and hence his desire to keep the great possessions he already enjoyed and to add thereto? Had he said to the Lord, "Master, I perceive that I am not what I thought I was—you have found in my heart selfishness, contrary to the divine standard, which I did not know was there. Can you help me over my difficulty? It seems too great a sacrifice for me to make."

In reply to such words the Master no doubt would have said, "What I propose is not so unreasonable as you surmise. If you give your heart completely to the doing of the will of the Lord in this matter I can point out to you step by step how you can accomplish it: but the consecration, the determination on your part to do this to the extent you are able to do it is necessary first. Then my grace, my assistance, will be sufficient for you and enable you to accomplish those good desires of your heart." If the young man had then proceeded to say, "Lord, I do consecrate everything to be your disciple and to get the eternal life, hard as it may be. I accept your promised assistance in the matter. Now how can I begin?" Our Lord probably would not have told him to sell everything that he possessed immediately, but to begin with doing all the good that he could find to do, using time and judgment and intelligence to ascertain the best ways of using all that he possessed, not as his own, but as wealth which he had consecrated to the Lord and his service—the Lord's wealth, the Lord's property, the Lord's time, the Lord's influence.

Some of his money might have been expended at once for the Lord and his apostles, and thus he might at once have begun to have a share in the harvest work then in process. But, you say, Were the Lord and the apostles in need? We answer, No. The Father saw to it that a sufficiency of means was provided for the work, and similarly he has always cared for the interests of his cause. He is not dependent upon the generosity of humanity. He is pleased to use human generosity and thus grant a blessing to those who seek to render a service to his cause; but his cause would not be left destitute if none appreciated

the privilege, for the gold and silver and the cattle upon a thousand hills belong to him who has the supervision of his own work.—Psa. 50:10; Hag. 2:8.

It is the same today. That young man would have had a privilege in connection with the service of the Truth. And it is still a privilege for any of us who possess this world's goods to have our means used in the Lord's service. We are not to think that we are carrying on the Lord's work, and that he could not get along without us; but, reversely, are to consider that he has no need of either us or our means; that it is a great privilege we enjoy to have the opportunity of casting influence, time, money, everything we possess, into the Lord's treasury, for use in his service. Whatever could not have been done for the Lord's cause directly could have been done for the poor of the Jewish nation, who indirectly represented the Lord's people, so that anything done for them because they were the Lord's would be so much which the Lord would accept as being done unto himself, and would appreciate and ultimately acknowledge and reward.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE RICH

When the young man had gone away sorrowful—declining to have the eternal life which Jesus was offering on the only terms now attaching to the offer—Jesus looked around upon his disciples and followers and noted afresh that they were for the most part ignorant, unlearned men and the poor of this world, and he said to them, "How hardly [with what difficulty] shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God." We read that the disciples were amazed at this statement. As they looked about them they well knew that the most prominent in religious circles were the rich, either in mental, social or physical riches. If the great, the learned, the Doctors of the Law, the prominent Pharisees, the rulers in the synagogues, the members of the Sanhedrin, etc., who constituted the wealthiest portion of the nation—if these would not get into the Kingdom of God, which the whole people had been waiting for for centuries—if these, whom they supposed to be the ones most ready for that Kingdom, and who claimed to be the only ones ready, and that all others were unfit because unholy, what must they think of the Kingdom—who would be in it anyway?

Noting their astonishment Jesus made the matter still more emphatic, saying, "Children [simple, unsophisticated ones], how difficult it is for them who trust in riches to enter the Kingdom of God!" Here our Lord defines the difficulty: it was not merely the fact that a man had been born wealthy or that by some peculiar means he had acquired great wealth—not these conditions would hinder him from getting into the Kingdom; but it would be the fact that he would love these riches and trusted in them that would hinder his faith in God and his love for God and his dependence upon God and his learning the lessons of faith which the poorer would have many more opportunities for learning.

THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE

Our Lord emphasized the matter, saying, "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." The thought is not that all of the Lord's people should be penniless, dependent upon the charity of others, but

that they must all be so fully consecrated to the Lord and to his service that they will not be their own—that their possessions, whatever they may consist of, riches of knowledge or wealth of money and houses and lands, or wealth of reputation and honor of men—all must be consecrated to the Lord, to be used in his service, to be sacrificed as our belongings if we would have a share with him in the Kingdom. We must not blind our eyes to these specific terms; if we do there will some day be an awakening to the fact that the opportunities which are ours have passed from us and are lost to us, and we will find that others have entered into the Kingdom and we have failed.

Our Lord's words indicate what is elsewhere set forth throughout the Scriptures most explicitly, namely, the necessity of sacrifice. The Royal Priesthood alone will constitute the Kingdom class, and, as the Apostle declares, every priest is a sacrificer and must have something to offer. (Heb. 8:3.) We have nothing of ourselves that would be fit to offer to God or that he would be willing to accept: every sacrifice upon his altar must be without blemish, and we by nature are blemished, children of wrath as are others. (Eph. 2:3.) Hence first of all we must receive from the Lord Jesus, from our Redeemer, through faith, the robe of his righteousness to cover our blemishes, to make us fit and acceptable for the altar of the Lord, and then we must follow the Apostle's directions, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service."—Rom. 12:1.

When we sacrifice ourselves wholly and unreservedly it includes not merely our hearts, our wills, our intentions, but all they can control—our mortal bodies, with whatever are their belongings, health or strength, time or talent, influence or money. Whoever makes this consecration has the promise of divine assistance in carrying it out—whoever fails to make such a consecration can have neither part nor lot in the Kingdom.

Our Lord's words with respect to the camel and the needle's eye are illustrated by the accompanying sketch of a city gate with a small panel door therein. These small doors were called needles' eyes. When the gate of the city was closed at sundown for fear of robbers, etc., the watchman guarded merely the needle's eye and admission through it was designedly tedious to prevent the intrusion of enemies. We have never seen one of these gates, but have heard that it is possible for a camel to squeeze its way through on its knees provided the load be first removed from its back, but for the truthfulness of this we cannot vouch. In any event the Lord's thought is evident: no rich man can enter the Kingdom. The only way one can enter it is by becoming poor, nothing;—by sacrificing everything, and this would include riches, social, political and financial; and thus, whatever his previous condition, he must cease to be rich in his own name and title and possession ere he could be accepted by the Lord as fit for the Kingdom. The spirit of the Royal Priesthood must be one of self-sacrifice and not one of selfishness. The great work of the future will be the blessing and uplifting and assisting of the world, and the Lord now seeketh for the "very elect," such as will manifest a sympathy of heart-desires in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Kingdom he is about to establish. All others will be excluded.

THE KINGDOM THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

Where then would be the hope for the rich young ruler and the many of our day who intellectually and socially and in a monetary way are wealthy, and who do not exercise faith nor make the consecration to the Lord, without which they could have no part in the Kingdom? What provision has God made for these? We answer that "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man," that "he is the propitiation for our sins [the sins of the Church, who now accept him and forsake all and become his followers], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:2.) A benefit must come to all mankind through this great sacrifice for sins, which God himself has arranged for. The rich young ruler and all the families of the earth are to be blessed, and the time for their blessing is specifically stated by the Lord to be under his established Kingdom. Only a very elect, select class of faithful sacrificers will constitute that Kingdom. These, with the dear Redeemer, on the spirit plane, will constitute the seed of Abraham, through which all the families of the earth are to be blessed.

Under the reign of that Kingdom Satan and sin and selfishness will be dethroned. In various ways conditions amongst men will be so changed that wealth will not have the same strong bondage upon mankind that it now has; knowledge will be so increased that all may have it freely, fully; the good things of life will be made so common, so general, that all may enjoy them; name and fame will go only to those who merit them. Under those new conditions we may see the young ruler glad to have life eternal through acceptance of the divine arrangement. Sacrifice will not be possible then nor will it be required, even as the angels of heaven are not required to sacrifice. Only Christ Jesus, our Lord, and the Church, his Bride, are put under this severe ordeal of test, invited to become sacrificers of their interests; and to them is granted the exceeding great and precious promises of God, and to them will be given the great exaltation to glory, honor and immortality by which they shall not only be superior to mankind but also far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named—next to the Father.—Eph. 1:21.

This is what our Lord meant by his statement, With men it is impossible, but not with God. This was said in answer to the disciples' query, "Who then can be saved?" It was not then time to explain that in God's plan various salvations are provided for—that first comes the special salvation, and that finally will come the general salvation, which will make it possible for such as this rich ruler and others who love righteousness and hate iniquity to attain eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. According to the Law no such thing was possible, but God made possible this plan of salvation through Jesus, who not only fulfilled the requirements of the Law for himself but sacrificed himself for those who were condemned under the Law, so that God might be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus—not only of those who are now called in the election to the high calling, the heavenly calling, but to those also who will have a share in the great work of restitution uplift which will follow the establishment of the Kingdom.

"WHAT SHALL WE HAVE?"

A new idea respecting the exclusiveness of the Kingdom offer was reaching the apostles, and Peter, the spokesman for them, called attention to the fact that although they were not wealthy they had forsaken all that they did possess to become the Lord's followers, and therefore he desired an assurance that he and his associates would be in the Kingdom. Our Lord's reply was surely amply satisfying to his dear followers: he assured them that no man that hath left either home or brethren or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for his sake and the Gospel's sake but would receive again an hundred fold now in this time, with persecutions, and ultimately in the world to come such will receive also eternal life. There was encouragement in this to the apostles, and there is encouragement also to all who are the Lord's people today. The suggestion is that the more we leave, the more we sacrifice, the greater our present loss for the Kingdom's sake, the greater will be our reward both now and hereafter. O, if we could only have this thought well in mind continually how we would vie with one another in our endeavors to spend and be spent in the service of so gracious a Master and in so glorious a mission and with so grand prospects and rewards.

Our Lord's words being true it is very evident that some who receive little of the Lord in this present life and who have but faint prospects respecting a share in the Kingdom in the future have themselves to blame. They should ask themselves, What have I sacrificed? What have I left, for the Lord's sake, for the brethren's sake, for the Father's sake? The stipulations are specific, hence those who have nothing to sacrifice can have no reward. But who has nothing to sacrifice? We know of none so poor that he could not sacrifice something, and the poorer we are the more diligently should we strive to find something to render unto the Lord our God.

In this connection we are to remember that the thing which the Lord most appreciates and the thing which is most difficult for us to sacrifice is self. Hence we read, "A broken and a contrite heart, O Lord, thou wilt not despise." (Psa. 51:17.) If we have given our hearts to the Lord we have given him all that we possess, and he will see to it that this shall cost us enough to test the loyalty and sincerity of our sacrifice; and as we see the test coming day by day we are not to be intimidated, but to remember that the Lord has promised that greater is he who is on our part than all they that be against us, and again that his grace is sufficient for every time of need. Hence, as trials and difficulties, pain and sorrow and persecutions or slanders shall come upon us, we are to rejoice and be exceeding glad (1) That these indications of our being in the hand of the Lord as pupils in the school of Christ are evidences that we are of the elect who are being shaped and polished, fitted and prepared for places in the Kingdom. (2) We are to remember that all these trials and difficulties rightly met, loyally responded to, are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We are, therefore, to take the spoiling of our goods with patience, with joy, knowing that in heaven we have enduring riches, enduring friendships, enduring knowledge and blessings of every kind.

But even in this present life how much the Lord grants us to enjoy: our enjoyment will be proportionate to our loyalty of spirit in the sacrificing. If we love much, and are prompt and liberal in our sacrificing, we will in turn be loved much by the Lord, be blessed and comforted, as he has stipulated, an hundred-fold more than all our distresses.

Who are these who have an hundred-fold more than they give to the Lord? Who are these whose joys are more than an hundred-fold greater than their sorrows, trials and difficulties, pains and disappointments? They are the elect of God, whom Jesus is not ashamed to call his brethren.

MANY FIRST SHALL BE LAST

"Many that are first shall be last; and the last first," are the concluding words of our Lord in this lesson. What did he mean? His words stand related to the recorded discourse just preceding. The rich young ruler, the priests and Scribes and Pharisees and wealthy generally, appeared to the disciples to have much better opportunities for the Kingdom than would the less learned, the less noble, the less influential and the less wealthy fishermen and tax gatherers, etc. Yet the latter, though seemingly less favored of God, seemingly handicapped by lack of influence, etc., were really advantaged. It was easier for them to humble themselves, to sacrifice earthly interests and ambitions, to make a complete consecration of themselves to the Lord than for those who had greater advantages everyway. On the contrary, as we have seen, position, honor of men, wealth and education were all barriers to becoming disciples of Jesus. Thus those who were first or most prominent apparently in opportunity were really less favored, while those who had less opportunity were really first or most favored from the divine standpoint.

"FORSAKING ALL"

Let us guard against a mistaken view of our Lord's words respecting father, mother, houses, lands, etc. Our Lord certainly did not mean that we should sacrifice others in order to be his disciples. Our Golden Text expresses the thought we would enforce: it is ourselves that we are to deny, ourselves that we are to sacrifice. Hence in making our consecration and in our endeavor to carry it out we are to remember this, and to deal justly and lovingly with those who are dependent upon us and for whom we are responsible by ties of nature. For instance, the selling of houses and lands, the forsaking of these, would not mean that the Lord would have us deprive our families of necessary comforts and temporal provisions. Other Scriptures show this distinctly, that he that provides not for his own—for those for whom he is the responsible caretaker,—is worse than an unbeliever. It would be worse for any of the Lord's people to neglect the ties of duty than for an unbeliever to do so, because with his higher light and sounder spirit of mind he should appreciate the situation more clearly than do others, and therefore be more just in his dealings with those who are properly dependent upon him.

This does not mean, however, that we should yield to the whims and fancies of friends or neighbors or parents or children in respect to our course as the Lord's followers. We are not men pleasers—and the only one who has the right to command us and the only one we have a right to obey is the Lord Jesus. If, therefore, a man finds that he has made proper provision for his children or for his parents, so that they suffer not in respect to a reasonable share in life's necessities and comforts, it is for him and not them to decide how his time and energy and further means shall be spent. He is not to seek to amass wealth for them, he is not to consider that wealth already entrusted to him belongs to

them. He is to understand that he has one responsibility toward them as a father or as a son and another responsibility toward the Lord, and that the Lord is not only willing but commands that the responsible duties of life shall be fulfilled by him. *Whatever* is more than this in his possession he holds merely as a steward, for use in the Master's service.

Let us then, dear friends, whatever our station, remember that there is only one narrow way to the Kingdom, and that it is open only during this Gospel age, and that the highway of holiness belongs to the next age. While rejoicing that the world, now unwilling to travel the narrow way, will have the glorious opportunities of the highway by and by, let us rejoice that the great favor of God respecting this narrow way has been brought to our attention, and that it is our privilege to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, with the assurance of his assistance all the journey through to the farther end, and with the gracious promise of life eternal and participation in the Kingdom. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself [let him sacrifice himself, his personal interests, ambitions, etc.], and take up his cross and follow me."

JANUARY 22

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD—Psa. 31:24.

It would seem as though the Adversary at times attempts to discourage us by making us think that the trials and difficulties of the "narrow way" of sacrifice will be unavailing anyhow, and that we might as well give up. ... And what course should we pursue at such a time? We should follow the example of our Lord, and seek the Father's face, anxious to know whether or not our interests are all right with Him; anxious for some assurances that while the world may hate us, and say all manner of evil against us falsely, we still have His approval; anxious for some fresh assurance that it will be well with us, that the Lord will grant us a part in the resurrection of the just—to life eternal—Z '01, 79 (R 2773).

Those who hope in the Lord are those who rely upon His Word and Providence. Since God is on their side, they may be of good courage, however distressing their circumstances in life may be, realizing that these must all work for the strengthening of their characters in Christ's likeness. Let these considerations encourage and strengthen them in every good word and work unto all well-pleasing in the sight of Him who so kindly blesses them—P '35, 183.

Parallel passages: Deut. 31:23; Josh. 1:5-9; 1 Chron. 22:13; 2 Chron. 15:7; 19:11; 32:7, 8; Psa. 25; 27; 31:24; Ezek. 2:6; 3:9; John 16:33; Rom. 8:35-39; 1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 1:19; 3:16; 6:10; Col. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:7.

Hymns: 110, 137, 183, 197, 200, 273, 313.

Poems of Dawn, 289: *God's Anvil*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 309 (R 5329).

Questions: Have I been encouraged and strengthened this week? How was it accomplished or hindered? What resulted therefrom?

GOD'S ANVIL

PAIN'S furnace-heat within me quivers,
God's breath upon the flame doth blow,
And all my heart in anguish shivers,
And trembles at the fiery glow;
And yet I whisper, As God will!
And in His hottest fire hold still.

He comes and lays my heart all heated,
On the hard anvil, minded so
Into His own fair shape to beat it,
With the great hammer, blow on blow;

And yet I whisper, As God will!
And at His heaviest blows hold still.

He takes my softened heart and beats it,
The sparks fly off at every blow;
He turns it o're and o're and heats it,
And lets it cool, and makes it glow;
And yet I whisper, As God will!
And in His mighty hands hold still.

Why should I murmur? For the sorrow
Thus only longer-lived would be;
It's end will come, and will, tomorrow,
When God has done His work in me;
So I say, trusting, As God will!
And trusting to the end, hold still.

He kindles, for my profit purely,
Affliction's glowing fiery brand,
And all His heaviest blows are surely
Inflicted by a master hand;
So I say, praying, As God will!
And hope in Him and suffer still.

R5329: GOOD COURAGE REQUIRED FOR OVERCOMING

"Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."—Psa. 31:24.

THE Scriptures everywhere encourage the Lord's people to be full of faith, hope, confidence, trust. As we look out into the world we see particular reasons why this should be so. The majority of the world are full of fear, apprehension, distrust, worry. For this reason they fail to get the best out of the opportunities they have. They know of pitfalls of sin and trouble in different directions, and therefore they have reason to be distrustful, to be fearful.

But the Lord's people have come into special relationship with Him and He with them. He has assured them that He will have a supervision of their affairs, as would not have been their experience had they not come into relationship with Him. They are, therefore, to hope in the Lord, to trust in Him. They are to heed the things which He has said, and to take courage in the thought that their affairs are under His supervision.

God's people have stepped out from the world and joined the standard of the Lord Jesus Christ—the standard of righteousness, truth, holiness, opposition to sin and the Adversary. They will be beset by powerful enemies. Against them will be arrayed Satan

himself, who will seek to oppose them, as he has opposed all of God's plans. He can make no direct attack upon the Lord, but he can attack His Plan and those who believe in God. He it is who instigated the riots, the tumults and the persecutions in the days of the Lord, and subsequently instigated the persecution of the Lord's people.

Satan has not done these things with His own personal touch, but through his deluded servants. He has ever opposed righteousness and all those who love righteousness. On this account the Lord's people need to have *great* courage; for if they allow the Adversary to beat their courage down, he will soon put them out of the battle entirely. A *retreating* soldier is of no more good than one who has not gone out to battle. Instead of losing courage we are to resign our earthly interests to our Father and trust Him that in the present life He will guide us, will overrule everything for good to those who are "the called according to His purpose."

Besides the Adversary, we have the general spirit of the world to oppose us. The world considers us foolish in thinking that we have any special Divine supervision—that God loves us. They say to us, God has made all the worlds, the thousands of angels, etc. Do you imagine that He has any special interest in you? They tell us that if there is a God, He is so great and we so small that He cannot take any notice of us. Thus they would beat our faith down. And this is the sentiment of the world, even when it is not expressed. And whenever we come in contact with worldly people we find, as it were, a wet blanket thrown on our simple trust, even though they say not a word to us. We need to have good courage and to hope in the Lord, as our text enjoins.

Then, additionally, we have our own flesh. Each of us has in himself, in his own body, an opponent. The Scriptures represent that when we gave ourselves to the Lord and He gave us His Holy Spirit, we there passed through a transformation and became embryo spirit beings, the embryo having this mortal body in which to develop until the moment of resurrection, when we shall pass from the earthly to the Heavenly condition. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."—I Corinthians 15:42-44.

But while we are in the flesh, we have all the motions of the flesh. We as New Creatures have disowned these. We have turned our backs upon sin. We have exchanged the earthly interests and hopes for the Heavenly interests and hopes. By our daily experiences the Lord is testing us. We must be on guard to overcome the flesh. It requires a great deal of courage to fight down the tendencies to sin. And it requires still more courage that, after battling with the weaknesses and frailties of the flesh, and conquering it, we should additionally force our human bodies to *sacrifice*, to abandon the earthly things, and to serve the Lord. It requires a *great deal* of courage; therefore we are of ourselves insufficient.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF COURAGE

But we are exhorted to put our trust in the Lord, and assured that we "can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth us." (Phil. 4:13.) His is a power sufficient for us. It requires all our courage, all our hope—every helpful element that we can put into the fight—in order to bring about the most successful issue. But the Lord supplies sufficient grace so that we may be overcomers. This does not mean that any one will live a perfect life; and he may not fully exercise this good courage. He may make partial failures from time to time. But our Lord is leading us on, and we learn valuable lessons from our failures.

Some, having stronger faith and hope, having their minds fully centered on the Lord, have gone forward courageously. This is called *good courage* in the sense of being *strong* courage, proper courage. We might also associate with our text the thought that this *hope in the Lord* is to be backed up by a good courage, a right kind of courage, a godly courage.

There is a courage that is born of pride, which would say: Do not back down. Do not let anybody get ahead of you. In a battle the soldiers will vie with one another, each having a desire to do something especially conspicuous, which will bring him the applause of his fellows. They need something to inspire them—desire for fame, love of country, music, etc.—in order to give them courage to run the risk of losing their own lives, or to take the lives of other human beings. And this is the kind of courage that will help them to gain the victory in their battle, even though it be an unworthy motive for inspiring courage.

But a courage from *right* principles, based on faith in the Lord, is not one of bragadocio, but a courage that is noble and pleasing to God. It has its source in a realization that *God has promised*, and that God is watching, and desires us to be joint-heirs with His Son in His Kingdom. He is merely testing us to see whether we will prove faithful. And this courage with us must also be to do things in the right way.

THE EXHORTATION APPLIES TO ALL STATIONS

This exhortation affects us in everything in life, whether we are in one station or another. It would apply to a king on his throne—that he should be courageous enough to do the right thing—the thing understood to be the Lord's will. Such courage would say to us, Do your duty, whatever may be the Lord's will for you. Hope in the Lord, even though your motive will be misunderstood. We should have the good courage to stand for what is *right*, whether our reward be in this life or in that life which is to come.

This exhortation is for the business man who is a Christian. His worldly friends may say, You will fail in your business. You cannot advertise your business. If you tell the truth, the people will not patronize you; they will go to a place where a host of lies will be told them. If he takes their advice, he will do a larger business, but he will make a failure of the chief affair of his life, he will lose the great Prize.

It will apply to workingmen—that they may advocate right principles, and be not faint-hearted and fearful to express the truth. This does not mean that a man should be cantankerous and take a different view of every question from that of others, but that, after conceding every point that may be yielded with wisdom, where there is a principle at stake he should take his stand and say, My thought is thus and so, and I shall be obliged to maintain my position. However, I recognize that each of you has a duty to perform according to his own conscience; and I will content myself with doing what I feel is my duty, not wishing to coerce the remainder of you. But at any cost I will be faithful to principle. I hope that you will not misunderstand me, and think that I am trying to oppose you and to turn the matter my way. I have my rights and my conscience, and you have yours. I am merely telling you what I must do according to my judgment and my conscience. You must do what *you* think right according to your judgment and conscience.

Thus even those who would think differently would know that the one speaking to them had a conviction, and that he was of good courage. This would apply to the humblest walk in life—to a day laborer, or to a washer-woman—any person.

COURAGE PROPORTIONATE TO FAITH

There are trials and difficulties in the life of each one, great and small. The right kind of courage finds an opportunity to exercise itself in each of God's children. And this is what the Lord is looking for. He is looking for this kind of courage, a courage such as must be found in overcomers. It is only to *overcomers* that any place will be granted in the Kingdom. Whoever has not *good courage* will not be in the Kingdom at all. Hence the lesson of our text is, BE OF GOOD COURAGE; for this is the way in which we shall demonstrate our faith in the Lord. He who hopes in the Lord and is loyal to the Lord will be courageous in proportion to his loyalty and his faith.

This kind of courage will stand by us in all circumstances. For instance, our Lord in addressing His disciples on one occasion said, "Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake; ... take no thought [beforehand] how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak." (Matt. 10:18, 19.) The Lord's people, whatever circumstances may arise, will have such faith and trust in God that they will conduct themselves courageously, relying on God's power. The Greek here seems to give the thought: *Do not be worried* when you shall be brought before kings and judges.

The way in which God will give us a mouth and wisdom may vary according to circumstances—perhaps by suggestions from another; perhaps in the hearing of the testimony of some one else; or it may be that a text of Scripture that would be especially helpful would come to our mind. But the thought is that our trust is in the Lord, and that we are not to be in fear and trembling.

The Lord addressed these words to His disciples—the ignorant and unlearned. For them to be brought before kings and magistrates and judges would naturally cause them much apprehension. What should they say? How could they answer those men—those

great, learned men! They were very humble, and they realized their ignorance; but the Lord guided them. Education was much less general then than now. Today, practically all are educated to some extent. The assurance of the Lord would, therefore, apply less forcefully to us today, than it would to the disciples then living.

But if we are in any straits, any difficulties, we are to remember that the Scriptures assure us that "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear [reverence] Him, and delivereth them." (Psa. 34:7.) This thought should tend to make us cool and collected in our minds, and should enable us to conduct ourselves courageously, feeling ourselves in this close relationship with Him, and having the confidence that this thought would give us. Furthermore, we realize that we are not wise enough to know just what God's purposes respecting us may be. We know not, therefore, just how the Lord may prefer to have this or that matter eventuate.

"FAITH CAN FIRMLY TRUST HIM"

The early disciples, thinking of Jesus and what He had said to them, thought: Jesus is certainly a good man; God would not allow any disaster to befall Him. Thus they pondered, as they thought of the things that Jesus had predicted for Himself. St. Peter said to Him, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God!" (Matt. 16:16.) And they thought, How could God allow any harm to come to Him? So the disciples concluded that these things He had said must be figures of speech, just as when He said, "You must eat My flesh" and "drink My blood." So now when He said that the Son of Man would be crucified, they thought it was one of His peculiar sayings that they could not understand.

Hence they were quite perturbed, wondering and astonished, when He was arrested and taken before the Jewish Sanhedrin, and when, instead of using His powers and His eloquence, He was *dumb*, and allowed Himself to be contradicted and maligned. Then He was taken before Pilate. Now, the disciples thought, Jesus surely will not hesitate before him! Hence the surprise and astonishment of the disciples again when things turned out so contrary to what they had expected. But such a course on our Lord's part was *necessary* in the Heavenly Father's Plan, not merely for the Lord Jesus, that He might suffer and then enter into His glory, but necessary also for the world, because the *redemption price must be laid down*, must be in the hands of Justice.

We see that the Lord has declared that His people shall not be especially protected along earthly lines; and if in His Wisdom it is best in any way to bruise us and put us to shame, as was done with our Master, we are to be of good courage, and He will strengthen our hearts, because we trust in Him, we have confidence in Him. We know that He is too wise to err, and that there must be a motive, a reason for the permission, whatever it may be. We know assuredly that the saintly ones are precious in the sight of the Lord—are as the apple of His eye; and thus we know that all things are working together for good to us.

So we do not necessarily anticipate that a certain form of words will be given to us, before either judges or princes. We are not necessarily free from worldly condemnation.

We are to remember that these words of the Master were applicable to our Lord Himself and to the Apostles; that Jesus was condemned and crucified; that the Apostles were condemned and were put into prison and received stripes on several occasions. And later most of them were killed.

Whatever may be the outcome of any matter to us, we are to accept it as from the Lord, whether we are able to discern the reason for it or not. We are to have faith and hope, even though the way is rough, and even though things might seem to be the very reverse of what we expected. "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord."—Psalm 27:14.

JANUARY 23

Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God—1 Cor. 7:24.

Duties may at times seem to conflict, but they do not really do so. A Christian's first duty is his hearty acknowledgment of his Creator and Lord, in all his ways. His second duty, if he be a husband and father, is toward his wife and children; or if she be a wife and mother, it is toward her husband and children. The marriage contract, by Divine arrangement, comes in as a first mortgage upon every husband's time and upon every wife's time—the demands of this mortgage must be reasonably met before anything can be properly done to or for outsiders—Z '99, 155 (R 2488).

The spirit of the age is restlessness. Almost everyone is seeking some change in life. Contentment should so mark the Christian's character, amid the prevalent discontent, as to move him to be satisfied where he is and with what he has, and therein should he remain until the Lord indicates the necessity of a change. Faith in God will insure this spirit—P '30, 14.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 7:20; Luke 3:12-14; Eph. 6:5-8; Gen. 2:15; Prov. 10:4, 5; 12:11, 24; 13:4, 11; 14:23; 20:13; 22:29; 31:27; Eccles. 9:10; 11:6; Rom. 12:11; Eph. 4:28; 1 Thes. 4:11, 12; 2 Thes. 3:10-12.

Hymns: 4, 134, 208, 307, 277, 267, 275.

Poems of Dawn, 295: *My Service*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 212 (R 5498).

Questions: What have I done as to remaining in my calling this week? What hindered or helped? What resulted therefrom?

MY SERVICE

I ASKED the Lord to let me do
Some mighty work for Him;
To fight amid His battle hosts,
Then sing the victor's hymn.
I longed my ardent love to show,
But Jesus would not have it so.

He placed me in a quiet home
Whose life was calm and still,
And gave me little things to do,
My daily round to fill;
I could not think it good to be
Just put aside so silently.

Small duties gathered round my way,

They seemed of earth alone;
I, who had longed for conquests bright
To lay before His throne,
Had common things to do and bear,
To watch and strive with daily care.

So then I thought my prayer unheard,
And asked the Lord once more
That He would give me work for Him
And open wide the door—
Forgetting that my Master knew
Just what was best for me to do.

Then quietly the answer came:
"My child, I hear thy cry;
Think not that mighty deeds alone
Will bring thee victory.
The battle has been planned by Me,
Let daily life thy conquests see."

R5498: HOW AND WHERE SHALL I SERVE?

**"Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."—
1 Corinthians 7:24.**

IN THE CONTEXT, the Apostle has been discussing marriage and its responsibilities. He has also been discussing slaves and their state. He asks, "Art thou called being a slave? Then seek not to be free." Nevertheless, he added that if freedom were to come to the slave, he should be glad to avail himself of the opportunity of having a wider field of service as a free man. But the slave should not say to His master: I have become a child of God, and therefore your regulations are nothing to me; you cannot longer hold me as a slave.

The Apostle gives the thought that the Lord's people are not to want an immediate change from the condition in which they were called. His thought is, You are not necessarily to think that you are to leave what you are now doing. Your business may be that of a servant, or a slave; therein abide—in the sense of having your mind at rest. If the Lord opens the door, then you are to look about. If your condition is one of great severity, it is right to ask the Lord that in His own due time He will make it less so, if it please Him. He has promised us that with every temptation He will provide a way of escape or direct the issue, that we may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13.) This would apply to our business relationships—to everything.

If one were single, he should consider very carefully the matter of taking on added responsibilities. He should think: "I was called when single. Does the Lord wish me to

marry?" And if he comes to the conclusion that the Lord so desires, he should remember the Apostle's injunction, "Only in the Lord." If he were married when called, he should not say, "I wish I were not married. I could do so much more, so much better, if not married." He was married when called, and therefore there is a mortgage upon his time. He has this mortgage or contract to consider.

ENTER OPEN DOORS, BUT DO NOT FORCE THEM

Nevertheless, the Apostle, in previous verses of this same chapter points out that if the unbelieving husband or wife should depart, let them do so. Do not seek to oppose their going if they desire to go. The Lord is able to provide for your affairs. And if that is the Lord's providence for you, so accept it. As for the thought of our leaving our business to go into the Colporteur work, or the Pilgrim work, or the Class Extension work, or whatever it might be, the proper thing for us to consider would be, Is this an opening of the Lord? If we find that a better opportunity for service comes to us in this way, a wider opportunity for work in the Harvest Field, and that there is an *open door*, then we should rejoice and should enter the door.

But if we find that there is no open door and we would have to *force one open*, to violate some right principle to enter such work, that would alter the case. We must stand for principle. We shall never have to oppose any right principle to engage in the Lord's service; there is always some way to serve. The Apostle is here addressing brethren, and his words could not refer to any who were then engaged in a dishonorable avocation.

NO BROTHER IN DISREPUTABLE BUSINESS

But suppose that a man, before receiving the Truth, had been the keeper of a gambling house, or were in some other disreputable business. Suppose he had been a saloon-keeper (several brethren have come from this business). After he had accepted the Truth, he would say, Here! What am I doing? Am I dispensing to human beings that which is to their injury? I must quit this. And so he would have to get out of the saloon business before he could become a child of God at all; he would have to get out of the unprincipled *condition of mind* before he could become a child of God. The Apostle's words were addressed to the brethren: "Brethren, let every man so abide." He would not be a brother in Christ while in a business repugnant to his conscience and injurious to his fellow-creatures.

The whole matter was, of course, forceful to servants in the Apostle's day. In that time and in every time the humble classes, the servant classes, the slave classes, seem to have been ready to receive the Message. Our Lord said unto the rich, as a class, "Woe unto you rich!" And to the poor He said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden." And we see that not many wise, not many rich, not many noble, come into the Light.

BRETHREN IN PENAL INSTITUTIONS

A prisoner in a penal institution would do well to say to himself, "Well, in God's providence this Message has reached me here in prison. Perhaps I should never have had it if I had not been here." If we were such a person, instead of hastening to try to pry open the doors by sending a paper to petition release, we would consider well before we started such a paper. We would think, "Perhaps I may have opportunities for serving the Lord amongst these fellow-prisoners. Perhaps I may have an opportunity of preaching to them." Or if there were an application made for release, and if the application resulted in refusal, we should bow to that refusal as being the Lord's word in the matter. We would try to be thoroughly content and thoroughly happy, and would say, "I will strive to show forth the praises of God, who has called me out of darkness into His marvelous light." We could not know but that a man would have just as good opportunity for service there as anywhere else. The Lord will give what is best to all His faithful ones.

JANUARY 24

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart—Prov. 3:3.

While justice is the first feature of the commandment of love, it is not the end of its requirements; it requires that, going beyond strict justice, our love shall prompt us to the exercise of mercy and forgiveness. And in thus exercising mercy, we are again but copying Divine love. ... Hence in our dealings with others who, like ourselves, are fallen and imperfect, we are to remember this feature and not only be just toward them but, additionally, to be merciful, generous, kind, even to the unthankful, that thus we may be children of our Father in heaven—Z '02, 171 (R 3020).

Truth is the Lord's Word; and mercy is the application of the Lord's Word amid the distress of the present. No jeweled chain forms a better adornment than these are to the Christian's character. Love for mercy and truth should be crystallized in the heart. So crystallized, they become our eternal adornment, making us more attractive than the rarest gem or the costliest diadem, and shed their bright luster all about us—P '34, 189.

Parallel passages: Psa. 37:26; 85:10; Prov. 11:17; 14:21, 22, 31; 20:28; 21:21; Hos. 4:1; 12:6; Mic. 6:8; Matt. 5:7; 23:23; Luke 6:36; Rom. 12:8; Col. 3:12, 13; Jas. 2:13; Prov. 23:23; Zech. 8:16, 19; 1 Cor. 13:6; Eph. 4:25; 2 Cor. 6:7, 8; Rom. 2:8; Gal. 3:1; 2 Thes. 2:10.

Hymns: 267, 22, 49, 296, 95, 82, 105.

Poems of Dawn, 134: *Be Strong*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 275 (R 5309).

Questions: Have I this week laid hold on, clung to and practiced mercy and truth? How? Why? In what circumstances? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

BE STRONG

BE strong to bear, O heart of mine,
Faint not when sorrows come.
The sum of all these ills of earth
Prepares thee for thy home.
So many burdened ones there are
Close toiling by thy side,
Assist, encourage, comfort them,
Thine own deep anguish hide.
What though thy trials may seem great?
Thy strength is known to God,
And pathways steep and rugged lead

To pastures green and broad.

Be strong to love, O heart of mine,
Live not for self alone;
But find, in blessing other lives,
Completeness for thine own.
Seek every hungry heart to feed,
Each saddened heart to cheer;
And when stern justice stands aloof,
In mercy draw thou near.
True, loving words and helping hands
Have won more souls for Heaven
Than all the mixed and various creeds
By priests and sages given.

For every grief a joy will come,
For every toil a rest;
So hope, so love, so patient bear—
God doeth all things best.
Be strong to hope, O heart of mine,
Look not on life's dark side;
For just beyond these gloomy hours
Rich, radiant days abide.
Let hope, like summer's rainbow bright,
Scatter thy falling tears,
And let God's precious promises
Dispel thine anxious fears.

*R5309: MERCY AND TRUTH COMPONENT ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN
CHARACTER*

"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee; bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart." "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Prov. 3:3; Micah 6:8.

MERCY and Truth are great principles of righteousness. Truth and righteousness are, we may say, synonymous. That which is *right* is *true*, and that which is *true*—firm, faithful, steady, genuine—is usually *right*. The record does not say that we shall bind justice about our neck. Justice is a quality which we are not permitted to exalt too highly, except in our hearts and minds, as a principle of the Divine standard. We are to remember that there is none righteous, no, not one—none perfect. Hence *our* course in respect to Justice cannot be the same as that of our Heavenly Father. He recognizes no lower standard than justice, up to which everything must measure.

GIVE MERCY AND TRUTH PROMINENT PLACE

If we are acceptable to the Father, it can be only by righteousness. And if we have not righteousness, it must be obtained from Christ; for God receives nothing short of perfection. Though imperfect in ourselves, we are to come up to the standard of justice as nearly as possible in our own personal conduct, but we are not to exact full justice from mankind. Since they have no one to *make good* for them, it is our duty to be benevolent toward them, and thus emulate the character of God, who is merciful. While He keeps the two qualities, Justice and Mercy, distinctly separate in His dealings, it is not for us to do so.

For one to keep the principles of truth and of righteousness before his own mind, is to be a thoroughly upright man or woman, one in whom truth, purity, goodness, will be in control. But a person who has merely these principles in control should cultivate more and more the quality of *mercy*. We should bind these about our neck. The thought is that of a necklace, or ornamental band. As a man puts around his neck a cravat, with a jewel in it as an ornament, placed where it will be displayed, so these qualities of character are jewels. Give them a prominent place; for they will help to make you better, help to make you more acceptable to the Lord.

The preferable place for the display of a jewel is the neck. There a jewel is especially conspicuous and ornamental. So we should fasten these noble qualities of character where they will be manifest in all the affairs of life. Whether we buy or sell, or whatever we do, we should wear these ornaments. They will show what is the character of the man or woman—right on the outside, in the very front. They should be seen as we meet others. There should be nothing mean, nothing contemptible, nothing niggardly about us.

RE-WRITING MERCY AND TRUTH UPON THE HEART

More than this, we are to write mercy and truth in our hearts. We are to remember that originally God wrote the Divine Law in Adam's heart. We know that in the Divine heart, the Divine character, are the qualities of Truth and Mercy. God is merciful, kind and loving. And as God has these traits of character, so when He made man in His own image, His own likeness, man was created with these qualities in his character. Man was not created an unrighteous, an untruthful being.

But man fell from his original perfection. With the centuries of falling and imperfection of mind and body, and with every interest pressing for self-gratification at the expense of others, these principles of mercy and truth have become largely effaced from our hearts, just as the constant dropping of water, and the general wear and tear of the weather would tend to efface the original inscription on a stone. In time one could scarcely discern the characters. So we see in mankind that some have apparently lost all sense of justice, all sense of mercy, nearly all sense of patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness and love. All these qualities that belong to the heart, as originally placed there by God, have been more or less effaced—in some more than in others.

PURPOSE OF GOD'S PROVIDENCES

Under the terms of the New Covenant and through the ministrations of Christ's Kingdom, God purposes to re-write upon the heart of man the original character which was in his heart, and which has been effaced by selfishness. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah. ... I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." (Jer. 31:31-33.) "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."—Ezekiel 36:26.

God's Law is the Law of truth and mercy. Truth would include everything righteous, toward God and toward man. Mercy includes all the graces of character. The Millennium will be the time for the re-writing of these qualities in the character. And this work of re-writing the Divine character in the heart, which will progress in the world by and by, for a thousand years, is already begun in the Church. We write these qualities within our own hearts. The entering the School of Christ is voluntary, not compulsory. In the next Age mankind *must* write these qualities in their hearts, through the assistance of the Mediator. There will be stripes to bring mankind to righteousness. And if they are intentionally unwilling to obey the Laws of righteousness, they will be destroyed.

But now obedience is a voluntary matter. We declare that we desire to have these lessons written in our hearts; and to attain this end, we enter the School and submit ourselves to the great Teacher. Then, by the various providences of our lives, He shows us where we have not yet engraved these qualities within our hearts. As we pray for patience, He gives us lessons of experience that will engender this quality in our hearts, and that will strengthen it more and more. As we pray for love, He gives us tests of love. As we pray that we may develop mercy, we find more opposition, which will develop mercy. Thus God gives us opportunities for the writing of truth and mercy in our hearts.

We must attain to that condition of heart where we shall *love* truth and righteousness, and where we shall *hate* iniquity and unrighteousness. As the people of God, we have the first opportunity now to develop these traits. And the Lord tells us that if we prove faithful in learning our lessons, it is His intention to use us during the Millennial Reign, His intention to make us judges of the world—its rulers, teachers.

THE JEWISH LAW HELPFUL TO CHRISTIANS

The words of our second text were addressed to the Hebrew people and not to Christians; for there were no Christians at that time, of course. The words do not seem to be prophetic, but an exhortation to the people. Apparently the Jews thought that the Lord was asking too much of them; and since this was so, they felt that they should not take the Law too seriously. The Lord seems to bring the matter down to a specific statement: What is required of thee but three things; namely, to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? This would seem to be the sum total of the Law.

The Lord was looking to see Israel live as nearly up to the requirements of the Law as possible. And He purposed to bring them, in due time, the promised New Covenant, which would take away the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, thus making them tender-hearted. But if now they would walk as nearly as possible in harmony with the requirements of this law, doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with their God, they would be blessed accordingly.

While this Law was given to the Hebrews alone, nevertheless the principles inculcated therein are applicable to the whole world. Everybody who would have any standing with the Lord, is required to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly. Therefore every statement of the Law, in that it gives the Christian a conception of God's standards, is helpful to the Christian; it shows him the standards of perfection. But the standard of a Christian goes higher than that of the Law. The Law is merely an amplification of the Golden Rule—Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you. Deal justly with others, if you would expect them to deal justly with you; and be merciful to others, if you would expect them to be merciful toward you.

In thinking of these qualities and considering which should be put first, we decide that in our conduct toward another, we could not think for a moment of giving anything less than *justice*. Additionally we might be as merciful as the circumstances would permit. But nothing *less* than justice should be thought of. In our requirements of others, however, we are—as before stated—not to expect full justice. Remember that the whole human family are imperfect. If by the grace of God we are able to be more just or more merciful than the average, it is through God's Spirit.

GOD'S STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUS CONDUCT

To walk humbly with the Lord would imply that we were in that condition of mind in which we could be taught of Him, could appreciate His goodness and our own insignificance; that we were receiving whatever instructions He was sending. While God made our race in His image, we have largely lost that image. Therefore we should be very humble and teachable in all things.

Comparing God's requirements of Israel, as given in the text, with His requirements of the Church, we would say that God *requires* nothing more than this from the Church. This is as much as justice could require from any creature. The peculiarity of the position of the Church is that it is not one of *requirement*, but of *privilege*. But we see operating in the Church a still higher principle than that of Law; namely, that of *sacrifice*. As Jesus loved the Father and loved righteousness, and sacrificed His earthly will and earthly ambitions and privileges, so He set us an example that we should walk in His steps. It was not required of *Him* that He should do more than justice, but He was *permitted* to do more. And so with the Church. *We* are not required to do more than justice, but are permitted to do more. If we present our bodies living sacrifices, and are faithful to the end, the Lord will count us among those to whom He will be pleased to give, very soon, the glorious Kingdom, the Kingdom for which we pray.

VARIOUS DEGREES OF LOVE

After we came voluntarily into this condition of sacrifice, it became a bondage to us in that we had taken vows to this effect, and we are bound by *our own vows*. We vowed that we would lay down our lives in harmony with the invitation: "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." Still the Lord is not requiring more of us than justice. But He is waiting and watching to see to what extent we will be faithful to the agreement of our Covenant. If we are joint-sacrificers with Jesus, then we shall become joint-heirs with Him. At our consecration, we took His yoke upon us. Could we go back and take up the privilege of Restitution? No; this we gave up entirely! The only thing for us is to fulfil our Covenant of Sacrifice; and rebellion against that Covenant would mean the Second Death, everlasting destruction.

There are various degrees of love. That degree to which we have consecrated ourselves is the sacrificing love, which goes beyond what would be *just* to a brother, a neighbor or an enemy. This is the Love of God, which is an all-absorbing, an all-comprehensive love.

That the requirements of the texts are very reasonable will be conceded by all. That God could not require less from those whom He is educating for the future judging of the world, is evident, and yet all of these qualities specified through the Prophet are comprehended in the one word—*Love*. Love requires that we shall deal justly with our neighbors, with our brethren, with our families, with ourselves; that we shall seek to cultivate our appreciation of the rights of others—their physical rights, their moral and intellectual rights, their liberties; and that, appreciating these, we shall in no sense of the word seek to abridge or deny them. But, additionally, Love leads us to have the spirit of sacrifice that gladly lays down life itself for the brethren.

JANUARY 25

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself—Matt. 6:34.

Our Lord assures us that if the main thought of our hearts is His service and the promotion of righteousness and an attainment of the Kingdom, which God has promised to them that love Him, then we need carry no anxious cares respecting the future. As His disciples we will have trials and tribulations enough, day by day, and will need daily to lean upon the Lord's arm as we seek to walk our narrow way. Sufficient for each day will be the evil of itself; and thanks be to God also, we have the promise that daily His grace shall be sufficient for us—Z '98, 44 (R 2259).

Worry plows furrows not only in the forehead, but also in the heart. The heart that trusts in the sufficiency of God's providences for every need is not only free from worry, but full of joy and peace, and looks with hopeful eyes into the future. It is therefore profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come—P '33, 191.

Parallel passages: Matt. 6:25-33; Job 38:41; Psa. 104:10, 11; 147:9; Luke 12:24-26, 31; Phil. 4:19; 1 Kings 3:13; Psa. 34:9; 37:25; Rom. 8:32; Psa. 127:2; Matt. 13:22; Luke 21:34; 1 Cor. 7:32, 33; Phil. 4:6; 2 Tim. 2:4; Psa. 37:5; 55:22; Jer. 17:7, 8; Heb. 13:5.

Hymns: 56, 307, 93, 106, 63, 313, 328.
Poems of Dawn, 153: *Strength Sufficient*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 230 (R 5508).

Questions: What have this week's experiences been along the lines of this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

STRENGTH SUFFICIENT

OH, ask not thou, "How shall I bear
The burden of tomorrow?"
Sufficient for the day the care,
Its evils and its sorrow,
God imparteth by the way
Strength sufficient for the day.

R5508: OUR GREAT BURDEN-BEARER

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

THESE COMFORTING words of the Apostle Peter are addressed to the Church of Christ; and all who are of the Lord's people surely realize that there are cares and

difficulties of life which are our portion and which are perplexing. These cares of life come also to those who are of the world—to some more and to some less. But they *surely* come to all who are the Lord's children.

The word *care* is used in two different ways. Thinking of the word in the sense of exercising proper thought and giving proper attention to that which is entrusted to us, or concerning which we are responsible, we might be in danger of misunderstanding our text. The word *care*, however, very often has in it the thought of *worry, trouble of mind*; and this is its use by the Apostle in this place. The Apostle Paul also says, "Be careful for nothing"—be worried about nothing, have anxiety about nothing. So we might render the words of St. Peter, "Casting all your *anxiety* upon Him; for He is taking thought for you."

IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS

The Apostle's advice is not that we shall throw off all sense of responsibility, and cease to exercise care in what we do and in respect to our duties and obligations. Surely we all agree that the man or the woman without care for anything, in this proper sense, would be totally unfit for any position in life. We often notice evidences of some one's not having been sufficiently careful. Perhaps the wall paper has been carelessly marred or the furniture scratched; doors are slammed or left swinging when they should be closed for warmth, etc. Some might say, Oh, these are very small matters! But one who is careless, thoughtless, and inattentive to these matters is very likely to be untrustworthy in larger matters.

Personally, it is painful to us to see these things; and undoubtedly it is so to all who exercise proper care. The children of God, His representatives before men, should not go blundering along through the world or needlessly annoying others, whether it be the brethren or people of the world. Our influence for good may be greatly marred by inattention to what might be called little things, but what in reality are not so. There is a trite saying which is full of meaning: "Trifles make perfection; and perfection is no trifle." The Lord's people should be the most careful people in the world.

Our Lord said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much"; and the reverse of the statement would be equally true—that he that is *unfaithful* in that which is least is *unfaithful* also in much. (Luke 16:10.) These little things of every-day life may prove to be more crucial tests of real character than will seemingly larger matters. Little courtesies, little acts of thoughtful consideration for others, how much they mean! How greatly they often affect the happiness of those around us and our own influence as ambassadors of Christ! So we need to exercise much care and thoughtfulness in regard to our words, our actions and everything with which we have to do. This is not the care that we are to cast upon the Lord for Him to bear. This we are properly to bear ourselves.

OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED BY THE LORD

God is the most *careful* Being in the Universe, we may be sure. He is not *careful*, in the sense in which the word is used in our text—in the sense of worry and unrest of

mind—but He is care-full in the right and proper sense. There are cares that come to the Lord's people because they are harassed by the Adversary. These experiences the Lord permits for the very purpose of leading His people to cast their care upon Him, of bringing them closer to Himself, of teaching them patient endurance, of showing them more fully their need of Him, their utter helplessness and wretchedness without Him.

But worries and frettings—anxieties that would hinder us in the Lord's service, that would rob us of our peace in the Lord—should be dropped, not carelessly, however, but intelligently, with the thought that Jesus, our great Burden-bearer, has invited us, yea, urged us, to cast all our care—all that would disturb our peace—upon Him. He will make our burden light and ease our tribulations. This is a rest of faith, and cannot be attained otherwise than through faith in His love, faith in His promises.

OUR FATHER'S CARE FOR HIS CHILDREN

Each day that a Christian lives he should be more reliant upon the Lord. He should realize more fully than before that our Heavenly Father, who has provided for the grass of the field and for the birds of the air, cares far more for His children than for the flowers or for many sparrows, and that He has a Plan also for the world—an arrangement for their blessing, in due time. But *we* have already entered into the blessing of the Lord; we have already become His children, and are His especial care. And "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him"—those that reverence Him.

We cannot be faithful children of God if we are full of worry. Worry is one thing, but proper carefulness is another. We should be more careful every day, and thus be able to fulfil our obligations to the world in general, to our families, to ourselves, to the brethren, and to the Lord—to render our God more effective service.

We are not to be troubled and anxious as to where we are to get our next suit of clothes. We have a suit of clothing for the present, such as the Lord has seen fit to give; and we are to do our best to provide the things needful. If the Lord should never give us apparel as good as many others have, or as rich or dainty food, we should not worry, but be content with whatever His providence arranges for us, and accept it thankfully. He will give what is best—what is for our good as New Creatures. We should not doubt, nor fear that He will not provide for our needs. He knows all about our affairs, and is not unmindful of our welfare. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."

How needful this humility before God, and how consoling and precious this loving assurance! As we go on in this blessed way marked out by our Lord, let us learn more and more fully that we are not to ask anything according to *our* wills, but only that His will may be done in us and for us. His Wisdom is unerring. Let us tell the Lord all about our burdens, great and small, and let us appropriate to ourselves His love and sympathy, applying to our hearts the balm of His Word, of the precious promises which are the

heritage of His own, trusting Him that He is both able and willing to supply our every need—yea, that He delights thus to bless us, if we abide in His Love.

"How strong and sweet my Father's care!
The words like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—'He cares for thee!'

"Then naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me or mine,
Since Thou with tenderness Divine
Dost care for me!"

JANUARY 26

When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance—Matt. 6:16.

Fasting is specially commendable to the Lord's people at times when they find themselves lacking in spirituality and exposed to severe temptations from the world, the flesh and the devil; for by impoverishing the physical force and vitality, it may assist the full-blooded and impulsive to self-control in every direction. We believe that a majority of Christians would be helped by occasional fasting, a very plain diet for a season, if not total abstinence. But fastings to be seen and known of men or to be conjured up in our own minds as marks of piety on our part, would be injurious indeed and lead to spiritual pride and hypocrisy, which would far outweigh their advantages to us in the way of self-restraints—Z '98, 45 (R 2260).

Those who afflict themselves to appear religious before others are as bad as those who pray and do alms to be seen of men. The Christians' fast is self-denial and should be entered into with grateful, joyous appreciation as a coveted opportunity for the Lord's glory. And the more of self-denial they can manifest in this spirit the sweeter is the perfume of faith, hope, love and obedience that ascends from them in prayer to God—P '32, 198.

Parallel passages: Isa. 58:5; Deut. 12:18; 1 Sam. 2:1; 1 Chron. 16:27; Ezra 6:22; Neh. 8:10, 12; 12:43; Psa. 4:7; 5:11; 16:5-11; 30:11; 68:3; 89:15, 16; 97:11, 12; 126:5, 6; Luke 6:22, 23; John 15:11; 16:20, 22, 24, 33; Acts 16:25, 34; 2 Cor. 6:10; 7:4; 8:2; 12:10; Heb. 10:34; Jas. 1:2; 1 Pet. 4:13.

Hymns: 248, 41, 151, 179, 204, 247, 310.

Poems of Dawn, 42: *Courage! Press On.*

Tower Reading: Z '11, 222 (R 4858).

Questions: Have I this week rejoiced or been sad amid my self-denials? Why? With what results?

COURAGE! PRESS ON

TIRED! Well, what of that?

Didst fancy life was spent on beds of ease,
Fluttering the rose leaves scattered by the breeze?
Come, rouse thee! work while it is called to-day:
Courage! arise! go forth upon thy way.

Lonely! and what of that?

Some must be lonely; 'tis not given to all
To feel a heart responsive rise and fall,
To blend another life within its own:
Work can be done in loneliness. Work on.

Dark! Well, what of that?
Didst fondly dream the sun would never set?
Dost fear to lose thy way? Take courage yet!
Learn thou to walk by faith, and not by sight;
Thy steps will guided be, and guided right.

Hard! Well, what of that?
Didst fancy life one summer holiday,
With lessons none to learn, and naught but play?
Go—get thee to thy task! Conquer or die!
It must be learned; learn it, then, patiently.

R4858: THE PROPRIETY OF FASTING

"When ye fast be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance."—Matt. 6:16.

IN OUR TEXT our Lord is not expressing any disapprobation of fasting; quite to the contrary; He is endorsing it as a propriety. Undoubtedly it is better for the health to fast somewhat at times rather than to eat to satisfaction. The Master's comment, according to the context, seems to be based upon the improper conduct of the Pharisees. The fasting was supposed to be good not only for physical health, but also for mental and spiritual health. The Pharisees, professing to be very holy, made manifest their holiness by fasting, subordinating the flesh that they might be spiritually strengthened.

Our Lord does not dispute the propriety of such a course, but it was the *wrong spirit* that He condemned. For when the Pharisees fasted, many of them did it to be seen of men, in order to seem holy and given over to spiritual things. Hence our Lord's suggestion that when His disciples fast they should not be as the hypocrites, whose fasting and long faces were to show men their piety. In the same connection our Lord proceeds to say that when His disciples fast they should do the very reverse; that they should anoint their heads and be as cheerful as possible.

We can see the philosophy of this course. If their fasting had brought them nearer to the Heavenly Father it should have made them more gracious and luminous. It should have had a happifying effect, which would have shown itself in the countenance. The thing reprimanded, then, was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who assumed a sadness of countenance to be seen of men. They delighted to have people say, "What a holy man! He has fasted so much! He is always thinking about holy things and, in order to do this, he is even denying himself the necessities of life. He is a *very* holy man!"

The followers of the Lord are to practise such fasting as will be seen of the Lord and not of men. The Father, who knows the heart, will appreciate our efforts to draw near to Him and will grant our desire. But these things should be hidden to the outside world and known only to God; and the joy of the Lord should be manifest in the countenance.

HOLINESS OF THE HEART NOT A MERE OUTWARD FORM

Our Lord's frequent reference to the Pharisees, no doubt, was in part owing to the fact that the Pharisees were a very large and influential class; and in part because their name signified that they were the *holy people*. Hence, when our Lord was teaching special obedience to God, the question in the minds of the people would be, "Is He not a Pharisee, and do not the Pharisees teach all these things?"

So it became necessary for our Lord Jesus to show wherein some of these things that the Pharisees practised were not proofs of their special nearness to God, and that they were not leaders to holiness, but that it was very evident that many of the Pharisees were hypocritical. Their holiness had become a mere form; it had degenerated into a custom—as the Scriptures say, a "Drawing near to the Lord with their lips, while their hearts were far from Him," and thinking merely of the general attitude they had toward the world, the people in general.

We remember that there were *some* very noble Pharisees—Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, who buried our Lord, and St. Paul, who tells us that he was a Pharisee. But evidently the greater part of them had made broad their phylacteries and were more anxious in respect to what men would think of them than what the Lord would think of them. Perhaps some of the hypocrisies of the Pharisees have been practised since by some in the Monastic Order, where they wished to show their special separation from the world by the wearing of a peculiar garb, by a special cut of the hair, by seclusion, etc. There is danger along this line in the observance of the Lenten season by some of the Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans. But it may not be hypocritical with all.

ABSTEMIOUSNESS SPECIALLY HELPFUL DURING LENT

In many respects it would be a very good thing for all the Lord's people to follow the Lenten custom of fasting, doing so with as little outward demonstration as possible, practising it as unto the Lord, without considering it a thing to be mentioned, without attracting attention, but merely as a privilege. The Lenten season comes at a time when abstemiousness in food seems particularly appropriate. As the cold of winter sharpens the appetite, in order to the resistance of the lower temperature of that season, so, in the spring, less carbon is needed, as there is not so much cold to resist; hence it would seem advantageous to practise fasting, more or less, in the Lenten season.

We have in mind the fact that the Lenten season represents the forty-day period of our Lord's experiences just preceding the crucifixion. We might enter sympathetically into this matter and think of the trying experiences that were upon the Master when He knew that He was drawing near to the time of His death. As we try to think of Him it will enable us better to realize what a privilege it is to endure hardship as good soldiers for the sake of His Message.

Fasting is specially commendable to the Lord's people at times when they find themselves lacking in spirituality and exposed to severe temptations from the world, the flesh and the Devil; for, by impoverishing the physical force and vitality, it may assist the full-blooded and impulsive to self-control in every direction. We may believe that a majority of Christians would be helped by occasional fasting—by a very plain diet, if not total abstinence, for a season. But fastings to be seen and known of men, or to be esteemed in our own minds as marks of piety on our part, would be injurious indeed and would lead to spiritual pride and hypocrisy, which would far outweigh any advantage to us in the way of self-restraint.

JANUARY 27

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life—Prov. 4:23.

It is not sufficient that we acknowledge sin in its various forms to be evil, and that we resolve that we will strive against it, because it is under the Lord's ban. In addition to this we are to root out of our hearts every *longing*, every *desire* for everything not thoroughly approved by the Lord. Oh, what a cleansing this would mean in the hearts and lives, and especially in the thoughts of many who have named the name of Christ! Many who fail to note this point find themselves continually beset by temptations, because, while outwardly avoiding gross immoralities, they secretly harbor sympathies for things condemned, desiring that they might have them, if only they were not forbidden—Z '99, 140 (R 2479).

The heart must be guarded with all diligence, both with regard to what enters and what leaves it. With great attention and care should we keep evil out of the heart and seek to fill it with good. So doing our lives will result in good, and not in evil. For as a man thinketh in his heart so is he! Our characters are thus formed, and our destinies are thus determined—P '26, 190.

Parallel passages: Deut. 5:29; 6:5, 6; 1 Chron. 28:9; 2 Chron. 12:14; Psa. 22:26; 31:10; 57:7; Prov. 14:30; 16:1; Jer. 17:9, 10; Matt. 5:8; 9:4; 15:18, 19; Rom. 2:5; 10:8; Heb. 3:8; 4:12.

Hymns: 183, 130, 125, 78, 136, 1, 13.
Poems of Dawn, 111: *Watch and Pray*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 396 (R 4904).

Questions: Have I been diligently keeping my heart this week? What helped or hindered? What were the effects?

WATCH AND PRAY

CHRISTIAN, seek not yet repose,
Hear thy gracious Savior say,
"Thou art in the midst of foes:
Watch and pray."

Principalities and powers
Mustering their unseen array,
Watch for thine unguarded hours:
"Watch and pray."

Gird thy heavenly armor on,
Wear it ever, night and day;
Ambush'd lies the Evil One:

"Watch and pray."

Hear, above all, hear thy Lord,
Him thou lovest to obey;
Hide within thy heart His words:
"Watch and pray."

Watch, as if on that alone
Hung the issue of the day;
Pray that help may be sent down:
"Watch and pray."

R4904: "THE ISSUES OF LIFE"

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."
—Proverbs 4:23.

ORIGINALLY man was created in God's image and likeness. As a result of the fall our hearts are not perfect, but are prone to sin. The Lord invites us to give our hearts, our affections, to Him: "My son, give Me thine heart." (Prov. 23:26.) God has provided the Channel whereby He can restore us to the relationship of sons, that Channel being the Lord Jesus. After we have accepted the Lord's proposition and given Him our hearts, we become the Lord's dear children, as the Apostle expresses it. The next thing is to keep the heart in loyalty, in full submission to the Divine will. The necessity for thus keeping the heart is manifest. Even though our hearts are loyal to the Lord, yet we are surrounded by adverse conditions. The world, the flesh and the Devil are assailing our hearts, which need, therefore, to be watched continually. As the Apostle says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." (2 Cor. 4:7.) We have these adverse tendencies, or conditions, to deal with.

God is not judging His people merely in respect to their flesh, in respect to the deeds of life. These are more or less imperfect. He has so fixed the matter that the result of that which springs from the heart, for which the heart is responsible, is life or death. If the issues are right, the result will be life eternal. If the issues are wrong, the result will be death, unworthiness of life. It is not merely the issues of our *conduct* that determine the everlasting result, life or death, but the issues of our *hearts*. They not only affect the present life, in the cleansing or polluting of those with whom we come in contact, but they determine or settle the matter as to whether or not we shall have life.

Thus the issues of the heart constitute the decisive test. The statement does not say that the antithesis of life is death; but the question is, Shall *we* have *life*? We have already been in death. We can have life only through the appointed Channel, the Redeemer. If we accept the issue of life and receive God's favor of life everlasting, we avoid the other issue, death everlasting. Not only is *this* question decided by the issue of our hearts, but it is also true that those who attain the condition of life during this Age will attain either the

glory of the divine nature or membership in the "great company." They will be either of the Royal Priesthood or the servants of this priesthood. Hence, a great deal depends upon the issues of the heart. Therefore, we should desire the things approved, the things of God. We should seek to have the very best achievable issue, or result, to attain to the prize of our calling in Christ Jesus!

MUST ROOT OUT OF OUR HEARTS ALL LOVE OF SIN

It is not sufficient that we acknowledge sin in its various forms to be evil, and that we resolve that we will strive against it because it is under the Lord's ban; in addition to this we are to root out of our hearts every longing, every desire for everything not thoroughly approved by the Lord. Oh, what a cleansing this would mean in the hearts and lives, and especially in the thoughts of many who have named the name of Christ! Many who fail to note this point find themselves continually beset with temptations because, while *outwardly* avoiding gross immoralities, they *secretly harbor sympathies for things condemned*, desiring that they might have them, if only they were not forbidden.

The more attention we give to this subject the more we will be convinced from our own personal experiences of the truth of the Scriptural declarations respecting the beginnings of sin as *secret faults in the mind, the heart*; and the more we will appreciate the statement of our text, "Keep thy heart [mind, affections] with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

We are not to wonder that God has so constituted us as to permit temptations to come to our minds, nor are we to pray that we may have no temptations; for *if there were no such presentations*, no such temptations, *there could be no victories on our part*, no overcoming of sin and of the Wicked One. We know that for this very reason we are now in the School of Christ; not that we shall there be *shielded from all temptation*, but *that we may learn of the great Teacher how to meet the Tempter*, and by our Master's grace and help come off conquerors, victors in the strife against sin. The degree of our success in this conflict will depend largely upon the keenness of our faith and trust in the great Teacher. If we have confidence in His wisdom, we will follow closely His instructions and keep our hearts, minds, with all diligence. Faith in the Lord's wisdom and in His help in every time of need is necessary to us in order that we may be thoroughly obedient to Him; and hence it is written, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our *faith*"; that is, it will be by the *exercise of faith* and the *obedience which flows therefrom* that we will be enabled to come off conquerors and "*more than conquerors*" through Him that loved us and gave Himself for us.—I John 5:4; Rom. 8:37.

We are not to seek Divine aid far in advance; as, for instance, to ask to be kept throughout the year to come, or month to come, or week to come; rather we ought to know that if we have made a covenant with the Lord and are His, He is near us at all times, in every trial, in every temptation; and that His assistance is ready to our use, if we will but *accept it and act accordingly*. Hence our prayers should be for help *in the time of need*, as well as general prayers for the Lord's blessing and care for each day.

The difficulty with many is that they are looking for some great battles instead of *averting the great battles* and keeping their minds cleansed from secret faults. The little battles, which are much more numerous, are principally the ones in which we gain the victories, with their ultimate rewards. "Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit [mind, will] than he that taketh a city."—Prov. 16:32.

Finally, the grand results of obedience to this counsel of the Lord, the grand attainment of those who have faithfully kept their hearts with diligence, is expressed in the words of the Psalmist, and may well be the repeated, earnest prayer of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus: "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults. ... Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer."—Psa. 19:13, 14.

JANUARY 28

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels—Rev. 3:5.

The faithful overcomers watch and keep their garments unspotted from the world. ... "They have not defiled their garments," they have "kept their garments unspotted from the world." They have not been willing to permit sin to contaminate them and to separate them from the Lord, but have quickly applied for and obtained the precious blood to remove every stain. They are so heartily opposed to sin and so earnest about the keeping of this garment unspotted that the Adversary gets no hold upon them—"the wicked one catcheth them not." All this indicates a full submission of their wills to the will of Christ—they are "dead with him," and hence could not willingly practice sin—Z '97, 161 (R 2159).

The overcomer will attain to the highest acquisition, a pure character, and such a character inscribed in the covenant through fulfillment of its obligations will never be blotted out. On the contrary, it will be praised by the Son before the Father and the holy angels. It will be the equipment for the honor, work and rewards in the Kingdom. It will last forever, even as the Psalmist says, "Your heart shall live forever!"—P '31, 192.

Parallel passages: 1 Kings 19:18; Ezek. 9:4; Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:8; Psa. 45:14; Matt. 7:21; Rev. 12:11; Neh. 13:14; Ex. 32:32, 33; Psa. 69:28; Rev. 21:27; 13:8; 17:8; Phil. 4:3; Matt. 10:32; Luke 12:8; Matt. 25:21.

Hymns: 201, 192, 312, 125, 230, 58, 92.

Poems of Dawn, 207: *Ascend, Beloved*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 118 (R 5668).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences and hopes in line with this text? In what did they result?

ASCEND, BELOVED

ASCEND, beloved, to His joy;
Thy festal day hath come;
Tonight the Lamb doth feast His own,
Tonight He with His Bride sits down,
Tonight puts on the spousal crown,
In the great upper room.

Ascend, beloved, to thy Love;
This is the day of days;
Tonight the bridal song is sung,
Tonight ten thousand harps are strung,

In sympathy with heart and tongue,
Unto the Lamb's high praise.

The festal lamps are lighting now,
In the great marriage hall;
By angel bands the board is spread,
By angel hands the sacred bread
Is on the golden table laid;
The King His own doth call.

Long, long deferred, now comes at last,
The Lamb's glad wedding day;
The guests are gathering at the feast,
The seats in heavenly order placed,
The royal throne above the rest—
How bright the whole array!

Sorrow and sighing are no more;
The weeping hours are past;
Tonight the waiting will be done,
Tonight the wedding robe is on;
The glory and the joy begun,
The hour hath come at last.

Within the hall is heav'nly light;
Around, above, is love;
We enter to go out no more;
We raise the song unsung before;
We doff the sackcloth that we wore,
For all is joy and love.

Ascend, beloved, share His life;
Our days of death are o'er;
Mortality hath done its worst,
The fetters of the tomb are burst,
The last hath now become the first,
Forever, evermore.

Ascend, beloved, to the feast,
Make haste, the day hath come;
Thrice blest are they the Lamb doth call
To share the heavenly festival
In the new Salem's palace hall,
Our everlasting home.

R5668: THE WHITE RAIMENT OF THE KINGDOM

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels."—Revelation 3:5.

IN THIS text, as throughout the Bible, the thought is maintained that the elect class, who will receive the highest glory, honor and blessing from the Lord, must demonstrate their loyalty by overcoming. It is not sufficient that there shall be an overcoming of the will at the beginning of the Christian career, but subsequently there must be trials and testings endured, and these must be met in an overcoming manner. The consecration having been made, and the trials and testings having begun, the individual yielding under those temptations and testings, and continuing to be overcome by them, would prove that he is not sufficiently loyal; for the Lord has promised that His grace shall be sufficient in every time of need.—2 Corinthians 12:9.

Although the Lord's grace is sufficient, this would not mean that we might not sometimes fall into temptation. We might fall into temptation inadvertently, without the consent of our wills, and "be overtaken in a fault." But the Lord's grace is sufficient to bring us out of the temptations as overcomers, enabling us to triumph over them. Falling *into* temptation does not mean *falling* in temptation—falling *when tempted*. But when one is temporarily overcome, whether it be a yielding to a temptation of the flesh or whether it be a wilfulness of spirit, or mind, has much to do with the nature and degree of the sin. We may not always be able to triumph fully, completely, according to the *flesh*, but the *will* must be loyal. We must triumph in the *mind*, otherwise we shall not be overcomers.

This overcoming is a gradual work, progressing throughout our Christian course, from the moment of consecration down to the conclusion of life. But the text apparently takes hold of the conclusion, rather than the beginning or the middle of the work, and implies that the individual has at the *end* of the trial, the *end* of his race-course, this overcoming degree of righteousness, so that he may be classed as an overcomer. Such an overcomer will be clothed in white raiment.

WHITE RAIMENT LOANED TO US

The Scriptures give us to understand that at the very beginning of our Christian experience, we figuratively are clothed in white raiment. This white raiment represents *justification*—we are justified freely from all things. It is a robe without a spot. It is sometimes spoken of as Christ's robe of righteousness, because it comes to us through Christ. It is to be had only through Him. He is able to *impute* to us, to *loan* to us, grant to us temporarily, this robe. It is spoken of as the wedding garment. At an oriental wedding, a wedding garment of white linen was used to cover over the clothing worn by each guest. It was loaned to the guest at the wedding by the host, when he appeared at the wedding-feast.

White linen signifies purity. So when Christ gives us the use of His merit, it is as a white garment to cover our imperfections. It is an *imputation* of His righteousness, which is to us *justification*. We are exhorted to keep our garments unspotted from the world. The imputation of righteousness given us, we are to preserve, to maintain. But we cannot fully maintain it of ourselves. Our tongues may sometimes say things that we wish they had not said, and our hands may sometimes do things we would not desire. Hence, God has provided a way by which our blemishes or transgressions may be eradicated—those not wilful. This way is our daily application for the cleansing of these unwilling transgressions, through the precious blood. Thus we keep our garments unspotted from the world. Thus our justification, our white robe, is maintained—should be maintained.

WHITE RAIMENT OUR OWN

But it is not sufficient that we have the imputation of our Savior's righteousness. This imputation is only a temporary arrangement. We need to come to the place where we shall have a righteousness of our own. Our flesh is imperfect; as St. Paul says, we cannot do the things which we would. In spite of our best endeavors things are bound to go more or less wrong. But we are to prove ourselves overcomers—"more than conquerors." The Lord has arranged that at the conclusion of our trial, at the end of the present life, all the overcomers shall receive the new body. This new body will be a body of actual purity. Thus, as the Apostle says, we shall "be clothed upon with our House which is from Heaven." So our raiment will be changed from a garment of *imputed* perfection, our justification by faith, to that which represents *actual* perfection. At the resurrection we shall receive that body of inherent purity, without blemish, without spot, which is here pictured as "white raiment."

"BROUGHT BEFORE THE KING"

Furthermore, we read of each of these that the Lord "will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life," in which are written the names of all those who become truly the Lord's people, those who have made with the Lord "a covenant by sacrifice," all who renounce their wills, who present their bodies a living sacrifice. The name of each of these is recorded, entered in the Lamb's Book of Life, when he starts to live the new life, and to demonstrate his loyalty. Just as these are clothed upon with the robe of Christ's righteousness in advance of being actually tested, so their names are written in that Book in advance of being actually tested. If they do not remain faithful, their names will be blotted out of that Book of Life. But if they are faithful their names will not be blotted out of the Book of Life; and they will attain all those glorious things which are promised to those who love Him supremely.—Revelation 21:7.

More than this, the Lord says, "I will confess their names before My Father and before His angels." The intimation here is that the overcomers will have such characters that the Lord will not be ashamed of them, but will be pleased to own them in the presence of the Father and the holy angels. We are to be "changed from glory to glory," into the likeness of our Lord. (2 Corinthians 3:18.) In the end, these overcomers will each be so grandly developed that the Lord will not be ashamed to confess any of them and to say, Here is

one of My followers. Here is another. They have walked in My footsteps and have overcome. But He will be ashamed of any who are ashamed of Him. Of such He says, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory and in His Father's, and of the holy angels."—Luke 9:26.

It is not a matter of favoritism, but of character-development. If they will not endure to the end, if they do not prove overcomers, they will not be fit for the Kingdom and association with their Lord.

This brings up the thought that there is another class mentioned in the Bible—the Great Company class, as in contrast to the Little Flock—or the antitypical Levite class as in contrast to the antitypical Priestly class. The Great Company had their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life, but they were not overcomers in the truest sense. They did not stand faithful. Because of not proving faithful, they will not be confessed before the Father and the holy angels in the same sense as the Bride class.

It is stated that the Bride will be presented before the Father, and that "the virgins, her companions" (Psalm 45:13-15) will be there also—but the latter will not be confessed as the Bride class. We will not say that their names will be blotted out of the Lamb's Book of Life. *Their* names may remain. But those who go into the Second Death will surely have their names blotted out of the Book; they will be destroyed with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.

ROBES WASHED IN "THE GREAT TRIBULATION"

The Great Company will not have the "abundant entrance" granted the Little Flock. And the same distinction obtains between these two classes in connection with the white raiment. While all receive the robe of Christ's imputed righteousness, some of them do not keep their garments "unspotted from the world." Their white raiment becomes spotted and soiled, bedraggled by contact with the earth. Their justification, or robe of Christ's righteousness, becomes unpresentable. When a spot comes upon it, instead of having the spot cleansed away at once, they allow it to remain, and the spots accumulate until their garment becomes quite soiled. Then at the conclusion of their course, when the examination day comes, their robe is found to be spotted—yet they *wear* it still. They are not divested of that robe of justification. They have not abandoned the Lord and He has not abandoned them. But they have failed to use the means which the Lord provided for their cleansing.

In the Revelation this class is spoken of as "a great multitude"—the Great Company. We are told that they "will come up out of the Great Tribulation, and will wash their robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb." Instead of doing a cleansing work day by day, maintaining their justification with God and being ready for the change (by means of their faithfulness) they are, on the contrary, found of Him as unworthy of this chief place. Their robes will not be taken from them, but they will be obliged to suffer great tribulations, with the view to making them ready to wash and make their robes

white in the blood of cleansing, so that they, also, will be clothed in white and in their resurrection bodies will be pure. But they will attain this only by passing through "the Great Tribulation."—See Revelation 7:9-14.

JANUARY 29

The fear [reverence] of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom—Psa. 111:10.

This is the only proper attitude of the creature toward the Creator, the Author of our being, and the Creator, Preserver and Lord of the whole universe. When He speaks, therefore, our ears should be reverently attentive to His voice, and every power alert to do His bidding. Our safety, our happiness, and that nobility of character which prompts to love and gratitude, and which promptly and wisely heeds instruction and advances in knowledge and wisdom, all depend primarily upon our supreme reverence for the Lord. And therefore the Lord would foster and cultivate in us that becoming filial reverence that is due to His name—Z '96, 155 (R 2002).

Wisdom not only includes knowledge but also the practical application of knowledge to good purposes. The highest and the best things are those that concern man in his proper relationship toward God and his fellow-men. How evident it is, therefore, that the source of wisdom is reverence for God, since it enables one to come into a proper relationship to God and man and realize its calls—P '35, 183.

Parallel passages: Deut. 4:6; 5:29; 6:2; 10:12; Job 28:28; Psa. 111:1-9; 25:8-14; Prov. 1:7-9, 21-23; 2:1-11; Eccles. 8:12; Zeph. 3:7; Mal. 3:16; Matt. 11:25-30; Luke 1:49, 50; John 14:15-17; Acts 10:35.

Hymns: 11, 55, 83, 63, 202, 130, 176.

Poems of Dawn, 88: *My Trust in Him*.

Tower Reading: Z '06, 299 (R 3861).

Questions: Did I reverence God this week? What helped or hindered therein? Did I receive good from the experience?

MY TRUST IN HIM

I CANNOT always see the way that leads
To heights above;
I sometimes quite forget He leads me on
With hand of love.
But yet I realize the path must lead me to
Immanuel's land,
And when I reach life's summit, I shall know
And understand.

I cannot always trace the onward course
My bark must take;
But looking backward, I behold afar
Its shining wake
Illumined with God's Light of Love, and so

I onward go
In perfect trust that He who holds the helm
The course must know.

I cannot always see the plan on which
He builds my life;
For oft the sound of hammer, blow on blow,
The noise of strife,
Confuse me till I quite forget He knows
And oversees,
And that in all details with His great plan
My life agrees.

I cannot always understand
The Master's rule;
I cannot always do the tasks He gives
In Life's hard school;
But I am learning with His help to solve
Them one by one;
And when I cannot understand, to say,
"Thy will be done."

R3861: NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart."

IN OUR study of September 15th we considered our Lord's answer to the Pharisees and Herodians and Sadducees on the Tuesday preceding his crucifixion. The present lesson closely connects with that one. A Scribe and Doctor of the Law, noting with apparent sincerity the wisdom of our Lord's replies to the Pharisees and Sadducees, broached the question respecting the Law—quite a common one among the Jews—namely, which commandment is the first or chief, the most important. It will be remembered that on another occasion a Scribe asked the Lord a similar question, and our Lord drew from him the answer by inquiring, "What sayest thou?" In the present instance, however, Jesus answered the question directly, quoting from the summary of the ten commandments. (Deut. 6:4, 5.) "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one, Jehovah, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength."

Our attention is called to a comment on this Scripture set forth in a Sunday School Teachers' Manual, as follows:

"This describes, designates, the God whom we are to love supremely. Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the one absolute, self-existent, eternal God, and he alone. He is the Creator, Ruler, Preserver, Guide, Savior, Father, Source of all good. One of the best

services science has done for religion is the completeness of the proof that there is but one God, by proving the unity of material, of force, of government throughout the known universe. The unity of moral law is another unassailable proof."

"No Unitarian can insist upon the absolute unity of God with more earnestness and emphasis than do the Trinitarians. We believe in one God, and only one. It would be a terrible thing if there were conflicting deities, some having one dominion and others another. There would be no peace, no safety, no exaltation of soul, no assurance of hope, no eternal heaven."

NEITHER UNITARIAN NOR TRINITARIAN

Trinitarians and Unitarians seem to have divided the truth between them so that neither one possesses it in the Scriptural sense. Unitarians, so far as the name belongs to a denomination, and judged by their public declarations, reject Jesus as the special son of God, who was with the Father before the world was, and who left his heavenly state to become a man, to accomplish the redemption of Adam and his race, and who having died for our sins has been raised from the dead by the Father's power, far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named, to participate in the divine nature and glory and honor. From the Unitarian standpoint, therefore, our Lord Jesus would appear to have been merely a good man and a noble example of good living. According to this view, our Lord is not divine, but human. We cannot accept this as the teaching of the Scripture.

We must hold to the contrary that he who was rich yet for our sakes became poor, not only experienced the humiliation but has since experienced still higher exaltation, so that as a result all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father also. While we cannot admit with the Trinitarians that this last expression would mean that the Father and the Son would be one in person, we claim that they are, nevertheless, one in purpose, in plan, in co-operation, in heart harmony—one in the same sense that the Master desired that all of his disciples might be one with the Father and with himself, praying, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." The Trinitarian view, while nearer the truth than the Unitarian, in some respects is, nevertheless, wide of the truth and very confusing both to head and to heart, and proportionately injurious to the cause of the Lord. As our Lord's quotation from the Law clearly states, "Jehovah God is one God" and not three Gods.

THE FATHER AND SON ONE IN SENTIMENT

The Son of God is not the Father but the Son, who "proceeded forth from the Father," who was the Beginning of the creation of God. (John 8:42; Rev. 3:14.) Nevertheless, even before he became man's ransom price his close association with the Father and his oneness of heart and purpose with him are clearly indicated in the Scriptures. We are assured that he was the "Word of God"—the *logos*, the expression, the channel of the Father's communication. We are assured that while the Father was *the* God above all others, the Son, the *Logos*, was *a* God above all others, next to the Father but subservient

to the Father. We are assured that he was the Father's active agent in the entire work of creation, so that "by him were all things made that were made, and without him was not one thing made." (John 1:1-3.) His subserviency to the Father is testified to by himself, "The Father is greater than I," "The Father hath sent me," "As I hear I speak." (John 14:28; 20:21.) This subservience and dependence upon the Father not only was true of our Lord while he was in the flesh and before he was made flesh, but is distinctly asserted of him since his resurrection to glory, honor and immortality to divine nature.

The Apostle tells us that the Millennial Kingdom glory, honor and power are to be specially given to the Son by the Father, and that when the Son shall have finished that appointed work he will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, and the Father will be recognized as the "all in all" of the universe. (I Cor. 15:28.) Every utterance of the inspired Word of God is in full accord with those which we have quoted. For instance, we have already referred to the statement that he and the Father are one, and have shown that he meant not oneness in respect to authority or person but oneness in respect to their plans, purposes and work, he having set aside his own will to do the Father's will. In the same manner he desires that all who would be recognized as his disciples, and by and by constitute his Bride, should lay aside their own wills and be fully submissive to the Father's will, and thus be in the fullest harmony with the Father and the Son, "That they all may be one in us." In accord with this view we have also the statement of our Lord, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father:" that is, humanity being of earthly nature could not see a spirit being, as it is written, "There shall no man see me and live." (Exod. 33:20.) A perfect human being would be the best illustration of the Heavenly Father that it would be possible for mankind to see with the natural eye, and this they did see in our Lord Jesus, the Father's image in the flesh. For a further and complete analysis of this subject the reader is referred to MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V.

HOW TO LOVE GOD PERFECTLY

The definition here given of the love due to our Creator is all comprehensive: our hearts, our affections, must all reverence and love him; our souls, our being, our bodies, must all be controlled by love for God; our minds must similarly recognize, reverence, appreciate and love the Lord, and our strength of mind or body must recognize him as worthy of every loving service we can render. Not only so, but our hearts, minds, etc., must not be divided in their love—the Lord must be first with us in every sense of the word. This means the full consecration of time, talent, influence, everything that we possess—it means a condition of heart that is unknown to the vast majority even of those who are justified by faith in the precious blood, and who have a measure of peace with God through our Lord Jesus. This fulness of love for the Father represents not the beginning of the consecrated Christian's condition, but its fulness, its completeness. It represents not his attitude at the time he enters the school of Christ to learn of him, but the condition he must attain to before he can reach the mark or be ready for graduation to the heavenly condition.

FIRST REVERENCE—LATER LOVE

The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but is not the end of it. We cannot love God until we have become acquainted with him and ascertained the lovable qualities represented in him. Hence the importance of the knowledge everywhere pointed out in the Word of God. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." (John 17:3.) The fear or reverence of God is our first knowledge, and if we be rightly exercised thereby the Lord will reveal himself to us more and more as the one appointed to be the Way, the Truth, the Life—no man cometh unto the Father except by him. Many lessons are to be learned respecting the power and greatness and wisdom and justice of our God before we are able to understand and appreciate the "love of God which passeth all understanding."

If we were all perfect as Adam was perfect we would have little difficulty in appreciating the divine character, because the perfect man was created in the divine image and would therefore readily appreciate all the divine qualities and attributes; but born in sin, shapen in iniquity, we are all more or less fallen from that perfection and must learn to know our God. As already suggested, our fallen conditions permit us to learn of his wisdom, justice and power quicker than to learn of his love. Indeed God's love has not yet been manifested to the world in general. Only to a comparatively small number is God's love manifested at all, and it is seen by them only with the eye of faith. The Apostle declares, "Herein was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him."—John 4:9.

How few realize the need of this sacrifice! Such only can appreciate the love that was back of it and manifested through it. The great majority are blind to these things, and must wait for their appreciation of the love of God until the glorious time foretold in the prophecies, when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise and chase all the darkness and sin away, when there shall be no more curse resting upon the world of mankind, when Satan shall be bound and the knowledge of the Lord be caused to fill the whole earth—then, as one of the chief elements of the glory of God, will be clearly seen by all mankind the love of God which passeth all understanding. Thank God that we are so highly favored that the eyes of our understanding are opening to this great love of God in advance of the world's blessing and enlightenment! Nevertheless, to the most enlightened this appreciation of the divine character as the God of love came gradually, little by little, as we came to understand the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan, and have come to appreciate the love that prompted that plan and is outworking it and guaranteeing its consummation to be glorious.

KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY TO LOVE

In proportion as we discern the perfection of the divine character, in the same proportion are we able to love the Lord with all our hearts, all our minds, all our beings, all our strength. The Christian who attains to this in his heart has surely reached the mark expressed by this command—the first command, the principal command. The Lord may permit him to be tried, tested and proved along the line of this love and to demonstrate a fixity of love, but all the time he was thus being tested he is at this standard of the divine

law. There is a distinction, however, to be made between the heart standard by which the Lord is judging the Church and the fleshly standard by which the same persons might be judged of others. Because of the weakness of the flesh, the heart love for the Lord might at times not be fully and clearly expressed so that it would be apparent to all mankind. The world, which judges only by the flesh, knoweth us not. It is a consolation to our hearts that the Father realizes our love and devotion, and is judging us not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, the heart, the intention, the new mind. And in proportion as we realize the imperfections of our flesh and our inability to show the loving devotion of our hearts and minds, being and strength, we should have compassion and sympathy with our fellow members who similarly more or less imperfectly manifest in their flesh the devotion of heart which they have professed. As the Lord waits patiently for us to develop the fruits of the Spirit, the graces of the Spirit, in our lives, so it behooves us to wait patiently upon the fellow-members of the body as they seek also to become renewed in thought and word and deed, sanctified wholly to the Master and his use.

"THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF"

Lest this Doctor of the Law should misapprehend, the Lord quoted from Leviticus 19:18 the statement, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and this he designated as also of primary importance and second only to the previous statement of love to God. As stated elsewhere, on these two commands hang all the Law and the prophets. In other words, the keeping of these two would touch upon, cover and include every item of the divine law. As spiritual Israelites, therefore, it is appropriate that we notice this as well as the other command. Indeed we hear the Apostle John as the mouthpiece of the Lord declaring, "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—I John 4:20.

It is well that we keep this test clearly before our hearts lest we deceive ourselves. Love, the greatest attribute in the world, stands related to all the other things in the universe. While God should be first in our hearts and affections, nevertheless our love for God is more difficult to measure than is our love for man. Love is opposed to selfishness and does not even "seek her own" rights, although it may be necessary that love be restrained and ruled at times by justice and wisdom. What a grand lesson on all that is implied in the word love is furnished us by the Lord through the Apostle in I Corinthians, 13th chapter. There we are not only shown what elements of conduct are loving, but what elements are contrary to love—which elements of our characters should be cultivated and which should be restrained, subdued, mortified.

Our Lord's questioner was evidently sincere. He perceived not only the wisdom of the Lord's reply to those who were seeking to catch him, but now he had a grand illustration of that wisdom when applied conscientiously to the most important of all doctrines—the most important features of the divine law. His reply was, "Of a truth, Master, thou hast well said, for there is but one God and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his

neighbor as himself, is much more than whole burnt offering and sacrifices." Jesus, beholding his candor, gave him an encouraging word, which should have been of great assistance to him, saying, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God."

One sincerely recognizing the truths just enunciated must surely have been of honest heart, and hence of the kind whom the Lord would be pleased to have enter the Kingdom class by full acceptance of him as their Redeemer and by a full consecration of their every power and talent to his service. This would be the practical outworking of this great commandment, fulness of love for God that would lead to endeavors to serve and please him in every possible manner, and their love for fellow men that would have delight in telling the good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. We read that after that no man durst ask Jesus any question. This was possibly because his ministries and teachings as divinely intended had reached their fulfilment, accomplishment, or possibly it may signify that all classes of his religious opponents held the Master in such awe and respect that they feared to attempt further questioning, which could only result disastrously to themselves, showing their own deficiencies and making him the more prominent as the great Teacher.

"KEEP YOURSELF FROM IDOLS"

Quite a good many of the Lord's earnest followers realize the danger which besets us all of rendering too much love and homage to an earthly creature, and thus to some extent robbing God of what is his due. This seems to be the Apostle's thought in the above expression. He had no thought of Christian people becoming worshipers of sticks and stones, but he did appreciate the fact that the human heart may consecrate itself to serve wealth or fame; and some of the Lord's people, keeping themselves from such idols, are in danger of putting too large a proportion of their love upon wife or husband, parent or child, brother or sister, and thus idolizing them and bringing an earthborn cloud between their hearts and the Heavenly Father. It is well to be on guard and to remember that, however much we may love others, the Lord must have all our hearts in the sense that he would be first and chief, and that if it were necessary every earthly tie might be broken, however tender, rather than the tie that binds our hearts to the Lord.

When in such fear, when realizing ourselves in such danger, let us remember that there would be two ways of correcting the difficulty: the one would be by breaking off some of our love for earthly objects and conditions, the other by increasing our love for the heavenly. It surely would be in line with the divine arrangement that we should be discriminating as respects our loves for earthly things, to discern whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good repute, and discouraging all others as unworthy of us as New Creatures in Christ. This would not, of course, mean that we should hate anybody, though it might mean that we would properly be separated from some whose influence would be to the contrary of these divinely appointed guides and sentiments. With our earthly love all centered upon good and noble persons, and especially appreciating these because of their relationship to that which is perfect, to the Lord and his standards, we should then measure the love for these with the love for the Father, and determine that the

love for God must be cultivated more and more, until it shall far outreach and outweigh any earthly love, however precious. From this standpoint we would love our dear ones of earth no less, but the heavenly Father proportionately so much more. This we may be sure would be the right attitude which the Lord would most approve.

KEPT FOR THE MASTER'S USE

This thought is presented in a poem quoted by Miss Havergill in her work entitled, "Kept for the Master's Use."

"I tremble when I think
How much I love him; but I turn away
From thinking of it, just to love him more;—
Indeed, I fear, too much."

"Dear Eleanor,
Do you love him as much as Christ loves us?
Let your lips answer me."

"Why ask me, dear?
Our hearts are finite, Christ is infinite."

"Then till you reach the standard of that love,
Let neither fears nor well-meant warning voice
Distress you with 'too much.' For he hath said
How much—and who shall dare to change his measure—
That ye should love as I have loved you.
O sweet command, that goes so far beyond
The mightiest impulse of the tenderest heart!
A bare permission had been much; but he
Who knows our yearnings and our fearfulness,
Chose graciously to bid us do the thing
That makes our earthly happiness,
A limit that we need not fear to pass,
Because we cannot. Oh, the breadth and length,
And depth and height of love that passeth knowledge!
Yet Jesus said, 'As I have loved you.'

"O, Beatrice, I long to feel the sunshine
That this should bring; but there are other words
Which fall in chill eclipse. 'Tis written 'Keep
Yourselves from idols.' How shall I obey?"

"Oh, not by loving less, but loving more.
It is not that we love our precious ones
Too much, but God too little. As the lamp

A miner bears upon his shadowed brow
Is only dazzling in the grimy dark,
And has no glare against the summer sky,
So, set the tiny torch of our best love
In the great sunshine of the love of God,
And, though full fed and fanned, it casts no shade
And dazzles not, o'erflowed with mightier light."

"BEWARE OF THE SCRIBES."

His opportunities for teaching his apostles were rapidly passing, and our Lord, sitting in or near the Temple, said to them, "Beware of the Scribes, which love to go in long robes and to receive salutations in the market places, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the chief places at feasts: which devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers: these shall receive the greater condemnation."

Our Lord did not say that all of the Scribes, all of the learned Doctors of the Law, had the disreputable qualities he reproved. More properly we might understand him to mean: You have been taught to honor and respect the learned Scribes or teachers of your nation, but take heed to those of them who have the characteristics I have just denounced. They are far from the Kingdom condition; their selfishness is manifest in the ways I have enumerated, and proportionately they are lacking in the traits which would have the Father's approval either under the letter or the spirit of the Law.

We might make two applications of this lesson to our own times: one would be that we are not necessarily to reverence and follow Doctors of Divinity, but are to be discriminating in regard to the respect we have for them and their teachings. We are not to think that those who manifest a self-seeking spirit, the highest place in the Conference, who boast of their learning, whose special adorning is not of the meek and quiet spirit, but of the long robes of profession, who love to receive recognition in public places and to be called Rabbi, Reverend, etc., and to be made very prominent before the people; these should not be regarded as proper exemplars or patterns. Rather we should look away from such, realizing that the Lord despises not only the proud but the selfish, and shows his favors to the humble and to the lowly. Another lesson for us would come still closer home to every reader of this journal.

In Spiritual Israel those who are instructed in the true knowledge of the Lord's Word should be overcomers of the spirit of the world, the spirit of selfishness. If any such find in themselves any of these enumerated characteristics which the Lord condemns, he should flee from the sin as he would from a contagious disease. For instance, if he finds himself greatly influenced by the opinion of others respecting his clothing, if he finds in himself a self-seeking spirit, a selfish disposition to grasp the best for himself on all occasions, and love of public praise and of recognition, titles, etc., let such beware. Whether he has a greater or less degree of earthly learning, or a greater or less degree of heavenly learning, he is in a dangerous condition if he has the selfish tendencies which the Lord here enumerates. Especially is he in need of divine grace to help him out of the

horrible pit of selfishness if he finds himself so devoid of love as to be willing to take the goods of others without proper recompense, whether they be widows' houses or what not. The more one knows, the more of a Scribe he is, the greater will be his condemnation if the characteristics here set forth by our Lord are his.

GREAT AND SMALL GIFTS TO GOD

We have seen the kind of love for God and man which the divine Law stipulates; we have seen how some of the most prominent of those professing to be teachers of the divine Law come far short of the divine standard, as in the case of the Scribe in the illustration just given. Our Lord next presented his teachings from still another standpoint: he would show his disciples that they must not measure the divine approval along earthly lines, but must remember that the Lord looketh on the heart; that many who are esteemed amongst men are an abomination in his sight, and some not esteemed amongst men are his jewels. He pointed out the poor widow who had just cast two mites into the treasury of the Temple, and he declared that her gift, although insignificant from the human standpoint, was greater in God's sight than many of the larger gifts, because she had given of her penury. Others had given from their abundance what they would little miss: she out of her nothing had given that which would cause her considerable self-denial. Here, then, is the Lord's appreciation and estimate of our sacrifices in response to our love for him. Whoever loves another will seek to serve him and be willing to render service at an expense that would be proportionate to his love.

The wealthy can give liberally and be blest in giving, but the poor are to remember that the Lord highly esteems the spirit of their hearts when they desire to serve him and his cause. Their humble efforts are appreciated by the Lord even though man might despise them and consider them insignificant. Our Lord's judgment was that the poor widow had cast in more than they all from the standpoint of divine appreciation. What a thought is here for every one of us: however small our talents, however few, however limited are our opportunities for service, our offerings are not despised, but on the contrary are credited proportionately to the real spirit of sacrifice prompting them. What an encouragement is this to all who have the right spirit of love for the Lord and desire to be his self-sacrificing followers. The Scribe with much ado and outward show of reverence and love for God got the reward which he sought—the approval of his neighbors or those of them who were deceived by his various, pious mannerisms. This poor widow, however, unnoticed and disesteemed of the multitude, would be sure to have the Father's blessing and favor and love; and her procedure mentioned favorably constitutes encouragement to ourselves and to all who desire to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

JANUARY 30

Jesus spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint—Luke 18:1.

In coming to God we need have no fear that He is too busy with other matters of greater importance, or that He is weary of our coming to Him repeatedly with things of small importance. It was to assure us against this very thing that our Lord spoke the parable of the importunate widow, who was heard and answered on account of her importunity. In so doing we evince both the earnestness of our desires and our faith that our prayers will be answered, if we faint not from lack of faith or zeal when the answer is delayed, as often it must necessarily be, since time is an important element in all God's work—Z '95, 214 (R 1864).

How blessed the assurance that the privilege of prayer is ever accessible to the child of God! How glorious is the assurance that omnipotent Love sits on the throne, favoring us! This should encourage us in every perplexity, since omnipotent Love is invincible. Therefore, yoked with God, we can never fail. Our strength will be equal to every demand, and our victories will follow one another in quick succession, until a complete conquest is attained in and by Christ Jesus—P '30, 14.

Parallel passages: Luke 2:37; 11:5-13; 21:36; Matt. 15:27, 28; 21:22; John 15:7; 16:23; Rom. 12:12; Isa. 62:6, 7; Psa. 118:5; 2 Cor. 12:8, 9; 1 Thes. 5:17; Heb. 4:16; 1 John 5:14; 3:22; Jas. 1:5, 6; Jer. 29:13.

Hymns: 239, 1, 26, 50, 56, 57, 136.
Poems of Dawn, 57: *Trust in the Lord*.
Tower Reading: Z '13, 277 (R 5310).

Questions: What experiences did I have this week in line with this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? What were their results?

TRUST IN THE LORD

PSALM 52:8.

O TRUST thyself to Jesus,
When conscious of thy sin—
Of its heavy weight upon thee,
Of its mighty power within.
Then is the hour for pleading
His finished work for thee;
Then is the time for singing,
"His blood was shed for me."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
When faith is dim and weak,
And the very One thou needest

Thou canst not rise to seek.
Then is the hour for seeing
That He hath come to thee;
Then is the time for singing,
"His touch hath healed me."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
When tempted to transgress
By hasty word, or angry look.
Or thought of bitterness.
Then is the hour for claiming
Thy Lord to fight for thee;
Then is the time for singing,
"He doth deliver me."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
When daily cares perplex,
And trifles seem to gain a power
Thine inner soul to vex.
Then is the hour for grasping
His hand who walked the sea;
Then is the time for singing,
"He makes it calm for me."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
When some truth thou canst not see
For the mists of strife and error,
That veil its form from thee.
Then is the hour for looking
To Him to guide thee right;
Then is the time for singing,
"The Lord shall be my light."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
In bright and happy days,
When tasting earthly gladness,
Or winning human praise.
Then is the hour for hiding
In the shadow of His wings;
Then is the time for singing,
"Praise to the King of kings!"

O trust thyself to Jesus,
When thou art wearied sore,
When head or hand refuses
To think or labor more.

Then is the hour for leaning
Upon the Master's breast;
Then is the time for singing,
"My Savior gives me rest."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
When thou art tried with pain;
No power for prayer, the only thought
How to endure the strain.
Then is the hour for resting
In His perfect love for thee;
Then is the time for singing,
"He thinks and cares for me."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
In days of feebleness,
When thou canst only dumbly feel
Thine utter helplessness.
Then is the hour for proving
His mighty power in thee;
Then is the time for singing,
"His grace sufficeth me."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
When thou art full of care
For wanderers whom thou canst not win
Our blessed hope to share.
Then is the hour for trusting
Thy Lord to bring them nigh;
Then is the time for singing,
"He loves them more than I."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
When loved ones pass away,
When very lonely seems thy life,
And very dark thy way.
Then is the hour for yielding
Entirely to His will;
Then is the time for singing,
"I have my Savior still."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
When flesh and heart do fail,
And thou art called to enter
Death's dark, o'ershadowed vale.
Then is the hour for saying,

I will no evil fear;
Then is the time for singing,
"Lord, Thou art with me here."

O trust thyself to Jesus,
As thy spirit takes its flight,
From every earthly shadow,
To the realm of perfect light.
Then is the hour for shouting,
"Christ hath done all for me!"
Then is the time for singing,
"He gives the victory!"

R5310: PRAYER THE VITAL BREATH OF THE NEW CREATURE

"And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."—Luke 18:1.

JESUS spoke a parable, of which the *gist*, or *import* is, "That men ought always to pray and not to faint." That parable tells how even an unjust judge would, because of importunity, heed an appeal for justice and would finally yield to its demands, although he cared little for the principle itself. In the parable the woman was importunate in her petitions for justice against those who were doing her injury. The Lord seems to inculcate just such importunity in prayer, and gives this as an illustration of how His people should continue in their prayers; not that they should pray all the time, in the sense of never getting off their knees, or of never doing anything except to pray, but that they should *continue* in their prayers and not grow faint or disheartened.

In order to pray properly, the child of God should know what he may pray for. Otherwise he might be asking for the wrong things, such as God would never be pleased to give him. How may we know what things are proper to pray for? The Lord gives us an intimation along this line, of what is proper. He says, If earthly parents are pleased to give good gifts to their children, how much more is the Heavenly Father pleased to give good gifts to His children. The things which earthly fathers give to their children are *earthly* things. The things that the Heavenly Father is pleased to give to His children are *Heavenly* things. The world of mankind are not permitted to call God their Father. He disowns them as children. There is only one way to come back into relationship with God, and that is the way that Jesus opened up by His death.

Were not the Jews children of God before Jesus came and died? We answer, No. The very highest expression of God's favor toward any of them was shown in Abraham. And he was called only a *friend*. "Moses verily was faithful in all his House, as a servant." Those Jews who were not faithful were not even servants. But when Christ came, He made it possible for some to come out and pass from the House of Servants into the House of Sons. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as

received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." (John 1:11, 12.) This privilege was not actually granted immediately, but merely in a reckoned way, up to the time when Jesus finished His course, ascended up into Heaven and poured out the Holy Spirit upon His followers. Then they were privileged to become sons of God.

All down the Gospel Age those who receive Him have been privileged to become sons of God. All the good promises of God's Word appertain to these. This class includes not only Jews, but Gentiles, to whom the door of opportunity was thrown open, after the special opportunity which had been granted to the Jews came to an end. Thus we have become Spiritual Israelites and heirs of all the things God promised to this class of sons of God. So when we go to the Father in prayer, it is the privilege of prayer as a New Creature. Whoever has not ceased to be an old creature and has not become a New Creature has no privilege of prayer whatever. The only exception to this is in the case of the children of consecrated parents, and God's favor to them is only on account of their parents' spiritual interests.

THE NEW CREATURE'S GREATEST NEED

Our text means that New Creatures should be persistent in their petitions to God. These may know what is proper to pray for, by studying the words of Jesus and the Apostles and the Prophets of old. The spirit-begotten ones may thus understand what are the rights and privileges of sons of God. To these the Heavenly Father is more willing to give the Holy Spirit than earthly parents are willing to give good gifts to their children.—Matthew 7:11.

The *Holy Spirit* is the one thing which the New Creature needs. The New Creature is on trial for the new nature—for glory, honor, immortality. And he can receive these only as he is worthy. The terms on which he is received into spiritual relationship with the Father are that he shall mortify, deaden, the earthly impulses and seek to have the spiritual impulses quickened. What, therefore, he especially needs to strengthen him and bear him up as a New Creature is the Holy Spirit of God. Consequently God is particularly willing to give us this, and especially pleased that we ask for it. This does not mean that earthly interests will be ignored. It means that our Heavenly Father knoweth what things of an earthly character we have need of, just as He knows what we have need of for our spiritual welfare.

The Scriptures indicate that God has given us the instructions we need in His inspired Word, the Bible. This Word will make us more and more wise, as we grow in grace and knowledge and in His Spirit, so that in time we shall know exactly what things to pray for and what things not to pray for. At the beginning of our experience, we might not know this so well. The Lord said in speaking of prayer, that the heathen think they shall be heard for their much speaking, and that they use vain repetitions. Their prayers are *all* vain repetitions. The first petition was vain and all the subsequent petitions were vain, because they are not based upon the conditions necessary to acceptable prayer.

THE MOTIVE AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION

All who have come into the Covenant of Sacrifice with Christ may realize that they have the privilege of prayer. What may they pray for? They may not pray with definiteness for earthly things, as the Heavenly Father would not answer any petitions that would not be for the good of His children. St. James speaks of some who offer improper petitions. He says, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."—James 4:3.

The word *lusts* here signifies *desires*. We are not to ask to gratify fleshly desires. For instance, suppose we should pray to the Heavenly Father to send us a million dollars, telling Him that we knew what to do with the money, and how to use it in His work. The Lord probably would not give it—for we would probably be asking amiss. But it might be that we would think that we were asking wisely. Whenever we ask anything from the Lord, we should scrutinize our motives to see if there is any personality connected with the matter. In our own case we should ask ourselves: Do we want that million dollars in order that we may shine in the use of it? If so, such a prayer would be a grossly improper prayer. We might offer such a prayer at the beginning of our Christian experience, and the Father would not chide us for it. We would excuse a child for doing what we would not excuse in one of adult years.

In respect to this matter of prayer our Lord gives us a cue. It is this: "If ye abide in Me and My Words abide in you, ye may *ask what ye will*, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7.) How broad a statement this is! It might seem at first as though we might ask for *anything*. But it has very particular limitations. Who are these who may pray thus? These are such as have already become members of His Body—such as have made a full consecration of themselves, and have received the begetting of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the word *abide* means not only that they have entered into this relationship, but that they are *remaining* there, *dwelling* there; that they are members of the Body of Christ in good standing with Him.

"If My Word abide in you." For God's Word to *abide* in us implies that we have a *knowledge* of God's Word. This necessitates the studying of the Word of God, that we may know what to pray for. We should not hasten to offer petitions, and make a great mistake, and then say, I have made a mistake, and have asked for the wrong things. We should consider what the Word of God teaches on this subject, and if any one has become well acquainted with the Word of God, he should know whether or not he has met the conditions which will sanctify his prayer. It is only after he has come to this position that he may continue to make his request, nothing doubting. But very likely he will then find that he has not a very large list of petitions that he can present. What are some of the things we may ask for?

SOME THINGS FOR WHICH TO PRAY

One of the things for which we may pray is that God's Kingdom may come. We may go continually to the Throne of Grace, then, appreciating the fact that God has said that He purposes to have a Kingdom here on earth. And nothing doubting, we are to pray for

that Kingdom. And as we pray, we are strengthening our faith more and more. What else may we pray for? We may also pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." But is not this something for the flesh? This is a necessity, and the Lord has warranted us in praying for our necessities. We are to use our judgment the best we may; yet we are not to trust to our own efforts alone, but to the Lord's supervising care. If, therefore, the temporal supply be scant, we are to learn the lesson of frugality and care of what we have.

We should learn very early in life not to be wasteful. When Jesus fed the multitude with the loaves and fishes, and then instructed His disciples to take up the remainder of these in their baskets, He illustrated His economy. We are to eat with thankfulness what we have, if it is merely bread and water, or potatoes and salt. There is nothing to indicate that we are to ask for pie or cake or ice-cream, but for the necessities. If in God's providence He furnishes the necessities and withholds the luxuries, then we are to be satisfied, to be *thankful*. But we are to pray and not to be fearful.

What if we do not get anything, *tomorrow*? Did you waste anything today? Did you eat too much today—twice as much as you had need for? If so, the Lord will probably teach you some lesson, and it will be for your good as a New Creature. But if you have used wisdom and economy, He will provide the things needful. As the Prophet says, "Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure."

We may pray for deliverance from the Evil One. This should lead us to see that *there is* an Evil One, and that we are not sufficient of ourselves to resist his attacks successfully. We need the Lord's help at all times, and we need to pray continually and not to faint.

We may pray for the forgiveness of our trespasses. What the Lord indicates in His model prayer is the forgiveness of our *daily* trespasses—"day by day." And these trespasses are the result of our fleshly imperfections. Our trespasses of the flesh today should be a great deal less than similar trespasses with us ten years ago or five years or even one year ago.

It is best not to use any set form of words in prayer, but merely to think in advance what you desire of the Spirit—more faith, more patience, more meekness, more love. Of course, we shall want to express thanks for Divine care and to request a continuance of the same. With such prayers, however simple, the Heavenly Father is pleased. The prayers recorded in the Bible are generally not lengthy. God accepts as our prayers all the good thoughts and sentiments of our minds, as well as those expressed by our tongues.

Other statements of our Lord and also of the Apostles seem to imply that we should not grow faint-hearted. After we have prayed for a certain thing, we should continue to keep it before our mind, and not conclude that because the prayer was not answered quickly God would never answer it. This would seem to apply to particular, individual things. Our text seems to include the thought that we should have in mind the advantages of prayer in all the affairs of life, coming repeatedly to the Throne of Grace to obtain the necessary aid.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PRAYER

Will God forget us if we do not ask Him for things, and neglect to do the part of a Father? The answer of the Scriptures is, that this is not so. God has made abundant provision for His children. But we are so constituted that reverence for God and desire for prayer are among the highest qualities of our nature. The organs of veneration and spirituality lie at the top of our head. And those who are not enjoying the exercise of these highest qualities are not getting the proper blessing out of life. Instead of living in the *parlor* of their brains, so to speak, some people live in the *basement*. Our true enjoyment comes from the exercise of the highest faculties of the head. Here we can commune with God respecting the highest things, the noblest things, the best things.

The natural tendency of some is toward the *baser* qualities of the human mind, rather than the higher ones; that of others is toward the *nobler* sentiments. But all are imperfect. Therefore when any have turned from sin and come into the School of Christ, they are instructed to pray, because this will enable them to get the best results from their own natural combination of faculties. By coming to the Lord with regularity in prayer they are enlisting the best qualities of their own minds. Thus the New Creature is using the highest faculties of the old nature to wean the old creature from the natural habits which he had cultivated through weaknesses of the flesh.

BLIGHT FOLLOWS NEGLECT OF PRAYER

There is a great blessing that comes from prayer! We see that if prayer be neglected, a certain amount of blight comes in; whereas if the New Creature persists in coming to the Lord in prayer, he thus uses the higher organs of the mind. He brings out the highest qualities, which will make for Righteousness and Truth, and for the growth of the New Creature. And the New Creature, making use of the higher organs of the brain, makes progress in character-structure and in the Lord's service.

Prayer is the vital breath of the New Creature. We cannot control, nor get the best out of our old bodies except we conform to our Lord's instruction to pray. If prayer was appropriate for our Lord, who was perfect, if He needed to go often to the Father in prayer, even so it is necessary for us to go to the Lord in prayer that we may be more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds. This does not mean that we should be always *on our knees*, but that we should go with regularity; if possible at least every night and morning.

Some may prefer to stand when they pray, and some to kneel; some to have their eyes open, others to have them closed. In all this the Lord leaves us free to exercise our own judgment. But some *formal* approach to the Lord every day should be observed. Not only should we have special *seasons* of prayer, but we should have the *spirit* of prayer, which should be with us in all life's affairs. As we are going about the duties of life, we should think, Now I am looking for the Lord's will and way. What shall I do about this matter?

And, not stopping to pray again, we think as to what would be the Lord's will. Thus we shall have the Lord's blessing and guidance on that day in everything that is good.

Some persons of active mind have the tendency to make light of Divine guidance and to say, I know what to do. Nobody need tell me—neither the Lord nor anybody else. Such are likely to have this tendency grow on them, and to be unlikely to seek any special counsel.

But the child of God should feel that it is a privilege to have the Lord's approval of every thought, every act and every word. What we do is God's work, not ours. And because it was done a certain way today, does not mean that it would necessarily be done so always. There are certain things that are as fixed as the hills, and others that are not. So with our experiences. The Lord may give us one experience today, and another tomorrow. Today He may be leading us by the still waters and in green pastures; tomorrow the pathway may be thorny and through rough places. Thus day by day we grow in knowledge and grow in love, and we should be ready for whatever experiences may come to us:

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

JANUARY 31

The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way—Psa. 25:9.

Such a disposition is essential to those who would receive the wisdom which comes from above. They must have a humble appreciation of their own deficiencies and lack of wisdom, else they cannot receive freely, heartily, the wisdom which God is pleased to grant in the present time only to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it. And it will be seen also that this humility of mind is essential as a basis for the spirit of a sound mind, for who is in a proper condition to think justly, reasonably, impartially, except first of all he have a humble disposition? Hence we must agree that humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ—Z '00, 68 (R 2585).

To be teachable, one must be humble. To be taught of God, humility is indispensable: Only those emptied of self can be filled with God; but so emptied, they are prepared to receive knowledge that far transcends the greatest heights of human wisdom, since God Himself will be their great Teacher and His wisdom embraces all things—P '34, 189.

Parallel passages: Psa. 22:26; 37:11; 76:8, 9; 147:6; 149:4; Eccles. 10:4; Isa. 11:4; 29:19; Zeph. 2:3; Matt. 5:5, 38-42; 11:29; 1 Cor. 6:7; 2 Cor. 10:1; Gal. 6:1; Eph. 4:1, 2; Col. 3:12, 13; 2 Tim. 2:24, 25; 1 Pet. 3:4.

Hymns: 71, 136, 145, 315, 128, 160, 154.

Poems of Dawn, 69: *How Strong and Sweet My Father's Care!*

Tower Reading: Z '13, 381 (R 5370).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

HOW STRONG AND SWEET MY FATHER'S CARE!

1 PETER 5:7.

HOW strong and sweet my Father's care!
The words, like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—
He cares for thee.

The thought great wonder with it brings—
My cares are all such little things;
But to this truth my glad faith clings,
He cares for me.

Yea, keep me ever in Thy love,
Dear Father, watching from above,
And let me still Thy mercy prove,
And care for me.

Cast me not off because of sin,
But make me pure and true within,
And teach me how Thy smile to win,
Who cares for me.

O still, in summer's golden glow,
Or wintry storms of wind and snow,
Love me, my Father: let me know
Thy care for me.

And I will learn to cast the care
Which like a heavy load I bear
Down at Thy feet in lowly prayer,
And trust in Thee.

For naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me, nor mine,
Since Thou with tenderness Divine
Dost care for me.

R5370: "BLESSED ARE THE MEEK"

"The meek will He guide in judgment; and the meek will He teach His way."

—Psalm 25:9.

EVEN a *perfect* man would need Divine guidance in respect to his judgment of matters, in respect to his decisions, in respect to his course, in respect to his ways. And if a perfect man would need Divine guidance and oversight, in order to make no mistake from his limited degree of knowledge, because of not knowing fully the Father's will respecting Him, much more would an *imperfect* man need this! The good and the bad, the wise and the foolish—all classes of mankind—need such instruction. But there is only one class now in the proper attitude of mind to receive it, and that class is Scripturally called the *meek*.

We cannot say that the meek are those who feel themselves inferior and that there are superiors to be looked up to, necessarily. Adam in that event could not have been meek; Jesus could not have been meek; the Heavenly Father could not be meek. While it is not Scripturally stated that the Heavenly Father is meek, yet Jesus was meek, and He was the express image of the Father's person in the flesh. Hence we would assume that the Heavenly Father possesses meekness, in distinction from haughtiness.

GOD RESISTS THE PROUD

Our Lord said, "I am meek and lowly of heart." Our Lord was meek in that He was teachable. He realized that even in His perfection there were things to be learned; and He

learned obedience through the things which He suffered. It was because He had this quality of meekness or teachableness that the offer was made to Him to be our Savior. Without this He never would have been our Redeemer, we may assume. Without this quality He would have been self-assertive and proud, not ready to do the Father's will. And as with the Master, so with the Church.

Even small talents that are rightly directed are more valuable than larger talents that are misdirected. The pathway of life shows much large talent misdirected for lack of proper knowledge and guidance. And this lack of guidance, we may assume, has resulted from the lack of the spirit of teachableness—the lack of desire to know the best way, the Father's way. We can see that even a heathen man, if he were meek, would have much more opportunity to learn about the Lord's will than would one who thinks that he is above instruction. Whoever knows it all to begin with, is not apt to be in a condition to receive any instruction.

The Lord declares that He resists the proud. Even if they become His children they would be kept at a distance. If the proud were permitted to come nearer to the Lord, it would make them more proud; whereas, if they are kept at a distance, they may become meek and teachable and humble. We see then that all need instruction. But the only ones who are in a position to receive it are those who recognize their need and who are in the attitude to avail themselves of the Lord's offer of guidance of their judgment, of their way, of their course in life. Such as avail themselves of the privilege get a proper estimate of everything—of the things of the life present, and also of the things of the life to come.

These are the ones whom the Lord is pleased to instruct and guide in the knowledge of His Son, and into all His blessings. If they continue to be meek, He is able to make of them heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord. We read in the Scriptures that the meek shall inherit the earth. They will inherit it under the terms of the primary and original Covenant. These will be the Seed of Abraham. From these the blessing will go to all mankind who will be obedient during the Millennial Reign. After the final test at the end of the Millennial Age, the whole world will be teachable. They will have learned the great lesson that God is the Fountain of all Wisdom; and they will have profited by this instruction.

FEBRUARY 1

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left—Isa. 30:21.

If we have come to the forks of the road—to some crisis in our experience—and know not whether to turn to the right or to the left, we should stop at once and listen to the voice. Or, in other words, we should turn at once to the Word of the Lord, and by pondering its precepts and principles, and its illustrations bearing on the perplexing subject, seek to learn the will of the Lord, asking also the leading of His Spirit, and endeavoring to bring the mind into a loving, submissive and trustful attitude—Z '95, 6 (R 1753).

The word behind us is the teachings of the Old and New Testament Scriptures. These teachings are applicable to every condition and experience of life; therefore to these marvelous teachings are we to look for instruction along life's pathway with the assurance that they will guide our steps aright in the ways of wisdom, justice, love and power—P '34, 15.

Parallel passages: Luke 11:28; 8:21; Matt. 7:21-29; Jas. 1:21-27; Col. 2:2; 3:16; Heb. 1:1, 2; Isa. 66:4; Eph. 5:26; 1 Thes. 2:13; 2 Thes. 2:14, 15; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 2:1-3; 4:2, 12; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:1, 2; 1 John 2:14; Jude 17; Rev. 1:3; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29; 2 Pet. 2:20-22.

Hymns: 49, 22, 79, 154, 296, 315, 306.

Poems of Dawn, 96: *This is My Will for Thee.*

Tower Reading: Z '11, 360 (R 4881).

Questions: Have I this week followed the Word? Under what circumstances? With what results?

THIS IS MY WILL FOR THEE

JUST to hear my dear Master say,
"This is My will for thee;"
Then to whisper the dark night through,
"*This is His will for me.*"

Just to keep in the narrow way,
Painful how'er it be,
Just to follow Him day by day,—
All shall be well with me.

Just to joyfully bear the pain,
All that He sendeth me,
Just to suffer the scorn and shame,—

Trust where I cannot see.

Just to hear, when the day seems long,
"This is My will for thee;"
Then shall my faith and love grow strong,
Knowing His will for me.

Oh, to hear, when the work is done,
"This is My will for thee,—
Faith and Patience and Love have won,—
Sit in My throne with Me!"

R4881: LOYALTY THE GREAT TEST

AT THE CLOSE of the Millennium, when men shall have been made perfect, the world of mankind will be subjected to a final test, not as to their perfection of human nature, but as to their loyalty to God. The test upon Mother Eve was of this character. She was not deceived in the sense of not knowing the meaning of loyalty to God or what constituted disobedience. God had forewarned her. She knew what was right. But she was deceived so far as the consequences were concerned. So with Satan. He was deceived as to the outcome of his course, in thinking he would be able to carry out his plans despite the Lord.

So, we believe, it will be at the end of the Millennial Age. Some of mankind will be deceived as to the result of the course they will take. All who are entirely loyal to the Divine Law will perceive the error of the wicked. During the Millennial Age Christ, as the Mediator, will stand between mankind and the full requirements of Justice; and mankind will be, as it were, in a household of protection. When all evil influences are restrained mankind will have a very favorable opportunity for coming to a full knowledge of the Divine requirements. After they shall have enjoyed the blessings of Restitution to the full, then it will be appropriate that a test shall come to see whether their adherence to righteousness is merely a matter of policy or whether they have reached such a condition of heart-loyalty to God and righteousness as not to be moved from righteousness by any influence.

At the end of the Millennial Age, then, after they shall have been turned over to the Father, He will thus test mankind to see whether or not they have learned full obedience. Evil influences will be let loose for a season. If they have not learned thoroughly the lesson of obedience they will be unworthy of everlasting life and will demonstrate that theirs has been merely a policy-service. It will be because they have not come into fulness of heart-harmony with God that they will be peculiarly susceptible, in this trial respecting their loyalty.

ALL MUST BE TESTED AS TO LOYALTY TO GOD

Satan was tested as to his loyalty to God. Adam and Eve were tested as to their loyalty to God. In the time of Noah the angels were similarly tested—not as to whether they preferred right to wrong, but as to their entire loyalty. Jesus Himself was tested as to His loyalty to the Father. So mankind, at the end of the Millennial Age, will be tested as respects their heart-harmony with God.

As to the nature of their test we are not specifically informed. Possibly the temptation that will come to mankind at that time will be the desire to take possession of the government of earth before it is fully turned over to them. If this be true, since they will know that it is God's intention to turn the earth over to mankind when the end of the thousand years shall come, they will be anticipating the immediate transfer of everything from the Ancient Worthies, who shall have been ruling as "princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45:16.) When the time shall be fully come, they will be disappointed. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city."—Rev. 20:9.

This shows the condition of many of the world at that time. Many of them will become restless. They will say, "These Ancient Worthies are holding back the Government from us. We do not need to have anything to stand between us and the government of the world." This attitude will be disloyalty to God. Knowing that all things are of Divine arrangement, they should say, "The thousand years, seemingly, are over. We thought this Government would be turned over to us. But we will leave matters entirely in God's hands. If He sees best to give us the Government, well and good. But if He sees best to hold it back after the time is up, we shall be satisfied." Such would be the attitude of loyalty.

So today. Our attitude should be to recognize that there is but one God and one Lord Jesus Christ; and that we will obey them. In due time we shall see God's Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power fully demonstrated; that they are fully harmonious in all of the affairs that God has permitted. Those who can see this by faith, are now demonstrating their loyalty of heart to God.

FEBRUARY 2

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die—Rom. 8:13.

What is it to live after the flesh? We answer, It is to live after, in conformity to, and in gratification of, the inclinations and cravings of the fallen human nature. And it is the easiest thing possible to do this. All we have to do is just listlessly to abandon ourselves to the current of our old nature, and cease to strive against it. As soon as we do this, we begin to float down the stream, and by and by we find the current more and more rapid and resistance more and more difficult—Z '95, 8 (R 1748).

The flesh is both the natural and the acquired sinful disposition, as well as the natural and acquired selfish disposition. To live after these would therefore mean to act out the principles of the natural and acquired depravity, as well as those of the natural and acquired selfishness. Such a course will kill the new heart, mind and will; and since the humanity is offered as a sacrifice, it is inevitable that those individuals who backslide, and who continue to live after the flesh, must eventually die and remain dead forever—P '33, 16.

Parallel passages: Job 4:8; Prov. 14:12; Matt. 26:41; Rom. 6; 8:4-12; Gal. 6:7, 8; Heb. 6:4-8; 10:26-31; Jas. 1:15; 4:4; 2 Pet. 2:20-22; 1 John 5:16; Jude 11-13; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 4:22.

Hymns: 192, 13, 48, 71, 78, 337, 145.
Poems of Dawn, 292: *A Dead Sea or a Galilee?*
Tower Reading: Z '11, 136, 169 (R 4809, 4830).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in relation to this text? How were they met? What were the helps, hindrances and results?

A DEAD SEA OR A GALILEE?

LIFE adorns the Sea of Galilee:
Its bosom teems with fish; its shores are green;
But to the south there lies the Salty Sea,
So desolate: no fish, no life is seen.

And yet from Jordan's waters both receive.
Then why doth one have life; the other death?
'Tis Nature's law, to take and then to give;
For every breath we take we give a breath.

The Dead Sea drinks far more than Galilee,
But has no outlet in its selfishness;
While Galilee bestows its bounties free—

It issues forth its life mankind to bless.

Am I a Dead Sea, or a Galilee?
More blessed 'tis to give than to receive;
If I confine my thoughts to *my* and *me*
I'll not bless others, but myself deceive.

R4809: KEEPING THE BODY UNDER

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air."—I Cor. 9:26.

THE Apostle Paul had definite knowledge as to what constitutes the prize. He was not uncertain about it; it was not a question with him as to its being one thing or another. St. Paul knew that the "high calling in Christ Jesus" is that we may be heirs with him, if we suffer with him—that we shall be with him in glory. Neither was the Apostle uncertain as to the terms and conditions of the race. He knew that they were even unto *death*; and that if he should seek to save his life he would lose it. Neither was he uncertain as to his own determination. He knew positively that he had entered the course. He was not of those who merely say, "I hope to do so some time." He had made with the Lord his covenant of sacrifice unto death.

Nor was the Apostle uncertain as to his opportunity to gain the prize. He knew that it remained with *him* to will and to do in harmony with God's good pleasure. He knew that nothing impossible was required of him in this race; that the terms and conditions of the race include "grace to help in every time of need"; and that this grace and help would come from the Lord. Hence, the Apostle's expression that, for the runners in this race-course, there was no uncertainty, from first to last.

Thus it may be with all under the guiding eye of the Great Redeemer. We may each make our calling and election sure: "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 1:10, 11.

"I KEEP MY BODY UNDER AND BRING IT INTO SUBJECTION"

The Apostle tells us that he *kept his body under*, lest, having preached the good tidings to others, he himself, should be a castaway. "I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection, ... lest I myself should be a castaway," he declares. (I Cor. 9:27.) One translation has this, "I brow-beat my body"; that is to say, I use coercive measures upon my body.

The body originally belonged to the natural man, the natural will. When the old will gave place to the new will, the latter became the owner of the body. The new will cannot

properly be served by the old body, because the new mind is perfect and the body imperfect. When the new mind, the mind of God, the mind of Christ, therefore, takes into possession the mortal body, it has more or less difficulty. The mind is not suited to the body, nor the body to the mind. It is the work, therefore, of the new will to show its obedience to the Lord, its full loyalty to the Divine will, even though the body should be, in some respects, treated shamefully, its claim, its supposed necessities, etc., being ignored.

Not only are we all thus to mortify and brow-beat the body, but, additionally, we are to bring it into subjection. We are to make it serve the New Creature. The Apostle says, "But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit." (Rom. 8:11.) The holy Spirit, which comes to us more and more as we feed upon the Lord, assists us to conform our lives to his will, and also quickens or makes alive our mortal bodies to the service of the Truth.

There are not two creatures, but one; we cannot be two creatures at once. It is not until the old creature submits and we are transformed, so far as the will is concerned, that we become New Creatures, so that, henceforth, we really are New Creatures. But the New Creature has not its new body as yet. In our text the Apostle evidently refers to the New Creature, the New Man. There is an outward man, which the world may think is the individual, but in proportion as the outward man is brought into subjection and service, the New Creature is growing stronger, until eventually, with the death of the human body, God will give the New Creature a new body, in the resurrection. Then the new Creature will be satisfied, when it shall be found in his likeness.

There is a tendency for the body, the flesh, to arise from its condition of reckoned deadness. Hence the New Creature needs to be continually on guard in the good fight of faith. These battlings of the new mind against the flesh are a "good fight," in the sense that they are fightings against sins and weaknesses that belong to the fallen nature. The entire course of the New Creature is the course of faith. It would be impossible for one to keep up this battle against the flesh and its propensities and desires, unless he exercise faith in the promises and in the Lord as his Helper.

THE APOSTLE HAD NO THOUGHT OF HIS COMING SHORT

There is another passage in which St. Paul says that we should "fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of *you* should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1.) He had no thought of coming short of it *himself*, but he urged those to whom he was writing to make their "calling and election sure."

It will be a great help to the overcoming of the weaknesses of the fallen nature to have rightly made a full consecration of the will, a full enlistment of every power and talent of mind and body to the service of the Lord. He who takes this proper view of his consecration to the Lord and of his enlistment in the Lord's army, realizes that he has nothing more to give to the Lord. Hence, whatever struggle of the will he may have had,

is all ended when he has finally decided to give himself to the Lord. How important it is, therefore, to realize that the service is until *death*, and that there is no room even to consider any suggestion to withdraw and cease to fight the good fight of faith!

We are to remember that it is *not the flesh*, the old creature, which has entered the School of Christ, and is under instruction and preparation for the Kingdom, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." (I Cor. 15:50.) Our acceptance of the Divine call to the spirit nature means, not only the renunciation of the earthly nature *in every sense of the word*, but also our begetting as New Creatures, "sons of God." The New Creature, the new mind, the new will, is in the School of Christ, to be perfected, to be brought into full accord with the Divine will, to become a copy or likeness of the Lord. We shall never succeed in bringing our *flesh* into absolute harmony with the Divine Law, because of its imperfections, inherited and otherwise. Hence, the necessity that it be covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness. He who looks for perfection of his flesh, and who rests his faith therein, must of necessity have a poor hope of ever attaining to the likeness of Christ—of ever becoming one of the predestinated class—of becoming "the image of his Son."—Rom. 8:29.

"WE DO THOSE THINGS WHICH WE OUGHT NOT AND LEAVE UNDONE WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO"

In joining the Lord in faith and consecration we are proclaiming ourselves, *not* as graduates and heirs, but as *students*, disciples, who *desire to be prepared to inherit* "the things which God has prepared for them that love him." (I Cor. 2:9.) If this thought be kept in mind as the Divine teaching on the subject, it will tend to prevent our discouragement with ourselves when we find that, unavoidably, we do those things which we ought not to do, and leave undone those things which we ought to do; for in our flesh dwells no perfection.—Rom. 7:15, 18, 19, 25.

It is unnecessary for us to point out that the new mind, in proportion as it develops in likeness to the mind of Christ, will relax no efforts to keep the body under, with the motions of sin—to keep the will of the flesh dead. Surely no spirit-begotten son of God could allow sin to *reign* in his mortal body. Should sin to any degree control him, it will not be willingly, and hence could be but momentarily—until the new mind, the New Creature, seeing the uprising of the flesh, would conquer it, obtaining the promised grace and help in every time of need, from the heavenly storehouse of grace—Christ.

This thought, rightly entertained, will help true disciples to appreciate their own position, and not to be utterly cast down if overtaken in a fault of the flesh, so long as they realize that their *hearts* are not in sympathy with the sin and unrighteousness, but, on the contrary, in full sympathy with the principles and instructions of our Teacher, and longing to be cleansed and acceptable in his sight. Moreover, this thought will also help all such to exercise fervency of love amongst themselves, toward the brethren who similarly are *disciples, pupils in this School*—New Creatures, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit of their mind. If, therefore, each should see blemishes in the flesh of the brethren, disapproved and striven against, he should remember that the evil

which he sees is his brother's enemy, and not the brother himself, the New Creature—if so be that he gives us the assurance that his heart, his will, is in harmony with the Lord and his law of Love; and that he is daily seeking to fight a successful warfare against the weaknesses of the flesh.

"A MAN IS TEMPTED WHEN HE IS LED AWAY OF HIS OWN DESIRES"

When studying this subject we must keep two facts in mind: (1), The Scriptures ascribe *no sin* to the New Creature, and (2), *no perfection in righteousness* to our fallen flesh. The New Creature (whose flesh is reckoned dead), which is represented by the new mind, and which is begotten of God, CANNOT SIN; for in its very essence, as the seed or germ implanted by the Truth—"the *spirit* of the Truth"—it is opposed to sin. This New Creature is so fully in accord with righteousness, so fully imbued with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, that it delights in holiness and not in sin; and this must be the case so long as this begotten or Holy-Spirit-condition continues. "He that is begotten of God sinneth not [willingly—neither approves of sin nor takes pleasure in it]; because his seed remaineth in him" [the holy seed of the Truth, the spirit of Truth with which he was begotten]; "and that Wicked One toucheth him not."—I John 3:9; 5:18.

We are not to suppose that every trial or difficulty which besets us is of the Devil; but rather to remember the Apostle's words, "A man is tempted when he is led away of his own desires and enticed." (James 1:13, 14.) Such temptations, then, are of the flesh, and the result of our being members of the fallen race, whose weaknesses and imperfections have been aggravated and intensified for now six thousand years. So, then, we are to recognize as among our chief foes our own inherent weaknesses and predisposition to things selfish, depraved, sinful.

The whole world, thus depraved and under the control of the spirit of selfishness, are largely, though unconsciously, the tools of Satan, "who worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2.) To the children of God the world has become an enemy and a tempter by reason of the fact that we [the Church] have been "begotten again" to *new* hopes, *new* ambitions, *new* aspirations, *new* desires, which are along radically different lines from anything the world knows or has sympathy with.

"THE FLESH DESIRES CONTRARY TO THE SPIRIT, AND THE SPIRIT CONTRARY TO THE FLESH"

Our begetting is of the Holy Spirit, and its tendencies are heavenly and spiritual, in harmony with righteousness and love. Yet it is only our *hearts* that are thus changed—our *flesh* is much more in harmony with the *world* than with the new order of things *established in our hearts and wills* by grace and truth, through Christ. Consequently, when the world, through the words or writings or general spirit of any of its children, comes into contact with the Lord's people, immediately they—the Lord's people—find that, although their hearts are loyal to the Lord and loyal to all the gracious things which he has promised them, and to the spirit of righteousness, love and truth, yet nevertheless,

their flesh has an affinity for and an attraction toward the world, its views, its arrangements, its pleasures, etc.

For this reason the Christian is called upon to reckon himself *dead*, not only to sin, but to his own natural desires, appetites, inclinations, and also to the world, which is in harmony with sin and has perverted tastes and appetites. As the Apostle intimates, there is a constant battle between the New Creature, the new will, and the old creature, the fleshly and depraved disposition. He says, "The flesh desires *contrary* to the spirit, and the spirit *contrary* to the flesh." (Gal. 5:17.) And even though the advanced Christian has reached the place where he is enabled to reckon his flesh and will completely dead and buried, nevertheless, he has need continually to re-examine himself lest the flesh should become alive again. This was the Apostle's method. He says, "I keep my body under [dead, buried] and bring it into subjection [to the new mind]; lest having preached to others I myself should be a castaway." (I Cor. 9:27.) This keeping of the body under, this watching it lest it should become alive again, is a constant necessity to those who would be overcomers; for it is the victory of the new mind, the new will, over the old will, the will of the flesh, that constitutes us victors, by developing in us strong, holy character—character like unto that of our glorious Lord and Redeemer.

R4830: THE SIN UNTO DEATH

THE HUMAN MIND, with its various qualities, is very much like a legislative body. The vote, or decision, of that body is its will. So the vote or decision of our minds is the will. Once, when we knew no better, the vote was for sin. But when light came in we voted *out* the mind of the flesh and voted in the mind of Christ and agreed with ourselves, individually, that we would be New Creatures, dominated by that new mind. As we say that the old will died when the will of Christ came in, so we think it proper to say that the old will is being revived, raised from the dead, when we turn again to the "beggarly elements of the world."

What is the influence which revives the old will? It is minding the things of the flesh. If we live after the flesh we shall *die* as New Creatures. (Rom. 8:13.) We mind the will of the flesh when we permit the fleshly desires which we have given up, abrogated, gotten free from, to become again the ruling, or controlling influence of our minds. So, then, the new mind is dead and the old mind, or will, revived when we seek to do the will of the flesh rather than the will of the Lord—to mind earthly things instead of heavenly things, etc.

In the case of all those who have not passed "beyond the veil," the New Creature, which has been begotten of the Holy Spirit, has merely a fleshly body, or organism, in which to exercise itself. This body is not at first fully under the control of the new will. It is the duty of the new will both to rule the body and to bring it completely into subjection, even unto death. After gaining this victory, the New Creature receives the new body which God intended for him. By its opposition to sin the New Creature demonstrates its loyalty to God, its harmony with righteousness. God judges this New

Creature, not according to the flesh, but according to the will. If the flesh should gain the victory over the new will and there should be a fall, it would not mean that the new will had ceased, but that it had not been on the alert.

In such a case the Lord might, in time, judge that the new will was not worthy of the highest honors, because it had failed to keep the body under and to sacrifice the fleshly interests. Or, if a wrong course were persisted in, the new will would become so weakened and the flesh so strong that there would be a gradual dying of the new will; and finally it would cease to exist. The Apostle John, in speaking of this matter, declares that these New Creatures are to so keep themselves that "that Wicked One touch them not." (I John 5:18.) Again, he says, "He who is begotten of God cannot sin," so long as the "seed" of God abides in that individual. In other words, so long as the mind, the will, is in complete subjection to the Divine will, he could not willingly, knowingly, intentionally, do that which is opposed to the Divine will, just as a person could not go north and south at the same time.

THROUGH LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, ETC., THE NEW NATURE MAY FOR A TIME LIE DORMANT

We believe that there are instances in which persons, begotten of the Holy Spirit, have fallen away from zeal and obedience to the new will on account of lack of spiritual nourishment, lack of knowledge, lack of appreciation of things that strengthen the new nature and "Build it up in the most holy faith;" sometimes this is on account of ignorance, superstitions, which cause it to lose its zeal. This might happen when the new will was neither dead nor had given way entirely to the flesh, as might seem to be the case. Thus, while the new will was submitting itself and allowing the old will to have its way, the conduct might be blameworthy through lack of spiritual nourishment, as has been stated. Such persons have been regained through a better understanding of God's Word—by more knowledge; and have been known to turn out very noble Christians, even when the new mind for a time had been dormant. The Apostle warns us against this state saying, "I keep my body under"; "Forget not the assembling of yourselves together"; "Build one another up in the most holy faith."—I Cor. 9:27; Heb. 10:25; Jude 20.

When one, once begotten of the Holy Spirit, has willingly, intentionally adopted the old life of sin, then the "seed" with which he was begotten has perished and he is one mentioned by the Apostle as "twice dead, plucked up by the roots" (Jude 12), one under condemnation of the Second Death, for whom there would be no more sacrifice for sin. (Heb. 10:26.) When he first presented himself to God and was accepted through the merit of Christ, the new will was recognized of God and the person was begotten of the Holy Spirit. Old things had passed away; all things had become new. His *body* was not new; but he had a new *will*, a new *purpose*. When later he willingly left the service of the Lord and willingly, knowingly and intentionally became the servant of sin, his course would imply that his new will had died; that his old will had come to life and had gained the ascendancy.

THE NEW WILL CANNOT SIN WHILE IT REMAINS A NEW

WILL

Thus, by losing the Divine will and voluntarily accepting the will of the flesh again, the New Creature could commit the sin unto death. This, however, would not mean that the new will—which is always in harmony with God—could sin. If the will sins it has ceased to be a new will. If one never willingly turns from God, he would never commit the sin unto death. So the losing of this "seed" of the desire, the spirit, to do that which is pleasing to God, would be the step by which one passes from the *life* condition into the *death* condition. We have never as yet had the new life in its fullness. But we could lose the spirit, the new mind. If we lose the spirit, the mind, we lose *all*.

As there was a particular moment in which the Lord accepted us and we were begotten of the Holy Spirit, so, likewise, in the event of the Second Death, there must be a particular moment at which that would take place. Similarly, as we learn of the Lord's will we come gradually to the point of presenting our bodies living sacrifices. As this was a gradual work, so we should suppose that the retrogression, departure from the Lord, would be gradual. A sudden denial of the Lord does not seem probable, neither would it be in line with the declaration of Scripture. The falling away is a process of retrogression, a departure from the living God and from our covenant with Him. This may be, first of all, a gradual departure from the arrangements by which we have made a covenant of sacrifice with the Lord. This might more and more increase until it becomes a defiance of God, a deliberate and wilful sin.

Stumbling is one thing; but wilful sin is another. The righteous man may stumble many times and yet recover himself. We that are spiritual may recover such a one, remembering ourselves, lest we also be tempted. (Gal. 6:1.) These stumblings are not, however, what is referred to as "the sin unto death." The Second Death condition, according to the Scriptures, we understand to imply the full giving over of the individual, his entire abandonment by the Lord and his going into utter, hopeless destruction, from which there will be no resurrection. But no one could come into this condition without deliberately and wilfully abandoning the Lord and without having received chastisements for the purpose of bringing him back and of restraining him from going into this condition.

AFTER BEGETTAL THE WORK OF TRANSFORMATION OF CHARACTER BEGINS

Our begetting as New Creatures is at the time when we make a full consecration of our lives to the Lord and receive the merit of Christ as necessary to cover our blemishes. God's acceptance of this consecration is manifested by the impartation of the Holy Spirit, spoken of in the Scriptures as the begetting of the Holy Spirit. The work following this begetting is that of renewing the mind—"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Eph. 4:23.) The Apostle was not here speaking to the world, to sinners, or to any one except the brethren. Although the wills of these brethren are already renewed, yet it is another thing to bring every *thought* into harmony with the will of God in Christ. We should

demonstrate to ourselves, first, what is the *good* will of God—what is his will as to our following *righteousness*, etc.; then what is wholly *acceptable* to him; and, thirdly, what is his *perfect* will. (Rom. 12:1, 2.) This gradual development is to proceed with those who are Spirit-begotten; and only those who are thus brought to the graduating point will be members of the Bride class, perfected in the First Resurrection—"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection; on such the Second Death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Rev. 20:6.

We are not to understand that the conduct of one could send another into the Second Death, without his co-operation. No one could intervene to separate us from God. As the Apostle asks, "Who shall separate us from Christ?" (Rom. 8:35.) But whatever influence we have may be used for either the assistance or the injury of another. It is possible for us, not only to so live as to be helpful to others, but to so act as to injure others. Nothing in the example of another could give us eternal life; but the doings and example of one might be an assistance to another; and if we can be of assistance to each other, we can also be injurious.

COULD OUR EXAMPLE LEAD ANOTHER INTO THE SECOND DEATH?

The question, then, comes up, in what way could a brother's example so stumble another that he could go into the Second death? We answer that if one should be influenced by another to violate conscience, one might thus be started on the downward course which would lead him from righteousness. It might be a small matter to begin with, but shortly it would lead off into sin. We should so guard our actions and our words that others would be made stronger and more tender in their consciences; we should try as far as possible to help them in the right way.

The Apostle speaks of our liberty becoming a stumbling-block to those that are weak—"For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols?" (I Cor. 8:10.) Thus we might, unintentionally, not only offset the good that we might do, but do harm when we are not aware of it. If the same tongue can curse men and praise God (James 3:9), how careful we should be to speak that only which will be helpful and uplifting and not destructive and injurious!

FEBRUARY 3

My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh—Prov. 4:20, 22.

Few recognize the influence of the mind over the body. God has so organized our beings that pure, noble, holy thoughts in general have not only an elevating and ennobling effect upon the mental and moral constitution, but also an invigorating influence upon the physical system. And, on the contrary, every unclean, ignoble, unchaste, unholy thought (as well as act) has a direct effect not only toward debasement of mind and morals, but also toward the germination of seeds of disease already in the constitution of the fallen race—Z '96, 180 (R 2013).

God exhorts His children to apply both their minds and their hearts to His teachings. No wonder He wishes us to learn His Word, since through the Word of God we are fitted for life everlasting. Not only to the elect of the Gospel Age, but also to the non-elect of the Millennial Age will the Word give life. It is the fountain of eternal life as well as of perpetual youth; and he who finds and drinks this water finds what the Spaniard sought in vain—the fountain of perpetual youth and life—P '27, 15.

Parallel passages: Ex. 13:9; Deut. 29:29; Josh. 1:8; Job 23:12; Psa. 12:6; 17:4; 19:7-11; 119:9, 11-20; Prov. 6:20-23; Matt. 7:24-27; Luke 11:28; John 5:24; 17:17.

Hymns: 296, 79, 49, 311, 306, 322, 22.
Poems of Dawn, 8: *How Readest Thou?*
Tower Reading: Z '13, 163 (R 5246).

Questions: Have I this week meditated on the Word? How? When? With what results?

HOW READEST THOU?

LUKE 10:16

'TIS one thing now to read the Bible through,
Another thing to read, to learn and do;
'Tis one thing now to read it with delight,
And quite another thing to read it right.

Some read it with design to learn to read,
But to the subject pay but little heed;
Some read it as their duty once a week,
But no instruction from the Bible seek;

Whilst others read it without common care,
With no regard to *how* they read or *where*.
Some read it as a history, to know
How people lived three thousand years ago.

Some read to bring unto themselves repute,
By showing others how they can dispute;
Whilst others read because their neighbors do,
To see how long 'twill take to read it through.

Some read it for the wonders that are there,
How David killed a lion and a bear;
Whilst others read—or rather in it look—
Because, perhaps, they have no other book.

Some read the blessed Book—they don't know why,
It somehow happens in the way to lie;
Whilst others read it with uncommon care,
But all to find some contradictions there.

One reads with father's specs upon his head,
And sees the thing just as his father did;
Another reads through Campbell or through Scott,
And thinks it means exactly what *they* thought.

Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,
Thus understand but little what they read;
And every passage in the Book they bend
To make it suit that all-important end.

Some read the Book to find that God is love,
Whilst others read—the opposite to prove.
Some people read, as I have often thought,
To teach the Book, instead of being taught.

R5246: THE TRANSFORMING INFLUENCE OF THOUGHT

"As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7.)

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

—Proverbs 4:23.

THE HEART is one of the most important organs of our body. If it ceases to work, death is sure to follow. The blood that flows through the heart constitutes the life, the energy of the body. If the blood current is interrupted for a little while, a clot is formed. This is so much of a preparation for death. There must be a continual stream of blood circulating through our bodies to keep life there.

In view of this important function of our natural hearts, the Bible very properly uses the heart, the center of life, as a symbol of the center of our affections, including the will.

Our will has to do with everything we do. Whoever of the Lord's people wills to seek more and more to purify himself becomes more and more alive. If we are pure in heart, we resolve to live righteously and soberly in the present life. Whoever appreciates the principle that right is *right*, and wrong is *wrong* will desire to live right—whether Jew or Gentile or the Church of God.

The Church, having accepted God's terms, have made a consecration of their lives to Him. They have engaged to fight a good fight against the world, the flesh and the Devil. They are under special obligations as New Creatures. Their hopes and ambitions are separate from those of the world. They are therefore doubly responsible in respect to their hearts, which represent their inmost sentiments.

According to a man's innermost sentiment, so is he. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is his real character. What is your real will? What are your real sentiments? Not, What *words* do you use? not, What are your *actions*? but, What is the *motive* underlying all these?

The New Creature is to be God-like, spiritual, eventually of the spirit nature in glory—perfect. But before it attains that perfection, the heart of the New Creature is required to prove its loyalty. Some will be overcomes in a higher sense than others, but none will be overcomers except those who are true, loyal, pure. If, therefore, we have made a consecration to God, it would be our endeavor that our hearts, our desires, our motives be perfect. The only proper attitude is to confess our imperfections, if we are wrong. God expects us to be loyal of *heart*. And that loyalty of heart should reach out and control the whole life.

If our thoughts are not according to our ideals, we should endeavor to make them so. We should put away anger, malice, hatred, strife, and all such works of the flesh and the Devil. With some people, in some conditions, these thoughts go very deep. It is not the transitory thoughts of the mind—the passing thoughts—that are meant in our text. Even people of very bad character may at times have deep emotions. The eyes of some persons will be suffused with tears over some trivial matter. This makes them appear to be very tender-hearted, and yet their lives may show that they would as easily be moved to some vicious deed as to sympathy.

We see this fact illustrated in the conduct of mobs. The people who hailed Jesus as King were five days later crying, "Crucify Him!" Those who shortly before had seemed to be so appreciative of Him appeared to lose that appreciation.

IMPORTANCE OF RIGHT THINKING

In reality a man is not always what on the surface he seems to be. His real character is deep down below—the purpose of his life. These are not the mere transitory thoughts, but the deep fissures of thought, if we may so designate those which involve the whole life. The Scriptures bring to our attention the fact that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds—by having them made over.—Rom. 12:2.

The Apostle, speaking of some very vicious traits of character, says, "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:11.) This cleansing, this sanctifying, comes not merely through the reading of the Truth, or the *mental* application of the Truth, but through the *heart*—thinking on the Truth. This heart-thinking, these deep resolutions, are ours as Christians, and are to be guided by certain principles. These have to do with the real man whom God is considering—not the old creature, more or less blemished, according to the degree of depravity. God looks at the New Creature.

These deep heart convictions and purposes constitute a transformation of character. This is the man's *real* condition, and so is *he*. If he have some transitory emotion of anger or of malice, it would not be his *real* thought, his *real* intention. Therefore it would not be *he*, but his old *nature*, temporarily asserting itself. As a New Creature, he is to watch his words, his thoughts, his actions. If a transitory, wrong thought should pass through his mind, it would not be the thought of his heart. And he as a New Creature, should stop it, put it away, so that it may not take root in his heart, and choke out better sentiments.

This right thinking of the heart has very much to do with the whole life. The Apostle says that we are transformed by the renewing of our minds, to know what is the perfect will of God. This is the Christian's standpoint. How glad we are that our Heavenly Father is judging us from this standpoint! How glad we are that He is able to read the heart, that He knows our hearts, that He knows our inmost thoughts!

At one time we might have thought that we were doing God service when we were not. We show our loyalty to God by giving attention to His Word, that we may know what is His will. The more we study God's Word, the more we receive the spirit of the Truth, and the more we appreciate it. And in proportion as we understand God's regulations and desire to be guided by them, our hearts will become purified. Then the more care shall we take of our hands, what they shall do; and of our tongues, what they shall say. Thus we shall keep our hearts—submit our wills to the will of God.

The will is a part of our heart, just as the rudder is a part of the ship. The new will is the rudder to steer us this way or that way. The more we understand the Word of the Lord, the better we understand how to guide our lives. Therefore we are to keep our hearts and purify them by the *knowledge* of God's Truth, the *study* of God's Truth. To do this, the will must ever be on the alert, watching with prayer and thanksgiving.

THE CHURCH ON TRIAL FOR LIFE

Some one may ask, why should we do all this? In a general way we might answer, that we may do right—because right is *right*. But that reason is not sufficient for us. While all appreciate the superiority of right over wrong, yet in our fallen condition we need to have some inducements to action. So the Lord puts certain inducements before us. He says, "If your heart is right, I desire to give you everlasting life. If your heart is wrong, then you will not be of the kind to whom I will grant this boon. You will die the Second Death."

Six thousand years ago there was a trial. Our first father, Adam, was tried, and failed. Consequently we have no right to life. But God has arranged through our Lord Jesus that every member of Adam's race may have another trial. The Father is willing to give life everlasting to all who love righteousness.

So we thankfully accept this provision, and say, "Heavenly Father, wilt Thou indeed give us another opportunity for gaining everlasting life? We would love to have that life! We are very thankful for the opportunity! We love righteousness! If we are loyal to the principles of righteousness, shall we get everlasting life? It is our desire that Thy will be done in us—even that we love righteousness and hate iniquity." "Very well, then," the Heavenly Father says, "I will put you into the School of Christ, where you will learn righteousness."

Day by day we are learning in the School of Christ. Our different experiences are a part of the general instructions for those who love righteousness and who desire to be taught of the Lord. The issue of our trial will be life or death. The world is not now on trial. There is no possibility for the world to gain life as yet. During this Gospel Age the Church are the only ones who are under this Covenant of Sacrifice—who are on trial, therefore, for everlasting life or everlasting death. In the next Age, the world will have their opportunity for learning obedience. Then the issue for them will be life or death.

God says, "I have set before you life and death, blessing or cursing." There is a curse for every one who loves unrighteousness; there is a blessing for every one who loves righteousness. So during the thousand years of Christ's Reign the world will be on trial for everlasting life or everlasting death. All who are obedient will get everlasting life. But all who have the spirit of Satan will be destroyed in the Second Death.

Only those who are more than mere overcomers will be of the Royal Priesthood. There is no excuse for our getting into the Great Company. Let us keep our hearts with all diligence. Let us watch our hearts. If they are in full harmony with God's will, we shall have little trouble with our tongues. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."—Math. 12:34.

Our heart is the most wonderful organ of our body. The tongue is the most subtle of all our members. The Lord takes our words as an index of our heart condition. But since we are imperfect, it is not possible for us to be faultless in word and deed. Yet we are diligently and faithfully to seek to attain the perfect mastery of our words. We should be especially on guard in respect to evil speaking. Every tendency toward slander is to be checked. Whoever of us is reviled is not to revile again. These tendencies belong to the old nature. To be pleasing to the Master, we are to keep our hearts free from every form of evil. If this be done, the heart is rightly instructed of the Lord. Then we will know that we must make good whatever is wrong. We are bound, thoroughly bound, to make it good to the best of our ability. Our heart must keep itself right.

DEFICIENCY IN MODERN EDUCATION

This same principle is applicable to the whole world, though not on a scale so far reaching. Mankind are influenced by thought, by experience. So vicious children may be trained up under favorable environments to become useful citizens. We have seen where, even with people of the world, good resolutions to live honestly, justly, soberly, have had a blessed influence on the life, making noble men and women, although these may not be Christians.

We have also seen the reverse of this—those who were criminals, but not so of necessity. Some of them were born under good conditions; but have read bad books and meditated upon sinful things. Thus the thoughts of their hearts have been evil instead of good. Thus they have become inclined toward evil. As they allow their minds to run in a certain direction, and allow these thoughts to become deeply rooted in their hearts, some of them become very vicious.

We were deeply impressed with this fact in noticing the photographs of the four gunmen recently convicted of murder in New York. Had we seen their pictures before knowing who they were, we should have said, "Those are strong characters." Their hearts had gone wrong, doubtless because of wrong education and a failure to appreciate the principles of righteousness. This seems to be largely the case at the present time. Very few see the principles of righteousness at all. The majority are swayed by superstition, by fear and by hopes which are more or less ephemeral, more or less deceptive.

So we see that the general education of our day is lacking in a very important respect. Although the schools have taken away to some extent the veil of ignorance and superstition, yet they are not giving instead the full, proper view of righteousness. This is because in a general way the Divine character and the Divine laws are being ignored. There is an attempt to teach mortality entirely aside from the Divine Law. But this course seems to be undermining faith—separating the pupils from faith in a Supreme Creator. Thus we see that while the world is making wonderful progress in education, yet it is not reaching its own ideals. The human mind in its fallen and perverted condition, is unable to see the subject of morality from a standpoint which educators would put before it.

The human mind needs the influence of its higher organs to assist the lower organs. Hence, although these educational influences are beneficial in many respects, yet they are very injurious in others. They do not inculcate veneration for God and for the Divine will. Therefore people are unable to grasp the best principles. The only persons who are in the right attitude are those who are seeking to have new thoughts, to have thoughts conformed to the Divine arrangement, taking the mind of Christ instead of their own imaginations and judgment, and thus growing up into Him in all things. This is our happy position.

INFLUENCE OF THOUGHT UPON HEALTH

There is another view of the text—"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"—given by Christian Scientist; namely, that according to our minds, so be it unto us. They get some

good out of this view. They say that if one thinks about kind, noble things, he will be influenced thus. We think our Christian Scientist friends are partly right and partly wrong. They hold that if one thinks himself to be well, he will be well; that if one thinks himself to be sick, he will be sick. There is a *measure* of truth in this view.

One-half the people in the world are sick because they think they are so. If they thought, not about their aches and pains, but about more helpful things, they would no doubt be better and stronger in every way. The mind has something to do with our condition. Whoever mopes about a headache will undoubtedly make it worse. Whoever tries to put the thought of his condition away and to give attention to other things will undoubtedly help himself.

The less we think about our aches and pains the better for us. If we talk about them we aggravate them. It is also bad to exercise too much sympathy with each other. Of course, there are times when it would be cruel not to show sympathy. But it is not wise to encourage those who are weak to complain about their condition. We become stronger in proportion as we try to avoid thinking of our ailments.

The mistake made by our Christian Scientist friends is that they carry this principle too far. *Thinking* ourselves sound will not *make* us so. And it would not be right to lie about the matter, and to say that we have no aches and pains when we have them. The middle line is the one which the Bible encourages—not to say that we have neither aches nor pains, not to say that death is "mortal error," and that there is no death. But we can help the dying process along, or we can seek to cultivate the more helpful thoughts, and thus exercise a helpful influence upon ourselves and others.

One notices this principle in action in a sick room. Some people will go into the sick room, express a great deal of sympathy, and leave the sick person under the impression that he is in a much worse condition than he really is; whereas they should have helped the person by encouraging remarks. It is not necessary to say to the sick, "You are looking extremely bad!" But we might say, "Are you feeling better this morning? Have you had a good rest?" Many people do not know how much they do rest, and do not feel thankful enough. So we might suggest, "I hope you are feeling thankful to the Lord, and that you are glad because of this beautiful day. See how the sun shines into your room! Hear the birds sing!" The condition of some people when they are sick is that of "groanings which cannot be uttered." Sick people need some one to bring sunshine into the room.

So, then, dear friends, let us resolve that since we have covenanted with the Lord to become dead to the old life, to the old ambitions, to the things of the past, these are to be all given over. We will wish to think as the Lord would have us think, to view all the affairs of life as He would have us view them, and to be influenced by the ambitions which He sets before us in His Word. Thus doing, we shall as New Creatures grow into the character-likeness of the Lord.

FEBRUARY 4

Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues—Rev. 18:4.

Whoever are worthy the name, "My people," will hear and obey the Lord's voice and come out of Babylon and "receive not of her plagues"; because their obedience in fleeing out as soon as they see Babylon's real condition will prove that they were never in real accord with her sins. Those who *remain* after seeing Babylon and her blasphemous doctrines in the light now shining are reckoned as endorsing the blasphemies and deserving the "plagues" most thoroughly—as much as or more than the "tare" class of Babylonians, because they have greater light—Z '00, 3 (R 2553).

Where have God's people been but in the various sects of Christendom, and where has more light been sinned against than in these sects, and upon what will God's plagues come with more severity than upon these sects? Therefore, how reasonable that God should save His people from being contaminated with their sins and make them immune from their plagues by inviting them to leave Babylon? In a secondary sense this passage well applies to the Lord's people coming out of the sects of Little Babylon—P '32, 15.

Parallel passages: Isa. 47:10; 48:20; 52:11; Jer. 50:8; 51:6, 9; 2 Cor. 6:17; 7:1; Zech. 2:7; Gen. 19:16, 17, 29; Luke 17:32; Matt. 24:15-20; Jude 23; Num. 16:21; Rev. 16:19; 18:1-24.

Hymns: 332, 18, 25, 41, 216, 310, 333.

Poems of Dawn, 128: *Let Us Go Forth*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 179 (R 5478).

Questions: Have we "come out of her" locally, sympathetically, doctrinally, practically and spiritually? Why? With what results?

LET US GO FORTH

HEBREWS 13:13.

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

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

Rest on the splendor of the prize.

What though with weariness oppressed?

'Tis but a little and we rest.

This throbbing heart and burning brain

Will soon be calm and cool again,

Night is far spend and morn is near—

Morn of the cloudless and the clear.

No idling now, no slothful sleep,

From Christian toil our pow'rs to keep;

No shrinking from the desperate fight,

No thought of yielding or of flight;

No love of present gain or ease,

No seeking man or self to please.

No sorrow for the loss of fame,

No dread of scandal on our name;

No terror for the world's sharp scorn,

No wish that taunting to return;

No hatred can to hatred move

The soul that's filled with pitying love.

No sigh for laughter left behind,

Or pleasures scattered to the wind;

No looking back on Sodom's plains,

No listening still to Babel's strains;

No tears for Egypt's song and smile,

No thirsting for its flowing Nile.

'Tis but a little and we come

To our reward, our crown, our home!

Another year, or more, or less,

And we have crossed the wilderness;

Finished the toil, the rest begun,

The battle fought, the triumph won!

We grudge not, then, the toil, the way;

Its ending is the endless day!

We shrink not from these tempests keen,

With little of the calm between;

We welcome each descending sun;

Ere morn our joy may be begun!

R5478: THE VOICE FROM HEAVEN

"Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Revelation 18:4.

THE context of the above Scripture shows that our text refers to Babylon—not the literal city of Babylon, but to the symbolic city, described in the Book of Revelation. The term Babylon seems to signify a concentration of the various errors in apostate church systems, personified in Revelation as mother and daughters. "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots," is the name given by the Lord to the original System, thus intimating that the whole brood is illegitimate in every sense of the word. She neglected the Heavenly Bridegroom, and mingled in her "cup" a stupefying potion that has intoxicated the world; even the Lord's saints were bewildered.—Revelation 17:1-6.

After the Apostles "fell asleep," the people of God gradually drifted into error of doctrine and practise, which culminated in the Dark Ages. A great System developed, and led into confusion and darkness. We need not suppose that in all these centuries every one connected with this System was hypocritical. As the people of Natural Israel were led captive into literal Babylon, so the people of Spiritual Israel, among whom were some of the Lord's true saints, were led captive into Mystic Babylon. Some of these would have liked to get free, yet did not know what to do.

When we come down to the Reformation, we see that instead of getting entirely free from Babylon and her errors, the various systems then formed partook to a considerable extent of the spirit of the Mother System from which they had separated. The same spirit of persecution that was manifested in the "Mother" has also been manifested more or less in the "daughters." The enslaving power extended from medieval times to the Reformation; so that, looking out upon the so-called Christian world today, we see that there could not be a better word used to picture existing conditions than the word *confusion*.

Yet there are true people of God still in this Babylonian System. But the time of separation is here: those yet remaining in Babylon must hasten! The fact that some of God's children have been in Babylon all through the Age shows us why God has had any respect at all for Babylon; His saints have been more or less enslaved there for centuries. This is the reason why God has dealt with Babylon in any sense or degree.

BABYLON CAST INTO THE SEA

Our text with its context is a prophecy that in the end of the present Age a time would come when God would wholly reject Babylon. In the picture given us in Revelation of this time, the Lord's rejection of the apostate systems is declared in the words, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!" She has been spewed out of His mouth, and the Almighty now calls upon His true people to "come out of her." The faithful ones are delivering themselves out of Babylon during this Harvest time; the separating work is almost completed. Soon, as pictured in Scripture, the "sea" of anarchy will swallow up the false systems. Babylon

is to be "cast as a great millstone into the sea." (Psalm 46:2; Jeremiah 51:62-64; Revelation 18:21.) We believe these prophecies are to be fulfilled in the very near future.

The nominal Church no longer stands in a peculiar position—above the world. Some of her ministers declare that they do not believe in Jesus as the Savior of the world—man is his own savior, they say. They believe in the social uplift of humanity, which, according to their view, is to come by putting the right men into the right places, by giving woman the franchise, and by other methods of social reform. What a sorry hope!

Some may ask: How may we recognize God's Voice calling His people to come out of the churches now? In what manner shall we hear His Voice? We answer that God bids His people to separate themselves from all sin and sinful conditions. Our forefathers did not hear this Voice, did not see this condition of sin. The Voice had not then spoken. Even in the time of the Reformation these entanglements of error were not clearly discerned. But now, in this Harvest time, we can see very clearly that the teachings of the nominal churches have been grossly in error—have grossly misrepresented the Divine Purpose and the Divine Character. We now perceive that Babylon is full of error and corruption of doctrine, and filled with the spirit of the world.

KNOWLEDGE BRINGS RESPONSIBILITY

Furthermore, the times and seasons of God's Plan are now made plain. We are shown that we are now living in the time foretold, when these systems of error are to be rejected by the Lord. Should we not leave these systems when we see all this? This is God's Voice to "come out of her." We hear this Voice now speaking; we see that this prophecy of Revelation is now being fulfilled. If any remonstrate: But, Lord, we have many precious friends in Babylon, and we are loth to leave them. We have tried to show them what Babylon is, but they will not heed. It will be a great loss to us to leave them all and take a stand against them. Must we come out? Our friends will think us crazy! The Lord replies: "Come out of her," or "receive of her plagues."

You are not sharers of her sins until the time you see this. You were born in Babylon. The Lord is not holding you responsible for what you did not understand. But the better you understand, the more responsibility you have. If, when you see what the Truth is and what the untruth is, you still remain in Babylon and support her with your influence and dollars, you will be very culpable. If you fail to come out of her when you hear the Lord's Voice, it will imply that you are not thoroughly loyal to Him. You may be His children, but if you fail to obey the Lord through fear of earthly loss, it will prove that these things are more precious to you than His favor, and He will treat you as He treats the hypocrites: you will have a share in their experiences.

If you are approving of the sins of the spewed-out systems by upholding them and giving them your influence, you will surely be partakers of Babylon's plagues. This is a fair warning. We understand that it is the duty of every Christian to break every tender tie, if necessary, and to be loyal to God, to stand free from the error and sins of Babylon. The time of her judgment has come.

The plagues coming upon Babylon are sore troubles, which will result in the complete overthrow of the present order of things—political, social, financial and religious. This order of things in its various phases, is one Cause, under different uniforms; these interests are all united in one great policy. The princes and kings of the earth and their supporters are Babylon's great army, and pitted against it is another vast army, composed of the masses of the people. The conflict between these two great armies will ere long precipitate the present order of things of the world into anarchy.

THE VOICE OF PRESENT TRUTH

It becomes an important question then: Have all God's people heard this Voice? We answer that we do not think all have yet heard; hence there must be some Christians still in Babylon, partakers of her sins, but confused because of ignorance, because of lack of knowledge. The question might be asked: Shall we go forth making this call a special message? We answer: This is not our thought. Our thought is that where this is made a special message the result is usually different from what is intended: it makes many angry. They say: By what authority do you call us Babylon, and by what authority do you tell us to "come out"?

Our thought is that it is the Lord who calls His people out of Babylon; the call is to be recognized especially as a *Voice from Heaven*. What is this Voice from Heaven? Apparently, the Voice is Present Truth—a presentation of the doctrines of the Scriptures, with their times and seasons—a showing that while there has been confusion and error all the way down through the Age, we are now in the Harvest time, when Truth is clearer than ever before. This Voice of Truth tells us whether or not we should support a system that is full of error, full of confusion.

In what way should we give God's Message to come out of Babylon? We should show them the Light, the Truth; we should place before them the opportunity for investigation, and encourage them to *prove* these things *for themselves*. As they come to see the Truth and the bondage in which they have been, they will be glad to stand free in Christ by breaking off these shackles. This will be the Voice, then, that will show all the Lord's people who are in the right attitude of heart that they should stand free, that they should come out of Sectarianism, that they should not misrepresent the Lord by claiming that they are of Babylon when they are not, but that they take their stand for God.

LOYALTY TO TRUTH THE TEST

This stand will mean the holding forth of the Divine Plan of the Ages, the Truth. If, after one has seen the real character of Babylon and has gotten his bearings in a general way, he then remains, it can be only by compromising the Truth. By being worldly wise he might remain and continue for a time to have popularity, to have honor of men. But if after seeing the Truth, after understanding the Truth, one were to continue in Babylon, he would of course be a greater sinner than one who had not been so enlightened.

It is not our thought that we should avoid doing our duty in the proclamation of the Truth, but that we should avoid arousing unnecessary antagonism; for people in error are in no condition to have the error lightly spoken of. They must be in the right condition before one can even whisper to them, "Come out of her." Even if they make inquiry of us, we should not speak too positively; but we should say: Now, my dear brother [or sister], if you have heard the Voice of God, if you realize that the various denominations are in error, then you will, apparently, see your duty. You once said you were of them; if now you see that you are *not* of them, you should tell them so. But *when* you shall see, and *when* you shall hear, is not for another to say. If, when you have heard and believe the Truth, you remain in Babylon, you will be a partaker of her sins, and more guilty than the average one among them. When you are able to hear this Voice yourself—this Voice which will show you the right and the wrong, the Truth and the error—no doubt you will have the fortitude to "come out."

BABYLON'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TRUTH

But those who hear the Voice of Present Truth, and who obey the call to come out of Babylon, are usually subjected to persecution. In our Lord's day, when the believers were from among the Jews, some were put out of the synagogues. We remember a particular instance during our Lord's ministry. A man who was born blind was asked how he had his sight restored; and when he confessed Jesus, the rulers put him out of the synagogue. (John 9:22, 34.) That same spirit, that same condition, seemed to follow with the Apostles.

All through the Dark Ages those who were faithful to the Light were kept out of the churches. The church creeds and practises were *conscience-barriers* to keep Light-bearers out; those faithful to the Truth were excommunicated or put to death as heretics. This condition continued to some extent even after the time of the Reformation. Servetus, a brother Christian, whose horrible death by burning at the stake was caused by Calvin, is a case in point. Jesus said, "They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." The execution of Servetus was an instance of the literal fulfilment of our Lord's words.

Those who have ruled the synagogues have not always been bad people, but *mistaken* people. Thus it was with Saul of Tarsus, when he haled Christians to prison and approved the death of St. Stephen. And so with the churches of our day when any become enlightened and let their light shine. The same thing is true that has always been true; namely, "The darkness hateth the light." They say: If you stay with us you shall not present these matters. So those who are loyal to God are in this way forced out of the synagogues; indeed, the loyal ones are now *called* to "come out."

"YOUR BRETHERN THAT HATED YOU"

But our day has a peculiarity that other days have not had. The Divine Plan is now so beautiful that we can see that others are in darkness, and this impelling Voice of the Truth is the Voice of God, the Voice of conscience, the Voice of enlightenment, calling us out

of Babylon, which is misrepresenting God, His character, His Plan and His Word. We do not know but that they may go to the extreme in our day—to kill socially, to kill ecclesiastically, perhaps to kill physically. Nearly all the persecutions that have come to God's people have come from professed Christians, fellow-believers. "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My Name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but He shall appear to *your* joy, and *they* shall be *ashamed*."—Isaiah 66:5.

We are glad that these shall one day, not far off, we believe, see their mistake. Instead of feeling like bringing vengeance upon our enemies, we should feel quite a sympathy—not *with* them, but *for* them. We should realize that it is with them very much as it was with the Jews in our Lord's day: those Jews and their rulers knew not what they did, or they would have been ashamed. And they *will* be ashamed when they come forth and realize what they did—just as Saul of Tarsus was ashamed when he realized what he had done. And so with these blinded ones of today: "Some shall come forth to shame and lasting contempt." This contempt will last until there has been a proper repentance for their share in the persecutions of the Lord and His faithful ones.

AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY

We surely appreciate very highly the value of knowledge, but we also remember the truthfulness of St. Paul's statement that "knowledge (alone) puffs up, but love builds up." Yet knowledge is necessary to growth in grace. Only as we perceive the beauty of the Divine character can we appreciate our God. Therefore, we rejoice that He is lifting the veil and revealing Himself more and more to our eyes of understanding.

We can see that mental capacity is not the same in all. Some can receive a large measure of the Truth, while others can assimilate only a little. No one needs more knowledge than he is capable of receiving. God is judging His people according to their character-likeness to His Son, our Lord, not according to what they *know*. While knowledge is very important, very necessary, still no one has a monopoly of understanding—no one has perfect knowledge in the present life; and if our eternal destiny depended upon knowledge, each of us would come short. Nevertheless, we believe that all who are the Lord's will be brought into touch with Present Truth, and will be judged by it. Those who obtain the knowledge and then show a disposition to shirk the responsibility connected with it or to deny the Truth or to live ungodly after seeing the Light, thus demonstrate their unworthiness.

The Apostle, speaking to the faithful ones in Christ, says, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that Day should overtake *you* as a thief. Ye are children of the light." He seems to imply that the Lord's true people will come to a knowledge of the Truth. This does not necessarily mean *all* the Truth, but enough to sanctify. One with large intellectual power would require and could assimilate a large amount of knowledge; one with small mental capacity would need less.

There are certain basic principles that the Lord's people have at all times grasped; for instance, the fact that there is but one God. Even those who hold to the doctrine of the

"Trinity" declare that there is one God. Thus they have a measure of the Truth, although they contradict themselves. It is the same in regard to the penalty for sin. Our forefathers desired to be right when they thought eternal torment the punishment for sin; and they called it a *just* penalty, in their endeavor to be right. But with these basic principles is mixed a large proportion of error. The whole world of mankind has been under delusions; and we who are now waking up are really surprised to see how little we actually knew—how ignorant we were in regard to some of the precious messages which our God has given us.

"WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH"

But as we were children of God before we received full knowledge, so we believe that it is possible for others to be children of God without having full knowledge. We are living in the Harvest of the Gospel Age, when God is causing the knowledge of the Truth to encircle the earth. At the same time the Adversary is doing all that he can to hinder people from studying the Divine Message—raising a dust of calumny to blind the eyes of the unwary.

It is because we believe that there are children of God attempting to live on the husks and skimmed milk of human tradition—brethren in Christ starving for the pure food offered in the Word of God—that we are trying to reach and help them. Otherwise we would abandon all special efforts at propaganda; for we know that as soon as the Messianic Kingdom shall have been set up, conditions will be favorable to all to come to a knowledge of the Truth as it is contained in the Bible.

The days that are almost upon us will surely bring "weeping and gnashing of teeth" to many of the Lord's people; for whoever stands for error will be in opposition to God. They are about to go into a great Time of Trouble, and it will be their own fault. Some of us heard God's Voice early in the Harvest, and therefore we had the responsibility earlier; some heard later. Some are hearing now about the sins of Babylon—that these sins are about to be punished, and that they should come out and be on God's side, if they would have Divine favor. It is the desire to further sound out this present Message that has led us to the production of the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION—that those who would not *read* might *see*. To whatever extent it helps each of God's children, still bound, to recognize his own responsibility, it represents the Voice of God, telling them their present duty as Christians.

"When ye hear I am come, then can ye arise,
The joy of your heart springing up in your eyes?
Can ye come out to meet Me, whate'er the cost be,
Though ye come on the waves of a storm-crested sea?"

"When I call, can ye turn and in gladness 'come out'
From the home of your childhood, the friends of your heart?
With naught but My promise on which to rely,
Afar from their love—can ye lie down and die?"

"Yea, we'll take up the Cross and in faith follow Thee,
And bear Thy reproach, Thy disciples to be.
Blest Savior, for courage to Thee we will fly;
Of grace Thou hast promised abundant supply."

FEBRUARY 5

This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification—1 Thes. 4:3.

Coming to the Scriptures to ascertain *God's will*, we find that the great *work* which God asks of us is not work for others, but work in ourselves, subduing, conquering, ruling self. Everything else, therefore—our service to the household of faith, and our doing good unto all men, by home and foreign missions, *etc.*—is subservient to this most important work within. For, as the Apostle by inspiration declares, Though we should preach the gospel eloquently to others, and though we should give all our goods to feed the poor, or become martyrs for a good cause, *without love*, the Spirit of Christ and the Father, developed in us as the ruling principle of life, we would be *nothing*, from the Divine standpoint—Z '99, 4 (R 2411).

Sanctification implies separation from self and the world, and the dedication of self to God's service. Its full operation will develop in us a character like that of our Heavenly Father. No less than the development of a God-like character is the will of God for His children, and he who during the time of the elective call has submitted himself to the will of God will ultimately be like God on the spirit plane of being, while in the Mediatorial Reign of Christ such submission will be rewarded with perfect human life—P '36, 14.

Parallel passages: Lev. 20:7, 8; Mic. 6:8; John 17:17; Acts 20:32; 1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11; Eph. 5:10, 26, 27; 1 Thes. 5:23; 2 Thes. 2:13; Titus 3:5, 6; Heb. 2:10; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Pet. 1:22; Jude 1.

Hymns: 125, 4, 198, 78, 114, 74, 196.
Poems of Dawn, 173: *Disappointment*.
Tower Reading: Z '16, 99 (R 5876).

Questions: What sanctifying experiences were mine this week? How did I act amid them? What gains did I derive from them?

DISAPPOINTMENT

"DISAPPOINTMENT—His appointment,"
Change one letter, then I see
That the thwarting of my purpose
Is God's better choice for me.
His appointment must be blessing,
Tho' it may come in disguise,
For the end from the beginning
Open to His wisdom lies.

"Disappointment—His appointment,"
Whose? The Lord's who loves me best,

Understands and knows me fully,
Who my faith and love would test;
For, like loving earthly parent,
He rejoices when He knows
That his child accepts, *Unquestioned*,
All that from His wisdom flows.

"Disappointment—His appointment,"
"No good thing will He withhold,"
From denials oft we gather
Treasures of His love untold.
Well He knows each broken purpose
Leads to fuller, deeper trust,
And the end of all His dealings
Proves our God is wise and just.

"Disappointment—His appointment,"
Lord, I take it, then, as such.
Like the clay in hands of potter,
Yielding wholly to Thy touch.
All my life's plan is Thy moulding,
Not one single choice be mine;
Let me answer, unrepining—
Father, "Not my will, but Thine."

R5876: HOW ARE WE SANCTIFIED?

For this is the will of God, even your sanctification."—1 Thessalonians 4:3.

THE words of our text are addressed only to the saints of God, as are all the Apostolic Epistles. In respect to His people, this is God's will, His desire, His design—even their *sanctification*, their *full setting apart* from the world to Himself and His service. This is not God's will in the sense that He has determined that certain ones shall be sanctified; but it is His will that there shall be such a *class*; and it rests with each of the called whether or not he shall belong to this class.

God has a great work to be accomplished, and hence He has a very particular reason for the selection of such a class. If we would be of this number when completed, we must make our calling and election sure by full compliance with the terms and conditions of the call, and this even unto death. We should bear in mind that the Lord is now selecting, electing, a sanctified class for a very special position, a very special work—First, for a thousand years they are to be associated with the Lord Jesus Christ in the regeneration of the whole world, including all who have lived since the time of Adam—for their uplift from sin and death to the heights of human perfection, from which Adam fell; and then

they are to reign with Christ their Head and be associated with Him in all His future work throughout eternity. This is why it is called a High Calling, a Heavenly Calling.

So the will of God referred to in this text is not the will of God concerning the world in the Ages to follow the present Age, nor is it His will concerning angels. It is His will for the Church, called to be the Bride of Christ, members of His Body. This great Call was never issued before this Age, nor will it ever be issued after its close. There can be but one Bride of Christ; and when this class shall have been completed, no addition to their number will ever be made. This Class have heard of the present grace of God offered through Christ and have accepted its terms and entered the race for the "Prize."

The Apostle in our text is practically saying, Here we are as Christians, the called of God. Now, what is the one thing God would have us do? Would He have us keep a seventh day? Would He have us abstain from eating meat? Would He have us adopt some certain forms or idiosyncrasies? No. The will of God is our *sanctification*. There is a certain difference between the words sanctification and consecration, though they are sometimes used almost interchangeably. The word *consecrate* has the thought of surrender. Consecration is a definite step, taken at a certain moment. It is the yielding up of the will and of *all* to God. Whoever has not thus definitely surrendered his will, himself, to the Lord, has never made a real consecration. We believe that there is no step more necessary to be seen clearly by God's professed people than this one, and none more necessary to be made plain to others. The word sanctification not only has in it the thought of this definite and complete consecration at the beginning, but also takes in the entire process of transformation of character and preparation for the Kingdom. It progresses throughout the Christian course until the character is fully developed and ripened, and it must then be maintained until the end of the way.

HOW TO ENTER THE HEAVENLY RACE

Many professed Christians do not see the initial step of full consecration as essential to one who would be a follower of Christ. In our conversation with people many tell us that they have been trying for years to be children of God, that they have been for years seeking to do God's will and live a holy life. We try always to get these down to the particular point: Have you *begun* right? Have you been trying to run the Christian race on the *outside* or on the *inside*? Then they ask us what we mean. And we tell them that the matter is like a race-course, where there is a certain prize offered, with certain definite rules and regulations. The person who is to run in the race must be entered in the regular way. The contract must be made and signed. The man must agree to all the conditions. Then he will be entered as a contestant, and must run on the prescribed track and for the goal.

Now another, who had failed to make this contract and to enter the race in the prescribed manner, might run around and around on the outside of the track. He might run as fast and as well as those on the inside. He might boastingly say, "I can beat any one running on that track!" But would he gain the prize? Assuredly not. He would be only amusing himself or wasting his breath and his strength. The real race was run on that

track. He had failed to meet the prescribed conditions, and all his running would be in vain so far as gaining the prize was concerned. And so it is with one who endeavors to live a Christian life without first having carefully learned and met the conditions and terms required in order to become a real disciple of Christ, and be recognized of the Father as His child.

We believe that this is the trouble with many who call themselves Christians. Many who talk with us express good desires and all that, but we pin them right down to the point: "Have you made a full consecration to God?" We had a case of this kind only recently—a gentleman who has now called upon us twice. In our conversation at his last visit we said, "Well, you remember what we spoke about when you were here before." He replied that he had been praying. We then told him that he had no right to pray, that he could not properly pray until he had an Advocate with the Father; for the Father does not hear sinners. We said, "You cannot pray until you have surrendered your will to God. And all access to the Father must be through the Advocate. 'No man cometh to the Father, but by Me.' There is a *definite* way. It is not that you can go in *your* way and I in *mine*. All the terms of discipleship are laid down by the Lord Himself. 'If *any* man will be My disciple,' said the Lord Jesus, 'let him *deny himself*, and take up his cross, and follow Me.' Unless we take this step of denying *ourselves*, yielding up ourselves to the Lord, we may do a variety of things—go to Church, etc., etc., and yet not be Christians. We are not Christians until we have accepted Jesus as our Redeemer, and made a consecration to God through Christ."

TWO PARTS TO SANCTIFICATION

In one Scripture we read, "Sanctify yourselves, and I will sanctify you." This means, Set yourselves apart to God, and He will set you apart. We have a part in this work and God has a part. If we make a full consecration, God will consecrate us; He will accept us and set us apart for Himself. He gives us the indication of this acceptance in the begetting of His Holy Spirit. Such soon begin to realize that they have a new mind, a new disposition, a new heart. It is of this class that the Apostle Paul is speaking in our text. "This is the will of God" concerning *you*, "even your sanctification"—you who have consecrated yourselves to Him and whom He has accepted and consecrated, has set apart for His service.

The acceptance of us by the Father is only the beginning of the sanctifying work. And it is His will that this work should continue and progress in us, to its full completion. This sanctifying work should affect our minds, our hands, our eyes, our ears, our tongues—our all—that we may be fully used of the Lord. It is the will that is given up at first, and the will, of course, includes the service of our mortal body.

But this body has natural tendencies of its own. The giving up of the will means that the individual will seek to bring every thought, word and act into subjection to the will of God. It is one thing for the will to be made holy, and another thing to bring the mind and the body fully into line with this holiness of the will. The will is present with us, but how to perform is the problem. Not only are our wills to maintain this sanctified state, but we

are to broaden our appreciation of the Lord's will for us, and thus have more and more of the spirit of sacrifice.

SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE TRUTH

Now what powers, what spiritual forces, are there that will aid us in this work of sanctification? Our Lord Jesus, in His last prayer to the Father before His death, prayed, "Sanctify them through *Thy Truth*; *Thy Word* is Truth." (John 17:17.) Here He gives us the key as to how this work of sanctification will proceed. The one who consecrates himself to God will not at first have a full knowledge of himself or of sin. He is only a babe at the beginning. But he is to be helped onward by the power of the revealed Word, by the Message of Truth. How will this Message sanctify? The Apostle Paul answers that thus God works in us both to will and to do His good pleasure. He gives us in His Word exceeding great and precious promises. He gives us counsel and admonition. And as these enter our heart and impress themselves upon us, through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, we are constrained to work out in ourselves the peaceable, precious fruits of righteousness and holiness.

We realize that by faithfully walking in the narrow way which our Master walked, we shall be pleasing to our God and shall receive an exceeding great reward, even joint-heirship with Christ to "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:4, 5.) Thus we see how very important is the Word of Truth in this sanctifying process, whether we receive this Truth from the reading of the Bible or from a hymn or from the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES or however. Whatever impresses upon our hearts the Word of God and increases our measure of the Holy Spirit is a part of that which does the sanctifying work.

THE METHOD OF SANCTIFICATION

There is another text which tells us how we are to be sanctified. It declares that by God's will "we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Hebrews 10:10.) The Apostle's thought here is that we were not sanctified in the beginning, but "were children of wrath, even as others." We could not sanctify ourselves; and the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, the sacrifice of His untainted life for us, was the basis whereby we might become God's sanctified people. No amount of consecration could have made us the people of God unless, first of all, the foundation for this should be made in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. His sacrifice opened the way. His merit cleansed us and made us acceptable to Jehovah.

Again, we read that we are of the Elect, "through sanctification of the Spirit." (1 Peter 1:2.) When we present ourselves in consecration, we are next accepted and begotten of the Spirit. This acceptance and begetting sets us apart; it inducts us into the Body of the Anointed. The spirit of the Truth inspires us and guides us in the Heavenly way. It first showed us that we were sinners needing a Savior. Next it showed us how to present ourselves to God. And after we had taken the steps thus shown, and were accepted as

sons of God, it led us on step by step into the fulness of the stature of men in Christ. Thus the Spirit, through the Word, brings about our complete sanctification.

We are told again that it is "the blood of the Covenant wherewith we are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:29.) How is this? God has made a great Covenant with the Church. It was first made with the Head of this Church, and then with those who are to constitute His Body. It is a Covenant of Sacrifice. Jehovah said, prophetically through the Psalmist, "Gather My saints [My holy ones, My sanctified ones] together unto Me; those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5.) The way to come into this class thus called and gathered is to accept the terms laid down by Jehovah Himself. No one comes into this class except by the *blood of the Covenant*.

When our Lord Jesus entered into a Covenant with the Father, it was by the consecration of Himself at baptism. This consecration was carried out and finished in His death on Calvary. There the shedding of His blood—the sacrifice of His life—was finished. There was no other way to fulfil His Covenant. It was necessary that He do all this that He might enter into His own glory as well as be the Savior of the world. And we who have become His Body members must make this same Covenant with the Father. We are to drink with Him His Cup of suffering and death. We are to lay down our lives as He laid His down. Our blood is to be shed, our human lives are to be sacrificed, with His. There is no virtue in our blood other than it is made acceptable by the imputation of Christ's merit. But by this imputation, we, as members of His Body, share in His sacrifice. So our death is like His, a sacrificial death; and our blood is counted in as His blood. Thus by partaking in the blood of the Covenant, the blood of the sacrificial Covenant, the blood which is to seal the New Covenant, we are sanctified. This laying down of our lives is a gradual work, in its actual carrying out, as was that of our Lord's. It is the work of sanctification, progressing until its completion in death.

So it is true that we are sanctified through the *Truth*, which becomes illuminated to us through the Holy Spirit. The offering of the body of Jesus opened the way to this sanctification. And our Covenant of Sacrifice gives us a participation in the "blood of the Covenant," and this means our full sanctification unto death. Whoever does not share in the drinking of Christ's Cup, in His sacrificial death, will have no part in the Kingdom. The world will have a share in the eating of the Bread that came down from Heaven; but to be members of Christ's Body of sacrifice it is necessary that we also drink of His *blood*, and share with Him in His *death*. We are to be conformed unto His death that we may share in His *resurrection*, the First (Chief) Resurrection. The world are to have no part in the drinking of the Cup. The blood of the Covenant wherewith we (the Church) are sanctified is to seal the New Covenant for the whole world. It is not sealed as yet; for the sacrificing is not yet completed. The Law Covenant was a type of the New Covenant, soon to be inaugurated. The Law Covenant was sealed by the blood of the typical bullock and goat. So the New Covenant will be sealed by the blood of the "better sacrifices."

SPRINKLING OF BLOOD, TYPE AND ANTITYPE

This is all an unmerited favor to the goat class. As in the type, when the Law Covenant was instituted, Moses took the blood of bullocks and goats, and sprinkled first the book of the Law, thus typically satisfying God's Justice, and then sprinkled "all the people," so in the antitype, the blood of the antitypical bullock and goat sprinkle first the Law, satisfying Justice on behalf of the entire world; and then the blood sprinkles "all the people," the whole world, who are dead in Adam. This will mean the Restitution, to be gradually attained by the world in the incoming Age as the result of the Ransom-sacrifice and its application on their behalf. This will be accomplished by the Millennial Reign of The Christ, Head and Body.

It may be asked, Why were there many bullocks and goats offered in the type, when there is only one bullock and one goat in the antitype? Why the difference? We reply, There is no difference. It was merely the duplication of the bullock and goat in the type. But why? Because it required much more blood than one bullock and one goat would supply, to sprinkle all Israel. But there is no difference in the thought. It typified the work of the one bullock and the one goat in antitype.

It is a marvelous privilege to be of this Lord's goat class, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, who are to share with Him in His sufferings of the present time and then to reign with Him throughout eternal ages of glory. Let us prove to God our appreciation of this glorious calling, by faithfulness even unto death.

FEBRUARY 6

Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another—Psa. 75:6, 7.

We may have desires and aspirations for usefulness which will never be gratified. The Lord may see that we could not bear the exaltation and honor which we seek. He knows far better than we do what is for our good, and so He would have us rest contented in His providence, not idle, but diligent; not careless, but watchful; not indifferent, but full of intense, earnest longing to do the will of God; yet patient under restraint, and content to be neglected and forgotten, remembering that "they also serve who only stand and wait" and that the Lord in His own well-chosen hour can lead us forth to fulfill His purposes—Z '95, 11 (R 1756).

There are no accidents in the experiences of God's people. Both their exaltations and their humiliations, their prosperities and their adversities, are under the Divine direction. His unerring judgment suits to our varying needs His changing providences, working all things together for good to them that love God. Therefore, we may rest content in His hand—P '30, 14.

Parallel passages: Jas. 4:10-12; 1 Pet. 5:6; Luke 6:37; 1 Sam. 2:7; Dan. 2:21; Psa. 113:7, 8; Luke 1:46-55; Matt. 13:10-17; Rom. 9:6-33; 11:1-33; 14:4, 13.

Hymns: 67, 11, 63, 83, 199, 176, 296.

Poems of Dawn, 162: *Waiting*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 265 (R 5304).

Questions: What have been this week's abasing and exalting experiences? How were they met? What motives ruled therein? In what did they result?

WAITING

"THEY also serve who only stand and wait."
Behold me here,
Dear Lord! With eager, watchful eye and quick
attentive ear,
I stand, and if a message Thou wouldst send o'er land
or sea—
(Today, tomorrow, night or day), *Lord, here am I,
send me!*
But, if in Thine all-wisdom, Thou shouldst choose
another one,
My heart in swift submission shall respond, *Thy will
be done!*
Let me *learn well* the lesson that Thy blessed Word
doth teach,

To rest in humble silence, not to murmur, nor to
reach
For what *appears my service*, with an over-confident
zeal,
But watch and pray until Thy will for me Thou shalt
reveal;
Thus patient, waiting ever, keeping *very close* to
Thee,
Perhaps, dear Lord, some wondrous day Thou wilt
have need of me!

R5304: GOD'S SUPERVISION IN THE WORLD AND IN THE CHURCH

"Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another."—Psalm 75:6, 7.

THE Scriptures declare that "The earth hath He [God] given to the children of men." Father Adam was the first great king of the earth. After his fall, this kingdom over the beasts of the field, the fish of the sea and the fowl of the air, was bereft of the power of the perfect man, because man had begun to deteriorate. This kingdom was also bereft of the Heavenly Father's guidance by His Spirit, because of man's disobedience. It was originally intended that humanity should have God's guidance in the affairs of the earth. But humanity became insane, or mentally unbalanced. This is their condition from the deterioration which sin and death have wrought.

Satan has been blinding and deceiving and misleading mankind on various subjects, putting light for darkness and darkness for light. This power of Satan is spoken of in the Scriptures as being that of the "prince of this world." And we are told how he rules. By promoting sin, he promotes that which is in opposition to God. He "now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience." This work has been going on for centuries, and particularly since the time of the Deluge. Before that time Satan operated in a somewhat different manner, because men were more generally acquainted with the proper standard and less fallen than they have been since. Longevity before the Deluge was greater than now, the average length of life today being thirty-five years.

Very rarely has God interfered with the arrangement which He put into the hands of man. As mankind look back they see the blunders that have been made. Being under the power of the "prince of this world," and allowing Satan to mislead them, they have fallen into various traps. Mankind has had a more severe experience with sin and death than would have been thought possible. The Apostle Paul calls our attention to the fact that man was not always in this degraded condition. He says that when man sinned, God gave him over and allowed him to take his own way—to lose himself in sin and the misguidance of the Adversary.

Why should God do this? We believe that His intention was that thus, eventually, during the next Age, mankind shall see what the real nature and outcome of sin is; that they shall learn a great, permanent lesson—that any deviation from the Divine standard is injurious; and that that lesson shall be recognized by the angels—that they also shall see what is the result of sin, and that they shall have this great, horrible object lesson before them. One can hardly read in the pages of history what humanity has done in this course of sin without being disgusted and horrified.

Then we see how humanity could have helped themselves by seeking to follow God's way. We see that when God gave man over to a reprobate mind, and did not hinder him from taking an evil course, it resulted in terrible excesses. (Romans 1:28-32.) We see that God merely intervened when, in the condition of things before the Deluge, to have permitted this course to continue would have been a serious wrong. The thoughts of men were evil, and only evil continually. Therefore God brought that condition of things to an end in the Flood. And He started things afresh with Noah and his family, who were saved in the Ark. God has interposed only here and there, as in the case of the Ninevites, the Sodomites and the Amalekites. In the case of the Sodomites, God rained down fire from heaven, setting forth an example, and the kind of destruction that would better conditions—not thereby settling the future of the Sodomites, but making them an example.

WORLD EMPIRES ILLUSTRATED GREAT PRINCIPLES

When the Babylonians essayed to be the rulers of the world, they apparently had good intentions, good sentiments toward mankind. They wished to give the world a good government. In some respects, perhaps, their rule was a benefit. At all events, it was not long before their success brought in a measure of arrogance. And then God permitted another nation to gain the ascendancy—the Medo-Persians. After them, the Grecians tried to rule the world, with a better government; and again, after them, the Romans. Each of these World-Empires, after a measure of success, toppled over and made wreck of their progress.

And so God has in a general way been permitting things to go thus, keeping humanity within general bounds in their sort of loose governments, and has merely hindered them when they went too far and were likely to hinder the Divine Program.

There was some promotion in some manner. The Scriptures say that Nebuchadnezzar became the head of gold—the head of the Gentile governments. Promotion came to him because God was pleased that Nebuchadnezzar should have this opportunity, because God *permitted* him to have it, and that nation to have the ascendancy. And thus with the other universal governments; and God had to do with the setting up and the pulling down. He thus permitted the world to have a variety of governments. As another instance, a certain Pharaoh was in power in Egypt at the time for Israel to be delivered from their bondage. According to the account given by the Apostle Paul, the Lord said to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose have I raised thee up."—Rom. 9:17; Exodus 9:16.

Pharaoh thus was given an opportunity of illustrating certain great principles along the lines of which God was dealing. There are some who think that God worked in Pharaoh to make his heart hard and to make him a bad man such as he was. But *this is not so!* He was a bad man naturally. God may have let other heirs drop out so that this particular man would come to the throne at that particular time. God set him there at that time—not that He might influence Pharaoh to evil, but that He might show the influence of an unregenerate heart.

The plagues came. "Let My people go," said the Lord. Thus after each plague had come, Pharaoh would entreat Moses, the servant of God; and when the plague was gone he would say, "Well, you did not have much to do with it. The plague has gone anyway." And so another plague would come. And time after time Pharaoh illustrated the mercy of God, who time after time lifted the plague and had mercy on the Egyptians.

It was a lesson, not of God's working in a man to make him a bad man and make him do evil things, but a lesson of the hardening effect of God's Mercy—in taking away the plague—of its having only a bad effect, instead of softening the heart. And so it is with many in the world. They are told that God is willing to forgive them, and they think, "Well, then I can go on and sin more!" We learn from this a great lesson of God's Mercy and of His method of dealing with men. Finally came the last plague. Yet even after that Pharaoh and the Egyptians went out to capture the Israelites. The finale was that the Egyptian pursuers were drowned in the Red Sea.—Exodus 14:5-31.

ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL

By faith we believe that God has a supervision of all the affairs of today. Therefore if we voted for a candidate at the last Presidential election, and if the one we thought the most suitable for election was not elected, we are not to believe it was a matter of chance. We are to assume that the Lord knew all about the election; and that in the Divine arrangement certain things were permitted to go in certain ways; and that therefore, the President, Mr. Wilson, was the most suitable as in harmony with the Divine arrangement.

We are to believe that all things are working according to the counsel of God's will—not that God touches every thought or act of every individual. Not so! But God is able so to regulate the winds of strife or contention that the results will come about not contrary to the Divine arrangement. We may be assured that so far as mere man is concerned, God does not care whether it is one or another. So far as the world is concerned, the Lord has no preference or favorites at all. It is along the line of principles that He is directing and ruling, to work out, eventually, good to all.

Thus God is arranging that all the affairs of the world shall reach a crisis soon, whether He is permitting this king to rule, or that one; or this one to be President, or that one. All things are working in harmony with His great Program. God will set down the "prince of this world," Satan, and all the arrangements he has made—set them down by a severe fall, by a great overthrow, and will set up His own Kingdom, that will bring blessing to all mankind—His own Kingdom that will be the "desire of all nations." It will

be the Kingdom of Messiah and His Bride, who is to be His Joint-heir in the Kingdom. It is the Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as in Heaven."

MATTERS OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

We would apply our text particularly to the Church—the Church being especially guided of the Lord, and those in which He is especially interested. In His arrangement He has provided for the setting of these members in the Church. "God hath set the members every one in the Body, as it hath pleased Him." "God hath set some in the Church, first, Apostles, secondarily, public orators, thirdly teachers, pastors, after that workers of miracles," etc.—indicating different stations in the Body of Christ. We are to remember that, as the Apostle says, *God* hath set the members in the Body.

In proportion as twenty or thirty or three hundred or five hundred or a thousand put themselves in harmony with His will, He will set some to be Elders and some to be Deacons, etc. How will He set them? Through the voice of the Church. Whoever should receive the appointment to be a Deacon in the Church should be faithful to the Lord and to the brethren. And whoever should be appointed as an Elder should consider it a matter of privilege, and be faithful to the Lord and to the brethren, so that he might profit the Church and be pleasing to the brethren, and above all, be pleasing to the Lord.

This is the thought the Apostle gives in his parting words to the Elders of Ephesus. (Acts 20:17-38.) He tells them to take heed to themselves that they may feed the flock. And he goes on to give varied advice—how they should take heed as those who should give account of their opportunities and responsibilities, which they must recognize as from both the Lord and the brethren.

Sometimes in the Lord's permission—certainly not *without* His permission—the classes, in their endeavor to express the Lord's will, may say, This brother was chosen as Elder last time, and we will not choose him as an Elder this time. Or they may say, He was a Deacon last time, and we will not choose him as a Deacon this time, but we will drop him. What should be the attitude of the brother thus dropped?

SUBMISSION TO THE LORD'S WILL

We have had experience along this line—letters from those thus dropped, intimating that they think the Class has made a mistake in not recognizing their ability and not re-electing them. And our answer has been that we did not know what had been the thought back of the action of the Class, and we did not know whether the Class had acted wisely or not, but that our thought would be that the brother should accept this decision as from the Lord.

Such a one should say to himself, I have been the servant of the congregation and have appreciated it very much. I recognize that such a promotion is of the Lord, and that the service given me was of the Lord. But now, in God's providence, I am not to be an

overseer for a year, or six months, or what-not. Perhaps the Lord has a good lesson in this for me. Perhaps the Lord wishes to show whom He will set up and whom He will not. So instead of feeling hurt or miffed or moody over the matter, I am going to say, If I can see anything in which I was derelict in my duty, I will consider it a chastisement from the Lord. I will remember the words of the Scripture which say, "Let the brother . . . rejoice in that he is exalted, and let the brother...rejoice in that he is abased." I am glad to see that the Class exercise independence enough to do what they consider the Lord's will. At all events, I will try to recognize that promotion cometh not from the East nor West nor South, but that God is the Judge, the Decider, and that He putteth whomsoever He will over the affairs of the Church.

FEBRUARY 7

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law—Rom. 13:10.

He who finds his heart not in harmony with this law of the New Covenant, love—mercy, kindness, gentleness, goodness—lacks the evidence or proof that he is in any sense of the word accepted as a son of God and a follower of Christ. If we have not love in our hearts for the brethren, and the love of gentleness and benevolence toward all men, and even toward the brute creation, we have not the spirit which will carry us through in making the sacrifices necessary under present conditions. It will only be a question of time with such when the power of pride or vainglory, holding them in the way of sacrifice, will snap asunder, and selfishness take full control—Z '98, 201 (R 2328).

We are not to look at God's law as consisting of isolated and unconnected streams, but as a great fountain, love, out of which all the streams of the Divine precepts flow. From this standpoint we can understand, since God's law is love, how breaking one of its precepts violates the whole law, as we can also see how a life of love is the fulfilment of the law—P '35, 15.

Parallel passages: Rom. 13:8, 9; Matt. 7:12; 22:38-40; Ex. 20:16; 23:4, 5; Deut. 22:1-4; Psa. 15:1-3; Prov. 3:28, 29; Jer. 22:13; Isa. 58:6-14; Zech. 8:16, 17; Luke 10:25-37; Rom. 15:2; Gal. 6:10; Heb. 13:3; Jas. 2:8.

Hymns: 166, 82, 20, 337, 95, 125, 198.

Poems of Dawn, 104: *Lord, Let Me Talk with Thee.*

Tower Reading: Z '12, 117 (R 5006).

Questions: Have I this week exercised love? How? Why? In what conditions? What helped or hindered? With what results?

LORD, LET ME TALK WITH THEE

LORD, let me talk with Thee of all I do,
All that I care for, all that I wish for, too;
Lord, let me prove Thy sympathy, Thy power,
Thy loving oversight from hour to hour!
When I need counsel, let me ask of Thee:
 Whatever my perplexity may be,
 It cannot be too trivial to bring
To One who marks the sparrow's drooping wing;
 Nor too terrestrial since Thou has said
 The very hairs are numbered on our head.
'Tis through such loop-holes that the foe takes aim,
And sparks, unheeded, burst into a flame.

Do money troubles press? Thou canst resolve
The doubts and dangers such concerns involve.
Are those I love the cause of anxious care?
Thou canst unbind the burdens they may bear.
Before the mysteries of Thy Word or will,
Thy voice can gently bid my heart be still,
Since all that now is hard to understand
Shall be unraveled in yon heavenly land.
Or do I mourn the oft-besetting sin,
The tempter's wiles, that mar the peace within?
Present Thyself, Lord, as the absolving priest,
To whom confessing, I go forth released.
Do weakness, weariness, disease, invade
This earthly house, which Thou Thyself hast made?
Thou only, Lord, canst touch the hidden spring
Of mischief, and attune the jarring string.
Would I be taught what Thou wouldst have me give,
The needs of those less favored to relieve?
Thou canst so guide my hand that I shall be
A liberal, "cheerful giver," Lord, like Thee.
Of my life's mission, do I stand in doubt?
Thou knowest and canst clearly point it out.
Whither I go, do Thou Thyself decide,
And choose the friends and servants by my side.
The books I read, I would submit to Thee,
Let them refresh, instruct and solace me.
I would converse with Thee from day to day,
With heart intent on what Thou hast to say;
And through my pilgrim walk, whate'er befall,
Consult with Thee, O Lord, about it all.
Since Thou art willing thus to condescend
To be mine intimate, familiar friend,
Oh, let me to the great occasion rise,
And count Thy friendship life's most glorious prize.

R5006: CHRISTIANITY AND THE LAW

"He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the Law."—Rom. 13:8.

JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES expounded the harmony between Christianity and Judaism, nevertheless comparatively few Christians today seem to grasp the subject clearly. Today's study aims to make clear their distinctions and harmonies.

The Great Teacher declared that He came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them. While the Law was spoken of as Moses' Law, it was really the Divine Law

given to Israel as a basis for the Divine Covenant with that nation, and Moses merely stood as mediator of that Law Covenant—that agreement by which Israel was obligated to keep the Law, and God was obligated if they did so to grant them everlasting life, Divine favor and the glorious privilege of being His instruments for the blessing of all nations, under Messiah's Kingdom.

The failure of even the most sincere Israelites to gain the promised everlasting life proved, not that God's Law was an unjust one, which would need at some time to be set aside as unworkable, but that Israel, like the remainder of the world, shared by inheritance Adamic weaknesses, which so impaired their moral quality that they could not keep God's perfect Law—in its spirit; the spirit of the Law our Lord defined to be whole-hearted love for God and "Golden Rule" love for the neighbor.

The Gospel of Jesus magnifies the Jewish Law by admitting its righteousness, its reasonableness and by admitting that the fault is entirely with humanity. The proposition of Jesus in respect to His followers is this: He, being perfect, was able to keep the Mosaic Law perfectly, and He had a right, therefore, to everlasting life, and needed not to have died; but instead of retaining His life He laid it down sacrificially, as a part of the great Divine Plan for human redemption. That sacrifice will bring to the world the blessed privileges and opportunities for eternal life which, it has been promised, Messiah's Kingdom will bring. But meantime the Redeemer, carrying out Jehovah's plans, offers an imputation of His merit to any who have His spirit—that of full consecration to do the Father's will by laying down the present life sacrificially, to gain with the Redeemer a heavenly, spiritual life, glory, honor, immortality, the Divine nature, as Messiah's joint-heir in His Kingdom. All who would thus do would be counted as a part of the spiritual Seed of Abraham, through whom all the families of the earth will eventually receive their blessing.

This offer was made to the Jew first; but, after gathering all the willing and obedient of that nation, the call was extended to the willing and obedient having ears to hear and hearts to obey regardless of all national lines. To all these the terms of discipleship were made clear—terms of self-sacrifice unto death: "If any man will be My disciple let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me; and where I am there shall My disciple be."

This class was promised everlasting life, even though they were unable to keep in every particular the spirit of the Mosaic Law. The Jews reasoned that this was a setting aside of the Law; Jesus and the Apostles answer, No. These disciples or followers of Jesus sacrifice their earthly interests and rights and thus become reckonedly dead to earthly things. God accepts their sacrifices and begets them of the Holy Spirit. Thus they become New Creatures in Christ. These New Creatures are not under any Law of sin and death, nor have they any imperfections. "The Law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from the law of sin and death."—Rom. 8:2.

But, the objector asks, how could God accept a blemished offering? and, furthermore, are not these New Creatures held responsible for the conduct of their *flesh*, so long as they live—until their sacrifice is completed?

The Scriptures answer. The great High Priest, who presents these offerings as part of His own sacrifice, covers their imperfections and blemishes by an imputation of the merit of His own sacrifice, which is already in the hands of Justice waiting for application on behalf of the sins of the world. When this High Priest thus presents us to God, covered with His own merit as a robe, we are assured that the sacrifices are "holy and acceptable unto God."—Rom. 12:1.

As for subsequent weaknesses of the flesh, the New Creature is indeed held responsible for its mortal body, but since our High Priest tasted death for every man and for all sins of heredity, therefore these New Creatures in Christ are assured that all their trespasses, whether of ignorance or weakness, may be forgiven, and that the Redeemer, their Head and Representative in glory, will upon application impute His merit for the cancellation of such imperfections, that they may thus be maintained in their standing with the Father, "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."—Eph. 5:27.

Thus are the demands of Divine Law met in respect to the Church. But the Church's covenant means more than merely the observance of the Law; it is a covenant to *sacrifice*, and Justice, the Divine Law, could not demand sacrifice. The Church's covenant, which she shares with her Lord and Redeemer, is an agreement to sacrifice all earthly interests in the doing of the Divine will at any cost. The reward for the keeping of this covenant will be obtained in the First Resurrection change to heavenly glory, honor and immortality. The terms of this covenant read: "Gather together *My saints* unto Me, saith the Lord, those who have made a covenant with Me *by sacrifice*."—Psa. 50:5.

FULFILLING THE PROPHETS ALSO

To the Jew it seemed as though the Gospel invitation would make void all the Prophets, of whom Saint Peter said that all the holy Prophets since the world began had spoken of restitution times and blessings at the coming of Messiah. (Acts 3:19-21.) To the Jew it still seems as though there must be some mistake, that if Jesus were the Messiah He should have begun a work of restitution, a work of social, moral, intellectual and physical uplift for mankind, using Israel as His channel, His agency. The Jew points to the eighteen centuries of Christian preaching, and says if Christians be right it makes void all of the prophecies of the past. What is the answer to this?

Jesus gives the answer, saying that the prophecies are being fulfilled. The prophecies tell not only of Jesus but also of His brethren, the "little flock," the Bride class; and that class must be selected before other features of the prophecies can be fulfilled. "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren." (Psa. 22:22; Heb. 2:12.) This is the present work—the work of selecting the class mentioned by the Psalmist, saying, "I have said ye are gods, all of you sons of the Highest; but ye shall all die like men."—Psa. 82:6.

The Law and the Prophets point out the necessity of a Priestly class under the High Priest—of a sacrificing class which would become a Royal Priesthood. These prophecies are in process of fulfilment; neither the Law nor the Prophets are being ignored. Soon this feature of the Divine Plan will have been accomplished; the Church will be glorified with her Lord, and then those features of the Law and the Prophets which dazzle the eyes of Israel will begin to be fulfilled, and will bring them blessing, and through them blessing to the world, far beyond their highest conceptions.

If therefore any of the followers of Jesus should violate the Ten Commandments and teach men so to do, it would manifestly be done through ignorance and misunderstanding, and he would thus mark himself as a follower of Jesus on a low plane—one of the least in the Kingdom. This would apply amongst the Lord's followers at the present time: the Church is the *Kingdom in embryo*, and any brother in such an attitude should be considered by the brethren as weak and should not be given a position of prominence in the service of the Church.

THE PHARISEES' STANDARD LOWER

In Jesus' day the Pharisees prided themselves on their zeal for the Law and found fault with Jesus' disciples and with Himself for healing the sick on the Sabbath. Instead of admitting their claims Jesus repeatedly showed them to be fallacious. They were particular respecting the little requirements of the Law, but were careless respecting its spirit of love. This Jesus termed hypocrisy; He declared that unless His followers would be nearer right in heart than were the Pharisees they would not get into the Kingdom at all. (We must remember the difference between the embryo Kingdom which was inaugurated at Pentecost and the glorious Kingdom into which the faithful will be ushered by the First Resurrection change.)

Unless His followers would have more of the spirit of the Divine Law than the Pharisees they would not be fit for the begetting at Pentecost—none but those who love righteousness and who thus have the spirit of the Divine Law are acceptable at all in the Church—"the Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven."

The Pharisees held the letter of the Law and said, Beware lest you kill a man, for that would subject you to judgment or trial before the council, or local court of your town; but Jesus taught that hatred is murder, even if it do not go to the length of killing. So high is this standard amongst the Lord's consecrated people that for one of them to be even slightly angry would be a serious matter; and if he were angry enough to call a brother Christian "*a fool*" it would imply that he were in serious danger of the second Death—*Gehenna*. All Christ's followers, therefore, must not only guard their actions but also their lips and the very thoughts of their hearts, that even in thought they shall be in fullest accord with the very spirit of the Divine Law of love; and if on approaching the throne of grace they find any other spirit in their hearts they should go no further toward God, but first be reconciled to their brother. Under a parable of arrest, condemnation and imprisonment our Lord teaches His disciples that if they have a wrong feeling toward a brother they should make great haste to settle the matter. Every moment of delay

endangers their spiritual standing with the Lord and makes it more difficult for themselves in their relationship with God.

The intimation is that if we have wronged a brother and delay to make the matter right and the case come before the Lord for settlement, we will be obliged to suffer the full penalty of our neglect, "the uttermost farthing," before we will be fully restored to Divine favor and fellowship.

GOD'S INHERITANCE

Ephesians 1:18.

And can it be
That God designs with you and me
Forevermore to dwell?
Can His great might
Secure for us the right
To be His Israel?
A people chosen to proclaim His worth,
To sound the praises of His glory forth,
To lead the van of an adoring earth?

This poor, weak clay
Can He transform in such a way
That it shall yield Divinity?
This sin-stained mind
So cleanse that He in us shall find
Affinity?
Th' abode of His eternal rest,
That habitation which He loveth best,
His chosen Zion? City ever blest?

If this be so,
Not all the wealth this world can know
Will me suffice:
Nor name, nor fame, nor power, nor pleasure here below
My soul entice.
How poor these transitory things of earth
Beside this treasure of unending worth,
This Heavenly fellowship, this Royal birth!

And can it be
That down throughout succeeding ages He
With ardent longing waits
Th' eventful day
When—sin all purged away—
We'll sit within His gates?

Can we be subjects of our God's desire?
Doth He our loving fellowship require?
And to this height may such as we aspire?

How good to know
His never-failing Word proclaims it so!
Here, Lord, I give myself to Thee,
Work out Thy gracious purposes in me
Until in Heaven Thy blessed Face I see,
And dwell with Thee through all eternity.
WM. W. JOHNSTON.—Africa.

FEBRUARY 8

O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?—Matt. 14:31.

What must be done to overcome this lack of faith, and to have an increase of faith? We answer that, like the Apostles of old, we should pray, "Lord, increase our faith." And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, each should *cultivate* faith in his own heart: (a) by refreshing his memory continually with the Divine promises, becoming very familiar with these in the Father's Word and (b) by seeking more and more to remember that, having made his covenant with the Lord, these promises are his, and in his heart and with his lips he should claim them as his before the Lord in prayer with thanksgiving. He should claim them in his own thoughts, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren—Z '00, 170 (R 2642).

One of the strangest phenomena to solve is a doubting Christian. With a God of perfect wisdom, justice, love and power pledging Himself under oath to make all things work together for his good, with a Savior made unto him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and deliverance, supplying all lacks, ridding him of all faults, perfecting in him all good, and with the Spirit making him a candidate for the Kingdom, furnished with everything for its attainment, why should he doubt?—P '34, 15.

Parallel passages: Job 30:20; Psa. 22:2; 31:22; 42:5, 6; 49:5; 73:13-17; 77:3, 7-9; Prov. 24:10; Isa. 40:27, 28; 49:14, 15; Jer. 8:18; 15:18; 45:3; Lam. 3:8, 17, 18; 5:20; Matt. 8:23-27; 14:29-31; 17:14-21; 28:17; Mark 4:38-40; Gen. 12:12, 13; Ex. 14:10-15.

Hymns: 197, 63, 110, 293, 305, 328, 330.
Poems of Dawn, 65: "*O, Thou of Little Faith.*"
Tower Reading: Z '14, 88 (R 5424).

Questions: Did I this week exercise faith or doubt? Under what circumstances? With what results?

"O THOU OF LITTLE FAITH"

O THOU of little faith, why dost thou fear?
The tempest hath no power when I am near;
Will not the angry waves be still at My command?
Step out, I'll hold thy hand,
Then, wherefore dost thou *fear*?

O thou of little faith, why dost thou doubt?
Doth not Mine Angel compass thee about?
Are not My Father's promises as sure to thee
As they have proved to Me?
Then, wherefore dost thou *doubt*?

O thou of little faith, what dost thou dread?
Are not the lilies clothed, the sparrows fed?
Heed not the world, nor marvel that it hateth thee,
For so it hated Me,—
What, therefore, dost thou *dread*?

O thou of little faith, why dost thou shrink?
Why dost thou tremble at the river's brink?
Oh, hark! Above its tumult sweetly sounds My
"Come,
Thou art not far from *home*!
Then, wherefore wouldst thou *shrink*?"

R5424: LET US GO ON "IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH"!

**"Having an High Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."—
Hebrews 10:21, 22.**

THE Apostle Paul is here drawing to the attention of the Church, and especially to those familiar with the Jewish arrangements of that day, the fact that the Aaronic priesthood was only a typical one, designed for a time to illustrate greater things; that God's real Plan was not to be carried out by the Aaronic priesthood from the House of Levi, and that their sacrifices of bulls and goats could not take away sins; but that from year to year this arrangement merely shielded God's typical people—typically covered them—through their Covenant. The Apostle points out that there is to be a greater Priesthood, after the Order of Melchizedek; that our Lord is the Head of this Priesthood, and that the Gospel Church are His members, the under-priesthood. He then asks, why should a better priesthood be needed than the one that God provided in Aaron and his sons? The answer is that they were sinners, and could never really cancel sin; and the blood of those animals possessed no real merit. Those priests themselves never really got back into favor with God. They merely had access into a typical Holy and Most Holy.

But now we have Christ as the Head of this new Order of Priesthood; let us realize our position as under-priests of this order. Our High Priest has entered into the true Most Holy. The evidence of this came in the Pentecostal blessing showing that the Father was well pleased with the sacrifice made by our Lord, and that all things were then ready to permit us also to come near to God, sharing our Redeemer's experiences, that we might later go to Him beyond the veil and share His glory. Seeing that God has thus made all these gracious provisions, and has accepted us as the House of God to take the place of the House of Aaron—and so much greater than his House—let us enter into the real Holy and Most Holy, "with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."

The under-priests were permitted to enter into the Holy, and after the Day of Atonement into the Most Holy. All, in this Gospel Age, who have made consecration to God, and have been begotten of the Spirit, are in the first Holy. Aaron and his sons were a *type* of the true Priesthood; but we are not of the order of Aaron; we are not members of the Aaronic priesthood, but of the Melchizedek Priesthood, under its great High Priest. "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9.

LET US COME WITH TRUE HEARTS

Seeing, then, that we have confidence that God has made this arrangement, confidence to take the proper steps, and have presented our bodies living sacrifices, have gone through the antitypical consecration, and received the begetting of the Holy Spirit, let us begin at once the work of the new Order of Priesthood. There are great things to be accomplished: let us fully enter in with Him—let us become full participators in this work—in everything that God has for us to do. Let us come with true hearts, however, realizing how wonderful are our blessings, how precious is the provision of the covering of our Savior's merit. Let us be true and loyal to this Covenant into which we have entered with God.

The Lord's call under this Covenant is, "Gather My saints together unto Me, those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5.) This call, or invitation, has been going forth during the entire Gospel Age. And all the holy ones, all who have entered into this Covenant, are privileged to have a share in the sacrifice of Christ and to co-labor with Him.

Let us come with full assurance of faith in the sense that we shall have no doubt whatever that God's promises are true and *for us*. The world sees no cause for sacrificing in the present life, and they count us fools all the day long, as the Apostle says. But nevertheless in full assurance of faith, let us go on! Let us loyally press forward unto the end of the way, until we shall be joined to our great High Priest, and enter into His rest!

ANOINTED IN HIM

The anointing of the high priest in the type represented the Divine appointment to office. Aaron was thus anointed of God. The Apostle Paul says that "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron." Even Christ took not this honor upon Himself. God appointed Him, saying, "Thou art a Priest forever, after the Order of Melchizedek." (Hebrews 5:4-6.) God's direct dealings were with the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the One acceptable to the Father. God gave His Holy Spirit to our Lord in fullest degree. Jesus Himself tells us that God gave not His Spirit by measure unto Him, because He was able to receive the Holy Spirit in full measure. Those who are counted as His members are not able to receive the Spirit in full measure, because of their imperfection. The less fallen man can receive more of the Spirit, and the more fallen man can receive less.

When Christ appeared in the presence of God for us, and applied His merit for those who would offer themselves to become members of His Body, to be associated with Him in the glorious Kingdom work, He received Divine approval and sanction, which was manifested by the begetting by the Holy Spirit of those who had presented themselves in consecration, the Holy Spirit being first given at Pentecost. The Apostle Peter says that God fulfilled His promise to Jesus by granting Him the Holy Spirit to shed forth upon His disciples. (Acts 2:33.) It is *of* the Father, and *by* the Son.

It was not necessary that the Heavenly Father should pour out His Holy Spirit upon each individual member of the body. We understand that the picture given in the type is quite complete. The Holy Spirit being poured out upon the Head of the great High Priest, and flowing down over the skirts of His garments, all His Body is thus anointed. We each receive our share of the anointing when we come into the Body, and under the Robe.

FULL ASSURANCE BASED ON KNOWLEDGE

Speaking to those who are privileged to come to God in prayer, the Apostle says, "Let *us* draw near in full assurance of faith." He is speaking to the *House of God* class. Natural Israel were of the House of God, too, but they were servants. The servants belong to the House, of course, but not in the very special sense, as do the children. We have the suggestion given us that Moses was faithful as a servant over his House, but that the Church of Christ are a House of Sons, and that Christ is Head over this House. It is this House of Sons that may draw near to God. The assurance with which these may rightly approach is dependent upon certain conditions here indicated. They must have a *true heart*, and are not to be double-minded. Entire heart loyalty must be theirs; they must fully demonstrate that they meant what they said when they gave their lives to God. Then they may come to the Lord with holy boldness, in full assurance of faith. All the steps of God's true people are steps of faith, of realization of His care. But there is a *full* assurance of faith in contrast with a *lesser* faith. A faith that is only partial will bring us somewhat near to God. A faith that is strong will bring us nearer. But a *full assurance* of faith is that faith which, if retained, will bring us off "more than conquerors," and make us at last members in full of the Royal Priesthood—in glory.

This full assurance of faith cannot be attained in a day. It requires quite a degree of information. And God has provided this information by instructing us in His Word as to what Christ did for us, and what He is *willing* to do; why He died for us, etc. All this is furnished us as a basis for faith. Then to further strengthen our faith, we have all the exceeding great and precious promises, and His daily providences over us. Therefore this fully consecrated class may draw near, and have the full assurance that they may attain all the glorious things to which God has invited them—to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

FULL ASSURANCE NECESSARY TO GOD'S APPROVAL

The Apostle intimates that without this full assurance of faith the child of God cannot come close to Him. Only those who trust the Father as a little child would trust its earthly parent, can expect to make good progress in the narrow way and have the courage and confidence which it is the privilege of all who are His to have, and without which we cannot have the perfect peace and rest of heart promised. "According to your *faith* be it unto you," is the promise. The desire to draw nearer and nearer to God must be in *our heart*; else we shall fail to go on and attain our privilege in Christ. Such a desire is a manifestation of our hunger and thirst after righteousness, which the Lord expects to see before He makes good to such His engagement that they shall be *filled*.

There are definite conditions specified in the Word as necessary to continued progress along this line. As we cannot draw close to the Lord except through this full assurance, neither can we *have* the assurance unless our hearts are kept "sprinkled from an evil conscience," or a consciousness of evil; for, as the Apostle also declares, "If our own heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." (1 John 3:20.) We may be sure that if our course as New Creatures in Christ is condemned by our own conscience it would also be condemned by God.

Therefore, if the child of God would draw very near, and would have the blessed realization of the Father's smile of approval continually, he must seek to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men—a conscience which can truthfully say, I am striving to do that which would be pleasing to the Lord, that which is in full harmony with my Covenant of Sacrifice; and I am striving also to do that which would justly have the approval of righteous men. Nothing short of this is at all permissible in those who have consecrated themselves to be members of the Royal Priesthood, to sacrifice their lives in the Lord's service that they may reign with Him.

CAUSE AND REMEDY FOR LACK OF FAITH

He who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. (Philippians 1:6.) But how few children of God, comparatively, have this "full assurance of faith" which is our glorious privilege! How few can say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and *I shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever!*" Surely, by God's grace I shall ultimately gain the Heavenly Kingdom and the glorious things which He has promised to those who love Him. The few who can thus enter fully into sympathy with the Apostle Paul and the Prophet David in their expressions of confidence have therein a great joy, a great blessing, a great rest of heart which none others possess.

Let us therefore inquire why it is that the number who thus enter into the rest of faith is so small. What are the hindrances to others, and how can these hindrances be removed? How can each one of the children of God enjoy fully this, his blessed patrimony? Many say, or *think* if they do not *say*, Oh, that I could feel sure that God's goodness and mercy would continue with me to the end! Oh, that I could remove my doubts of gaining the Kingdom, of being ultimately "more than conqueror"!

What is the difficulty with these? Why do they not have the "full assurance of faith" of their acceptance? We answer that their difficulty is a lack of trust in God; and such a lack is not pleasing to Him, for "without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He *is*, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6.) Moreover, this lack of faith is a constant hindrance to their overcoming; as it is written: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our FAITH." (1 John 5:4.) The Christian who has not the shield of faith, and a *large* one, is continually at a disadvantage before the Adversary, and all the hosts of evil.

Then let each one who realizes a lack in this direction pray earnestly, as the Apostles of old, "Lord, increase our faith!" And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, let such a one cultivate such faith in his or her own heart. (1) Let him refresh his memory continually with the precious promises of the Word, becoming very familiar with these. (2) Let him seek more and more to remember that, having made a covenant with the Lord, these promises are *his*; and in his *heart* and with his *lips* let him claim them as *his* before the Throne of Grace, with thanksgiving. Let him claim them in his *thoughts*, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

When trials or difficulties arise, he should call to mind these precious promises, remembering that they *belong to* him, because God has given these promises to such as love Him and have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5; Malachi 3:17.) He should resolve that henceforth he will trust the Word of his Heavenly Father implicitly. If some seeming accident befall him, let him call to mind the promise, "All things work together for good to them that love God, who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28.) Let him thus assure himself that the *seeming* accident could not have occurred had God not seen a way to make it the channel of a needed lesson or blessing to him.

Let us never forget that He who has begun this good work in us *changes never*, and that if we keep our hearts in harmony with Him, if our faith is still firm and clear in the great Atonement made for our sins, and we continually renew our consecration to Him, keeping our all on the altar of sacrifice, letting the Lord consume it in His own way, seeking not our own will, our own way, but *His will alone*, we have every reason to have full confidence that this good work in us will be finished, that we shall enter with joy into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord, and shall hear His blessed words of approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

FEBRUARY 9

Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee—
Psa. 116:7.

The Christian's *habit of thought* has much indeed to do with his spiritual progress or retrogression, as it is also an index of his spiritual state; and good habits of thought need to be carefully cultivated. By "habit of thought" we mean that normal condition to which the mind habitually (characteristically) returns in the moments of mental leisure. While engaged in the active duties of life, we must of necessity bend our mental energies to the work at hand, for if we do anything merely mechanically and without concentrating thought upon it, we cannot do it well; yet even here Christian principle, well established in the character, will unconsciously guide. But when the strain of labor and care are lifted for a time, the established habit of thought, like the needle to the pole, should quickly, return to its rest in God—Z '95, 250 (R 1884).

The Christian life is one in which, from the standpoint of the flesh, there is much perplexity and unrest, and the Christian's danger under these circumstances is permitting this perplexity and unrest to become a part of his character. To overthrow this tendency a constant returning in confidence in the Lord's good will and purpose toward him as expressed in the Word is necessary; for in such reliance upon the Lord through the Word, he finds rest and peace amid trouble and perplexity—P '33, 16.

Parallel passages: Job 34:29; Psa. 1:1, 2; 4:8; 25:12; 29:11; 85:8; 119:165; 125:1, 5; Prov. 3:13-26; Isa. 26:3, 12; 28:12; 32:2, 17, 18; 53:5; Luke 1:79; John 14:27; 16:33; Acts 10:36; Rom. 10:15; Phil. 4:7, 9.

Hymns: 244, 220, 339, 296, 90, 97, 22.

Poems of Dawn, 25: *Let Not Doubts O'erwhelm*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 25, 202 (R 5387, 5492).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences with the Word as our resting place? What helped or hindered therein? What were the results?

LET NO DOUBTS O'ER WHELM

HOW oft we doubt
And fear we shall be overwhelmed in sin,
Because temptation grows so strong without,
Because our courage is so faint within.

And thus we sigh:
Then can it be that I have known the Lord?
Can I be one with Him that sits on high?
Have I e'er felt the power of His Word?

Is this poor life
Fit prelude for a high eternity?
Alas! Have I not yet begun the strife,
Or must I fail before the victory?

O heart of doubt!
When wilt thou, O thou foolish heart, be wise?
Thou lookest everywhere, within, without,
Forgetting only to lift up thine eyes.

No more despair,
There is no help for thee in things below;
Search not within for hope—it is not there,
But unto Christ do thou for comfort go.

Christ is thy Rock;
Doubt not this firm foundation, true and tried;
Fear not the gathering tempest's angry shock;
It harms not those that on this Rock abide.

Christ is thy Friend,
He knows thy weakness, He will give thee strength;
Trust! In His name is victory; He will end
The conflict for thee; thou shalt win at length.

Christ is thy Peace;
From penalty and stain He sets thee free;
And in the white robe of His righteousness,
Before the approving God presenteth thee.

Christ is thine ALL:
Forget thyself, and in Him sweetly rest;
And thou shalt enter, whatsoe'er befall,
The everlasting mansions of the blest.

R5387: REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

"My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exod. 33:14.

WE ARE NOT to think of our Heavenly Father as literally walking through the wilderness with the children of Israel, as leaving the affairs of the Universe and going with them in their journey. Nor are we to get the thought that God is everywhere at the same time. This unscriptural thought has been the foundation for much error. Christian Scientists say that God is everywhere—in every piece of wood, of china—in *everything*.

When we ask what they mean, they say that since the word *God* simply stands for good, and since there is good in everything, therefore God must be in everything; for God means good and must be everywhere, even in every atom of matter. So on this erroneous doctrine of God's omnipresence they build their theory. But theirs is not the Scriptural thought.

The Scriptural thought is that God specially manifests His Power and Love to His people. God is in Heaven; the earth is His footstool. But by His various powers and agents, and by His intelligence and knowledge, He can be as if present everywhere—through His angels, His messengers. Just as we by the telegraph and the telephone can have communication with the uttermost parts of the earth, so God can exercise His Power in every part of the Universe.

The words of our text, we remember, were the Lord's answer to Moses when that great statesman was in perplexity. He had been commanded to go forward as the leader of Israel, and through Divine favor to bring them into the land of Canaan, there to give them rest.

From the beginning of the wilderness journey, there was more or less of disinclination or fear on the part of the people. They realized that they were breaking up their homes and going forth into a strange land. Even though they had been oppressed by the Egyptians, they reasoned that if they went out into the wilderness with no Egyptian taskmasters, this would mean that they would have no food. Thus they were stiff-necked—like an ox—difficult to turn about.

The Lord's promise to Moses was, "My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." And He promised to be with the Israelites. He gave them assurance that they might recognize His power in their midst; for God's energy in all the affairs of earth, as of the Universe, is not merely a power to know the things that are happening, but to control all events that they may outwork His designs. He guides and assists the efforts of His people. Additionally, the angels of the Lord quite probably were employed in this special work of superintending the affairs of the Israelites.

This thought is in harmony with the Scripture which intimates that there is a guardian angel for each one of the Lord's saints, who has supervision over him. We read, "In Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven." (Matt. 18:10.) They have immediate communication with the Father; and thus He has direct oversight of all who belong to Him.

The Divine Power was manifested directly with the Israelites in the Shekinah glory over the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy, which indicated the Lord's presence with them. And when they were to journey onward, the pillar of cloud went before them by day, and the pillar of fire by night. When they were to stop, this cloud would stand still. While they were encamped, the cloud would rest over the Tabernacle, and the Shekinah glory rested between the cherubim on the Mercy-Seat in the Tabernacle. Thus the presence of

God went with them to the Land of Canaan, and gave them all things which He had promised—Joshua 23:14.

MOSES' NEED OF ENCOURAGEMENT

From our context we perceive that Moses' meekness was again manifesting itself. He had previously asked for some one to be mouthpiece for him, and the Lord had said that Aaron might be his mouthpiece. Rash people often get into trouble, because there is a lack of meekness, modesty. But it was not so with Moses—"the meekest man in all the earth." Humility is a most important element of character. The meek man will find it easier to be gentle and patient than will the man who lacks meekness. And so in enumerating the fruits of the Holy Spirit St. Paul mentions meekness.—Gal. 5:23.

When the Lord promised that His presence should go with Moses, He was speaking to him as the *Mediator*. Therefore He said, "My Presence shall go with *thee*." As soon as Moses had inaugurated the Law Covenant at Sinai, Israel was in covenant relationship with God, and the Lord with Israel.

ISRAEL'S FAILURE TO ENTER REST

One might get the thought that God's promise to give rest would signify that Moses should have a rest of mind, and that all who would come into line with Moses and with God's promises would also have a rest of mind. But this mental rest is not what is here meant. The Israelites were going from the land of Egypt into the Land of Promise, which was to be an everlasting inheritance to them, if they would keep their Covenant. But of all the adults who came out of Egypt, only Caleb and Joshua entered into Canaan. (Num. 32:11, 12.) The majority failed to enter in because of their lack of faith. The forty years' wandering in the desert was because of their fearfulness and consequent rebellion.

When on the wilderness journey Israel came finally to the place where they could see the land of Canaan, spies were sent to make investigation and to report as to which would be the best way to enter the promised land. All of the spies save Caleb and Joshua, gave an unfavorable report. Then through timidity the people said, "We cannot go up and take that land. Those people are giants, and we look like *grasshoppers* beside them." So in their lack of faith they murmured against going up. Therefore God swore in His wrath, "This people shall not enter into My rest."—Hebrews 3:11.

TYPICAL AND ANTITYPICAL REST

The Apostle Paul shows that the rest in Canaan was a type of the rest of the people of God, in this Gospel Age. (Heb. 4:3, 9.) By *faith* we rest in God—we rest in His promises. We are not moved away by any of the adverse conditions of the present time. Our rest is the *reality*; the rest of Israel was the *type*.

The antitypical rest, into which the Lord's people enter, has two phases. We who believe enter into rest *now*. We have the peace of God ruling in our hearts and guiding

our lives. We have the peace of faith, the rest of faith, the confidence that God will direct our course. Therefore we are *contented*, even though not yet *satisfied*. We shall not be *satisfied* until we enter into our *complete rest*. Our true rest will be that glorious, perfect condition beyond the veil, which we shall attain through the First Resurrection.

St. Paul, in discussing this question in the 3d and 4th chapters of Hebrews, declares that the people of Israel failed to enter into rest, not because God did not perform His part, but because they failed to exercise the proper faith in the Lord; they had "an evil heart of unbelief." And he proceeds to say, "Let *us* therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1.) There are requirements; there are conditions. The Apostle means that whoever would be of this *overcoming* class must take heed, or he will fail to enter into the eternal rest of God. There *will be* such a class of overcomers; and God has predestined and foreordained that they shall enter into this glorious and perfect rest. If we are faithful unto death, we shall attain this glorious rest by the resurrection "*change*."

JOSHUA A TYPE OF CHRIST

The world is not now able to enter into rest. They are like the raging sea. They have not come into relationship with God. As the Scriptures tell us, mankind is a poor, groaning creation, travailing together in pain. They do not see the rest which God has provided. We see, however, that when the antitypical Moses, the great Mediator, shall have been completed, He will lead the people into rest.—Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22.

Moses did not lead the people into the Land of Promise; it was Joshua—their new leader—who led them over Jordan. Thus the type shows that mankind will enter into the promised land, not by the Law, but by a Savior. The name Joshua means savior—Greek *Jesous*. (Heb. 4:8, margin.) So Jesus will lead all of mankind who will, into the true Land of Promise—into love and loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness. It will take the entire thousand years of the Messianic Kingdom to bring the world into condition for all the blessings which God has in store for them.

Our Lord Jesus entered into rest by trusting the Heavenly Father to fulfil all His gracious promises. Jesus, the Head of the antitypical Moses, thus enjoyed perfect rest of heart, and realized the Heavenly Father's continual presence with Him. This continued for three and a half years; and then He entered into the rest complete, by the First Resurrection.

The same is true of all the members of the Body of the antitypical Moses—The Christ. God's presence goes with them. The world at present is not in a condition to enter into the Father's rest. Only the members of the Body of Christ have entered into this rest of faith, trusting in the Lord. And none except those who continue faithful will be recognized as members of the great antitypical Mediator. All who lack faith lack proof that they are in the Body of Christ. If, then, our hearts are disturbed and we cannot enter into this rest of faith, the proper course is to seek the Throne of Grace, that we may overcome the difficulty.

THE REST PROVIDED FOR MANKIND

As for those Israelites who the Lord said should not enter into His rest, we understand Him to mean, not that *no* Jew will enter into the true rest of God, but rather, that this was a prophecy of the end of the Jewish Age—that they as a nation would not be ready to enter into this rest of faith which was then offered them—that *as a nation* they would fail. They did fail; for "they knew not the day of their visitation."

As soon as the great Messiah shall establish the New Covenant, both Jews and Gentiles will enter into peace and prosperity, as rapidly as they enter into that New Covenant. But the disobedient, after a full, fair trial, will go into the Second Death. Throughout the Millennial Age mankind will be entering into the actual rest, which will mean deliverance from the bondage of Sin and Death. Before Messiah's Reign shall have ended, they will have fully entered into that rest and into perfection of life, and will be counted in as a part of the seed of Abraham, according to the promise, "I have constituted thee a father of many nations." (Gen. 17:5; Rom. 4:17.) The blessing of the Lord will be upon them all. Any *refusing* to enter into the rest of God will be cut off—the wilful sinner shall die at one hundred years of age.—Isa. 65:20.

R5492: FAITHFULNESS TO OPPORTUNITIES

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Matthew 25:21.

WE ARE NOT to confound the Parable of the Pounds with the Parable of the Talents. They teach totally different lessons. In the case of the talents, the amount given to each of the servants differed. In the case of the pounds, it was the same—each servant received one pound—approximately sixteen dollars. This parable, therefore, deals with something that is common to all of the class to which reference is made.

The object in the giving of the parable is stated in the lesson. The Lord and His disciples were approaching Jerusalem, where shortly He was to be crucified. The disciples had supposed, on the contrary, that the Messianic Kingdom would immediately be established in power and great honor. This parable was intended to inform them that a considerable period of time would elapse before the Kingdom would be established.

The disciples knew that the kings of Palestine were appointed by the Roman Emperor, and they had recently had an experience along this line, when one of the Herods went to Rome, seeking an appointment to a kingdom. Some who hated him sent a message to Rome, discrediting him and declaring their preference for another king. Jesus seized this circumstance as an illustration in His own case. He was the Appointee for the Messianic Kingdom of the world; but He would go to Heaven itself and there appear in the presence of the Heavenly Father, the great Overlord or Emperor of the Universe. He would be

invested by the Father with the ruling authority, and later return to earth and exercise His dominion.

This is exactly the presentation of the matter given us prophetically. (Psalm 2:8.) The Divine regulation is that Messiah, after finishing His work, shall in Heaven itself make application for a Kingdom which Divine providence has already arranged for and which Divine prophecy has already foretold. "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession."

"OCCUPY TILL I COME"

During the interim of the Master's absence—in Heaven, waiting for Divine investiture with the government of earth—He has committed to His disciples, His servants, otherwise styled His brethren, one pound each. He has left them with full liberty to use their best judgment and to show their love and their zeal in His service. At His return, all these servants will be reckoned with, and the degree of their zeal and efficiency as servants will be manifested by the results; and the rewards given them will be proportionate.

The parable distinguishes between these consecrated servants of God and the masses of the people. It shows that nothing is committed to the masses of the people; and that no judgment, reward, is made in their case at the return of the Master as King. Only to His servants did He give the pounds—only His servants had the responsibility of those pounds, and only those servants will be reckoned with or held responsible, either for reward or for punishment in respect to the matter.

In considering what is signified, or symbolized, by the pound, we must keep in memory the fact that as the same amount was given to each, the fulfilment must show some blessing or responsibility given in each case alike to all of God's consecrated people—all who are His servants. There is but one thing that we can think of that is given to all of the Lord's people in exactly the same measure. They have not talents and opportunities alike, but, on the contrary, very unlike. Some have more and some less wealth; some more and some less mental capacity; some more and some less of favorable or unfavorable environment. None of these varied talents belong to this Parable of the Pounds.

The pound is the same to all; it represents *justification*. The one thing which the Redeemer does for all who become His followers is to justify them freely from all things. This leaves them all on exactly an even footing; for justification makes up to each individual in proportion as he is deficient—in proportion as he by nature is short of perfection, the Divine standard.

"BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH"

All who in the present time become children of God, servants of God, followers of Christ, must receive from the Lord, as a basis for this relationship, the pound—the free

forgiveness of sins—justification. On this basis he has a standing with God, and whatever he may do or endeavor to do will be to his credit. Because all are alike qualified by justification, the results will show the degree of loving zeal controlling each servant. Those who love much will serve much. Those who love little will neglect to use their opportunities. As one in the parable gained ten pounds, so such noble characters as St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John and others, sacrificed themselves over and over again in the Divine service. In their zeal they counted all earthly things but as loss and dross, that they might be pleasing to their Master, the coming King.

These, and such as these, who have gladly spent themselves zealously in the service of the Lord, are to have the highest rewards, as represented by the Lord's words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Because thou wast faithful in a very little have thou authority over ten cities." In the parable another came, reporting a gain of five pounds. He had not done so well as did the first, but he had done well. He received the same commendation: he had been faithful, although less faithful than the first. He received his master's "Well done," however; but the reward was less—dominion over five cities. This will mean a less influential place in the Messianic Kingdom.

Then came a servant saying, "Lord, here is the pound that you gave me; I have kept it carefully laid up in a napkin." This represents a class that say, "I endeavored to maintain my justification. I endeavored to live justly and honorably, but I did not sacrifice myself. I am glad to be able to say that I have lost nothing. I was really afraid to use my opportunity, to use my privilege; for I realized that You would be expecting considerable return from the amount which You gave me."

The master in the parable addresses this one still as a servant, but a wicked servant, who knew his master's will, who had undertaken his service, but who had been found unfaithful in respect to it. Had he not professed to be a servant, he would have received no pound and would have had no responsibility for it. He should have made use of his privilege and opportunity. He should have lived for his master. If not so actively and so directly as did the others, he should have made at least some use of the pound entrusted to him, so that he would have had some results to show.

We may assume that this one represents a considerable class of those who have entered into a covenant with the Lord to be His servants, and who have received justification at His hands, but who have neglected to comply with their engagements for self-sacrifice in His service. This neglect indicates their lack of loving zeal; and all this means that they will not be fit for a share in the Kingdom. This class is referred to on several occasions by the Lord: for instance, they are represented in the foolish virgins, who failed to enter in to the wedding; and so these will fail to become members of the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

"SAVED SO AS BY FIRE"

The same class seems to be pictured by St. Paul when, speaking of the same testing of the Church in the end of this Age, he declares, "The fire of that Day shall try every man's

work of what sort it is." He proceeds to say that those who build with gold, silver and precious stones will suffer no loss, but will receive a full reward; while others building upon the same Rock, Christ Jesus—the same justification by faith—will suffer the loss of all their time and opportunity. He adds, however, that they themselves shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

This we understand to mean that this class of servants who maintain their justification, seeking to live harmless, honest lives, but who fail to sacrifice as they have covenanted to do, will not be *lost*, in the worst sense of that word. They will indeed lose the great prize—the highest blessing—the Kingdom; but because they still remain servants and have a love for righteousness they will be saved so as by fire; that is, through tribulations. They will ultimately gain everlasting life on the spirit plane, but will be quite inferior to the Bride class. They seem to be represented in the Scriptures as the virgins, the Bride's companions, who follow her.—Psalm 45:14.

These seem again to be pictured in Revelation, Chapters 14 and 7. Here the elect Church are referred to as 144,000, who will stand on Mount Zion, because they followed the Lamb whithersoever He went. Then a great multitude is pictured as coming through great tribulation, washing their robes and attaining a place before the Throne, instead of on the Throne. To these are given palm branches, instead of crowns. They are victors, but not "more than conquerors." In this respect they are not wholly copies of God's dear Son, and are not esteemed worthy of being members of His Bride class, who are to share with Him the honors and glories and services in His Kingdom, as set forth in this parable.

The fear expressed by this servant, saying, "For I feared thee," reminds us of the Apostle's words respecting this same class. He declares that Christ at His Second Coming will deliver those who all their lifetime were subject to bondage through fear of death. The consecration of the Lord's servants is unto death, and those who fear death are fearful of performing their covenant vow. They will not be worthy of the Lord's approval as faithful servants. Nevertheless, there are many vessels in the house of the King—some to more honor and some to less honor.—2 Timothy 2:20, 21.

"THOSE MINE ENEMIES"

Not until first He shall have finished dealing with His own servants at His Second Coming will the glorious Messiah begin to deal with the world, and especially with His enemies. This is the statement of the parable, and it is borne out by numerous Scriptures. When Jesus prayed on the night before His crucifixion, He said: "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; word." (John 17:9, 20.) Thus we see the work of the Gospel Age outlined by our Lord. It is merely for the selection of His servants, and the testing and proving of these. It is with a view to determining which of them will be found worthy of association with Himself in the great Millennial Kingdom which God has decreed, and whose work will be for the blessing and uplifting of the whole world of mankind.

So the Second Psalm points out that the Redeemer will not pray for, ask for, the world until, at His Second Advent, He is ready to establish His Kingdom, His Church having first been gathered to glory. Then He will ask for the heathen. By the term heathen, or Gentile, is signified all out of fellowship with God, "enemies through wicked works." The Psalm proceeds to say that Messiah will deal rudely with the heathen. "He will dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel," etc. This, interpreted by other Scriptures, means that the inauguration of Messiah's Kingdom will bring a great Time of Trouble, symbolically styled fire, or fiery judgments. "He shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance." Everything appertaining to present institutions contrary to the Divine standards of justice will be rudely shaken and eventually destroyed.

However, the Lord wounds that He may heal. The lessons of the Time of Trouble will be salutary; as we read, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." These judgments will not in any sense continue upon all throughout the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom, but will be inflicted only upon those deserving them. Hence the judgments will be especially severe at the beginning. All who learn righteousness will thereby deliver themselves; and as they come into harmony with the King of kings and Lord of lords, blessings will be their portion, uplifting them gradually to human perfection.

"SLAY THEM BEFORE ME"

At first thought, we might gather that these words signify that the King of Glory will be implacable, ferocious, unsympathetic, with His enemies. We might wonder how this shows sympathy! He admonishes us to love our enemies and to do good to them that despitefully use us. Gradually we come to see that this will indeed be the policy which the great King will pursue. He will be doing the greatest good for His enemies in bringing upon them punishments for their wrong course—shame, publicity, contempt. These things will be necessary to arouse them to an appreciation of their true condition and show them their privileges.

We are not to forget that during this Age the Lord's dealings with His faithful servants has been in permitting fiery trials to try them and to instruct them. It should not be a wonder to us therefore that fiery judgments upon the world are the Master's design, not for the world's injury, but for its blessing. We read that as a result of St. Peter's preaching at Pentecost the truths struck home to the hearts of his hearers—"They were cut to the heart." But we realize that this was a great blessing, in that it prepared them for the Message of Divine Mercy. So here we read of the Lord's slaying His enemies; they will be cut to the heart. A picture of this slaughter is given us in Revelation, where the Lord is represented in glorious majesty, with a sword proceeding out of His mouth, that with it He should smite the nations. (Revelation 19:15.) Blessed smiting! The sooner it begins, the better for the world, we might say; and yet we remember that God's time is best for everything.

Another similar picture of the progress of Messiah's Kingdom is given us in figurative language, as follows: "Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Thou Most Mighty, with Thy

glory and Thy majesty. Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things. Thine arrows shall be sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies; whereby the people shall fall under Thee."—Psalm 45:3-5.

Here the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom with power, great glory and majesty, is presented in pictorial imagery; and the sharp arrows of Divine Truth are represented as slaughtering the hosts of error. This terrible carnage will mean a great blessing; for the Lord smites to heal, and when His Word cuts to the heart the effect is to destroy the enemy. Unless the enemies of the Lord be thus brought into subjection to Him, nothing will remain for them but the final extinction mentioned by St. Peter: "It shall come to pass that the soul that will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people."—Acts 3:23.

FEBRUARY 10

Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity—1 Tim. 4:12.

Every Christian should strive to be a pattern worthy of imitation—a pattern of earnest, faithful endeavor to copy Christ in his daily life, and of active zeal in His service. Patterns of perfection, of the ultimate moral glory and beauty of holiness, we cannot expect to be in the present life. Such a pattern we have only in Christ our Lord. In no such sense did Paul ever say, Follow me, or Follow us; but he did say, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). The Apostle was a grand example of earnest endeavor to attain perfection, but not of the ultimate perfection which was in Christ only; and it is his zeal and intense earnestness in striving to copy Christ and to accomplish His will that we should seek to imitate—Z '95, 251 (R 1884).

Those set in prominent positions as teachers in the Church have double need of Christlikeness, first to inure to making their calling and election sure, and second to helping others by their example to develop Christlikeness. Their influence over those who hold them in love and confidence is great, and to support their influence with Christlike character will prove helpful to those whom they teach—P '27, 15.

Parallel passages: Titus 2:7; 1 Pet. 2:21; 5:3; Lev. 18:2, 3; 2 Chron. 30:7; Prov. 22:24, 25; Matt. 23:1-3; John 13:15; 1 Cor. 8:9-13; Phil. 2:5; 1 Thes. 1:6-8; Heb. 13:7; Jas. 5:10, 11; 1 Pet. 3:5, 6; 1 John 2:6.

Hymns: 267, 198, 78, 74, 150, 196, 114.

Poems of Dawn, 63: *Follow the Pattern*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 200 (R 5493).

Questions: Have I this week been an example of and to the brethren? How? Why? With what results?

FOLLOW THE PATTERN

LET us take to our hearts a lesson—no lesson can braver be—
From the ways of the tapestry weavers on the other side of the sea.
Above their heads the pattern hangs; they study it with care;
The while their fingers deftly work, their eyes are fastened there.

They tell this curious thing, besides, of the patient,
plodding weaver:
He works on the wrong side evermore, but works for the
right side ever.
It is only when the weaving stops, and the web is loosed and turned,
That he sees his real handiwork—that his marvelous

skill is learned.

Ah! The sight of its delicate beauty, how it pays him
for all his cost!

No rarer, daintier work than his was ever done by
the frost.

Then the master bringeth him golden hire, and giveth
him praise as well;
And how happy the heart of the weaver is, no tongue
but his own can tell.

The years of man are the looms of God, let down
from the place of the sun,
Wherein we are weaving always, till the mystic web
is done—
Weaving blindly, but weaving sure, each for himself
his fate,
We may not see how the right side looks, we can only weave and wait.

But looking above for the pattern, no weaver need
have fear;
Only let him look clear into heaven—the perfect pattern is there,
If he keeps the face of the Savior forever and always
in sight,
His toil shall be sweeter than honey, his weaving is
sure to be right.

And when his task is ended, and the web is turned
and shown,
He shall hear the voice of the Master, who shall say
to him, "Well done!"
Since in copying thus the pattern, he had laid his own
will down;
And God for his wages shall give him, not coin, but
a glorious crown.

R5493: THE IMPORTANCE OF EXAMPLE

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity [love], in spirit, in faith, in purity."—1 Timothy 4:12.

WE REMEMBER that Timothy was an Elder in the Church, though young in years. Therefore, it was appropriate that St. Paul should impress upon his mind that He should be an example of the believers, an example to all the Church; and such instruction is implied in other parts of the Epistle. But note that the Apostle, in our text, does not say:

Be thou an example *to* the believers, but, "Be thou an example *of* the believers." How different!

Being an example *of* believers means that one should show forth not only to his fellow-workers in the Gospel, but especially to the world, what believers stand for—what they believe, what they teach, how they live. We should see to it that we are setting such an example in *word*, as the Apostle enjoins, in the character of our language when declaring the Message of Truth. We are not to be merely smooth-tongued and unctuous; we are not merely to use kind words; but the kindness and interest manifested should be genuine—from the heart. All of the Lord's people are thus to be examples, striving to show forth the praises of our Master.

St. Paul further urges: "Be thou an example in conversation." This word *conversation* does not refer merely to language, as it is now used: the original meaning of this word is *conduct*. Our conduct relates to our manner, to the way we walk, to the way we act, to our general deportment, and not to our words alone. We are to be an example in our gentleness of demeanor. We should not slam doors, nor be boisterous, nor uncouth, nor thoughtless of others. In every way we are to be gentle and kind and considerate, and not rude.

"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE"

Those who are begotten to the new nature should strive to be examples to everybody of what Christians ought to be. The kind of work we are engaged in should be honest. It may be secular work, yet it should be done as unto the Lord, carefully, faithfully, not merely as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as servants of God; "for we serve the Lord Christ." The walk of the Christian should be in charity—love—in sympathy, in benevolence, in kindness of word and conduct. A generally sympathetic spirit should pervade his words and deeds, his entire behavior. The Heavenly Father loved mankind; while they were yet sinners He so loved the race that He gave the choicest Treasure of His heart for man's recovery. And He still loves the world, and is fitting the Church to be the blessers of the world in the future. So any begotten of the Lord's Spirit should have a transforming influence at work in his life—an influence that will manifest itself even to those who are out of the way, those who have not yet been blessed with the Light of God.

Our text also reads: "Be thou an example in spirit." This phrase, "in spirit," is not found in the original, but the thought seems proper enough: we are to show kindness of spirit, of disposition, to all. The spirit that animates us at all times should be the spirit, the mind of the Lord.

We are exhorted to be examples "in faith." The Apostle's exhortation applies to us all. The Christian's faith is also manifested to others in his conduct, his words, his course in life. If he is full of faith, he will not be murmuring against the experiences of life as they come, against the providences of the Lord. The Almighty has accepted us as His children; we should have continual and implicit confidence in Him, and whoever has true faith has

this confidence. If any of us lack faith in God we shall not manifest faith to others, nor inspire faith in them.

We are to be examples "in purity." There is a purity that goes with all that pertains to God and to His Word—a loftiness of standard, which is not to be found elsewhere. There are people in heathen lands who live more or less chaste lives, but there is nowhere so high a standard as in the Christian religion. Everything impure is contrary to God. Purity is one of the component elements of Christian character. As the Apostle said on another occasion, we are to be "first *pure*, then peaceable, gentle."

LIVING EPISTLES, KNOWN AND READ

In all these ways each of God's people should be living lessons, living epistles, wherever they go; they should be examples to the world. Whether the world believe what we preach or not, we should manifest these qualities which they cannot but approve and respect. This example will bear fruitage in due time, if not now. Every Elder, like Timothy, should be especially careful of his conduct, his words, his example. The Church has declared by choosing such a one Elder that they believe him to be an example of the fruitage of the grace of God in the heart.

The Apostle's counsel to Timothy: "Let no man despise thy youth," should be looked upon as advice not only to Timothy, but to all Elders of the Church who are young in years, that they so conduct themselves as to be examples of the Flock, that their deportment and ability to "rightly divide the Word of Truth" be such that none will have cause to slight the Message they bring, or to think of them as immature and unfit to lead the Flock of God.

Let every child of God, the younger as well as the older, strive to be an example worthy of imitation—an example of earnest, faithful endeavor to copy the Master in his daily life, a pattern of active zeal in the service of our God. We shall not be able while in the flesh to be examples in the full sense of the ultimate glory and beauty of holiness which will be ours beyond the veil: we cannot expect this in the present life. Our Lord alone was such a Pattern.

The Apostle Paul urged, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1.) St. Paul was a noble example of earnest endeavor to attain the perfect likeness of Christ, and his love, his zeal, his intense earnestness in striving to copy the Master and to accomplish His will should be an inspiration to us all. Let each of the Lord's children, individually, realize his or her personal responsibility. We are as "a city set upon a hill." Let each ask himself the question: Am I "an example of the believers"?

FEBRUARY 11

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you—Matt. 5:11, 12.

Opposition and persecution are the inevitable concomitants of activity in the service of God, and they should be met with reason and candor; and when these fail of their purpose, then, with solemn warnings of the dangers of such a course, the wilful opposer should be left to pursue his own course while we turn to others with the message of salvation. In the opposition which our Lord incurred and the manner in which He met it, there are valuable lessons for all who are similarly tried—Z '94, 368 (R 1735).

On account of Satan's putting all the advantages of the present on the side of sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, those who take God's side of righteousness, truth, love and Kingdom-mindedness, must expect and bear persecution. Let them not fear, however, for therein they enjoy the companionship in spirit, not only of the faithful of the Old Testament, but also of Jesus, the Apostles and the saints and martyrs of the New Testament, and their crown of rejoicing will be their sharing with Jesus in the Kingdom—P '32, 15.

Parallel passages: Matt. 5:10, 44; 10:16, 17, 21-23, 28; 23:34, 35; 24:8-10; Mark 13:9-13; Luke 6:22, 23; 21:12-19; John 15:18, 19; 16:1, 2; Acts 5:29, 40-42; 1 Cor. 4:9-13; 2 Cor. 4:8-12; 6:4, 5, 8-10; 11:23-27; 12:10; Phil. 1:12-14; Heb. 11:25-27, 33-38; 1 Pet. 4:12-19; Rev. 2:3, 10.

Hymns: 330, 23, 93, 200, 228, 305, 227.

Poems of Dawn, 188: *Some Day*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 291 (R 5544).

Questions: What persecutions have I met this week? How were they met? In what did they result?

SOME DAY

SOME day all doubt and mystery
Will be made clear:
The threatening clouds that now we see
Will disappear.

Some day what seems a punishment,
Or loss or pain,
Will prove to be God's blessing, sent
For very gain.

Some day our weary feet will rest
In sweet content;
And we shall know that we were blest
By what was sent.

And, looking back with clearer eyes
O'er life's short span,
We'll see with wondering, glad surprise,
God's perfect plan.

And, knowing that the way we went
Was God's own way,
We'll recognize His wise intent,
Some day, some day.

R5544: REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you."—Matthew 5:11, 12.

THESE words of our Lord are addressed to His disciples—not merely His Apostles, who were chosen to be His special messengers, but all His followers throughout this Age. A disciple is a pupil—one who is being taught by another. All who are Jesus' disciples are to take the message of our text to themselves. "Blessed are ye," signifies that *persecution* is a favor from God. Consider it as a favor from the Father when men shall revile you—not because of the reviling, but because they shall say these things of you *falsely*, for Christ's sake.

No one would choose naturally to be persecuted or to have evil spoken against him. The Scriptures say that a good name is more to be esteemed than great riches. But if it is for Christ's sake that we suffer, we may know that the Lord will recompense us. In the Lord's arrangement there is to be a time of "evening up" for all we suffer here. Thus we lay up treasure in Heaven. All that we suffer now is storing up for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if borne for Him.

From this standpoint we should really desire persecution. We are not to strive for it, not to endeavor to bring it upon ourselves unnecessarily; but realizing that if we lack persecution we lack one of the evidences of being true disciples of the Lord, we rejoice when in the providence of God it is our portion. Some, it is true, might be reviled for something evil or unwise that they had done. There would be no blessing in such an experience. The blessing comes when the accusation against us is false and is for the Truth's sake.

"All who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution." Hence we should investigate our lives to see whether we have this evidence that we are living godly. The Lord is the "True Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We are the lesser lights. In letting our lights shine faithfully, we shall bring upon ourselves persecution. Let us not imagine that escape from persecution in our own case is the result of superior wisdom or tact on our part. "*All* who will live godly shall suffer persecution," is the promise, the assurance of Scripture. We should not court it, but should desire this evidence of our faithfulness, and should wish to be one of the "blessed" ones, of whom the Master speaks in our text. Then let us ask ourselves, Do I have persecution for Christ's sake? We should make a prayerful examination of our hearts to see whether we are fully loyal to God, to see whether we are letting our light shine out properly. If we lack this proof of sonship, we should inquire, What is the reason?

PERSECUTION A SURE RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS

A sister once said to the Editor, "I have no persecution, no opposition. Everything seems to be going favorably with me." She seemed troubled. We asked the sister to study her own heart to see whether or not she was as faithful as she knew how to be. Upon her reply we said, "Probably you take your persecutions with such grace that you are happy under them." The sister replied that she *would* be happy if she thought that was the case. Then we told her that the only other explanation we could think of was that the Lord was allowing her time to gain strength in order that she might bear what would come to her later. We told her to pray about it. A year or two after we again saw the sister. We recalled the circumstance, and asked her if she had yet had any persecution. She answered, "Oh, yes. I have had plenty of persecution, but I am happy and rejoicing in it!"

It is impossible to rejoice in persecution until we get the right focus on the subject. We cannot do this of ourselves, and need, therefore, to take the matter to the Lord and confer with Him. After we have had "a little talk with Jesus," our faith takes hold on Him. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to be exceeding glad and joyful in persecution and affliction for Christ. The Apostle Peter also declares, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as ... an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters; yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him glorify God on this behalf."—1 Peter 4:14, 15.

The Master was not surprised at the attitude of the chief priests and religious leaders of His day. He knew from the beginning that he would have their opposition and hostility, and He warned His disciples not to expect otherwise. As to the reason why there should be persecution against the Lord and those who faithfully follow in His footsteps, He himself tells us, saying, "The darkness hateth the light." Darkness stands for Satan, for sin, for everything contrary to righteousness. God is represented as the great light, "and in Him is no darkness at all." Light is healing, beneficial, health-giving.

They who are of the darkness hate those who are of the light, because the light reproves the darkness, and the darkness does not like to be reproved. Wherever righteousness is, it is a rebuke to that which is sinful, dark. Our Lord stood for the light. He represented the Truth, the Heavenly Father. And those who were in darkness were in opposition to Him in proportion to their darkness—some of these knowingly, others in more or less of ignorance. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all them which believe not." Satan has been skilful in putting darkness for light and light for darkness.

IN GOOD CONSCIENCE MANY HAVE OPPOSED LIGHT

The fact that many of the world are in opposition to God and righteousness is not because as a rule they are evil of heart, but because Satan has succeeded in making the darkness seem desirable and the light undesirable. It was thus in the religious systems of Jesus' day, and we believe that it is the same in the religious systems of today. Saul of Tarsus was for a time one of those blinded by Satan. In persecuting the followers of Jesus he verily believed that he was doing God service. But when he was apprehended by the Lord and the light was revealed to him, he proved himself loyal to God.

And so we trust it is with some who today oppose the light and truth now being proclaimed. They are deluded; but if their hearts are fully loyal to the Lord, if they are true to their consecration vows, the Truth will be revealed to them before "the door is shut"; for "ye, brethren, are not in darkness; ye are the children of light." "The wise shall understand." Soon the knowledge of the Truth will come to the "foolish virgins," and they will wash their soiled robes in the blood of Christ—during the great tribulation shortly to come to the whole world. And soon, too, the light of the knowledge of God is to fill the whole earth. But so long as Satan is "the Prince of this world," and there are those in the world who have his spirit, and those who are followers of the Lord and have His spirit, just so long must there be conflict.

The opposition of the darkness to the light may be manifested in different ways. In the days of our Lord and the Apostles there were persecutions of Christians by Jews. Later, during the long centuries in which the Word of God was neglected and the Truth was obscured by gross errors, there were persecutions of Protestants by Catholics and of Catholics by Protestants and of Jews by both—all because of failure to study the Word of God and to follow its teachings. But very few in these dark times had access to the Word.

Some of the opposition to our Lord was open, and some of it was hidden. Many of the Apostles, like their Master, suffered death by violence; and many of the faithful down through the Gospel Age have suffered violent deaths. At the present time, outward persecution is not sanctioned by law, nor is it tolerated to any great extent.

PRESENT METHODS OF PERSECUTION

Persecutors have all along used the weapon of reviling, slander, saying all manner of evil falsely against those who are God's true people. As the Bible declares, "Out of the

abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Today slanderous charges are made and villainous, opprobrious expressions indulged in by opponents of the Truth, and this is the chief weapon, because the defamers have not the power at present to use open, personal violence. Public sentiment and law would not permit it. But the persecution is of the same brand, the same spirit—merely governed by circumstances and conditions. Those who would say all manner of evil falsely, knowing the charges are false, are the very kind who would crucify or burn at the stake, had they the power. Not being permitted to use personal violence by the present laws and the general sentiment, these are forced to content themselves with bringing all sorts of false charges—seeking to assassinate the reputation and destroy the influence of those who are proclaiming the Truth, the Word of God.

The right attitude of the persecuted ones is indicated in our text. Instead of feeling downcast and discouraged by these experiences, and thinking them strange, evidences that God is against us, we should conclude the very reverse. We should say to ourselves, "This is the same kind of experience that the Lord had, and that His people of the past have had." So, "Marvel not if the world [especially the religious world—the world that hated Him] hate you. Ye know that it hated Me before it hated you," forewarned our Master. So far from being discouraged, we are to rejoice—not that any could rejoice in the persecution for its own sake, for persecution is grievous; but we are to rejoice because "great is your reward in Heaven." What we do not get here of prosperity, we shall get *there*—in the Kingdom.

The Socialists say that they intend to have some of the good things *now!* They have not sufficient faith in the future blessings to be willing to wait. But the class addressed in our text are those who have faith in God and His promises, those who are associated with Christ, who understand that the experiences of this time are working out for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and they are content to await God's time. These are rejoicing in their hearts, realizing that they are enduring for righteousness' sake, that they are on the side of God, the side of right, the side of Truth, and realizing that these afflictions are only momentary, as it were; for the present life is but a mere span compared with the eternal life, the glorious immortality, so near at hand, in which we shall receive the blessings promised—joy forever with the Lord.

"FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED"

The Master gave all His followers fair warning that they were not to expect the world to appreciate their attitude. One might well reason that if one gave up sin and adopted a righteous course, the world would esteem him; that all would see the worthiness of his character and would show him special deference. But we must not expect this under the present reign of Sin. It would be a very broad way into the Kingdom, and a great many then might take this course for the favor of man, for the prosperity which it would bring them. The Lord could never demonstrate our fitness for the Kingdom honors under such conditions.

If our great Master was called Beelzebub, we cannot expect that the members of His Household will be treated any better. If He who was perfect was held up to scorn as the Prince of Devils, we may expect similar treatment to be meted out to His followers by those whom the Adversary has blinded; for we are less able to uphold the standard of righteousness than was He. When His enemies attempted to make His character appear vile in the sight of others, He did not retaliate. Jesus did on proper occasions point out the wrong-doing, the wrong character, of those who were the religious leaders and teachers; but He did not do this in a retaliatory sense. On various occasions He accused them of being untrue, unholy, hypocritical; but He said nothing with a view to injuring them, but with the desire to show them their improper condition of heart, that they might profit by His instruction. He endeavored to help others to see the real condition of these blind leaders of the blind, in order to prevent them from falling into the ditch toward which their leaders were hastening.

THE MASTER'S CRUCIAL TEST

When the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law tried to trump up charges against the Master and to put evil constructions upon what He said, He was patient under all these trying conditions. He submitted to the treatment. It might be asked, Why did God permit His Holy Son to suffer such revilings? Why did He not smite down those who did so wickedly? The answer is that the Father wished to demonstrate the kind of character that was pleasing to Him, and He wished to test the loyalty of Jesus Himself. Would He be submissive and obedient or would He resent these affronts? Would He say, "I will have none of this! I did not come into the world to bear such indignities"? His painful experiences were thus tests of His loyalty to the Father.

Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that He should submit Himself, even unto death, and He had agreed to do this. Now the crucial test was: Would He continue loyal to the Father and carry out His purposes? If so, He would be worthy to be the Messiah, worthy to be the Divine Son of God throughout eternity. Our Lord's experiences had all been foretold in prophecy. In order to fulfil these prophecies it must be that He receive revilings, and He must accept them properly. The Apostle Peter shows that in this He was a worthy Example to all of His followers. As He who was holy, harmless, undefiled, did not seek to have the Father bring upon the revilers some punishment for their misdoings, so this is an example for us; so we should walk in His steps.

SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION STILL HERE

We realize that in our case there is none righteous, not one who is perfect. So we see that our enemies might have some cause to revile us. They might see some of our imperfections and have something that they could pick at and exaggerate. The Apostle Peter says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." As they said all manner of evil against our Lord falsely, we may be sure that they will say all manner of evil falsely against us. And as He bore it patiently, so are we to take patiently everything that comes to us, and to recognize that nothing can possibly happen to us except what the Father will foreknow and permit

for our good and for His glory. Our Master left us a portion of His cup that the Father poured for Him. After the cup has all been drained, then will come the glory and the honor—but not now.

We might naturally expect under the changed conditions of the present day, that those who are loyal to God and His Truth would not be maltreated and persecuted as in Jesus' day. But we believe there is another way of viewing the matter. We believe that Jesus, if He were here in the flesh today, would be persecuted and maligned by the worldly-minded, especially in the nominal Church systems. Now, instead of crucifying Him literally, or roasting Him at the stake, they would "roast" Him before the public—a more refined form of persecution—for the spirit of persecution is still here.

In proportion as the followers of Jesus are faithful to the teachings of the Master, in that same proportion they will be out of harmony with everything opposed to the spirit of Christ, and in that same proportion they will be misrepresented and persecuted. In Jesus' day there were plenty of people who did reverence to the Doctors of the Law, who made broad their phylacteries and were very exact as to the letter of the Law, the paying of tithes, etc. Jesus did not seek honor and high position. But He appealed to the people to turn from sin, to walk in His steps, to stand for the Truth as against all unrighteousness and untruth. This appeal touched no responsive chord in the hearts of the worldly-minded.

For this reason, we say that the world has not changed, that the world is still in opposition to the Word and its spirit—particularly the religious world. It is still true, however, as in the days of our Lord in the flesh, that the common people are inclined to hear the Gospel gladly, if not blinded by the religious leaders. But today, as in Jesus' time, many are influenced by the false representations of those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual shepherds. If then the world should come to be in sympathy with us as a people, and should speak well of us, and we should become popular, we should come under the condemnation expressed in the Master's words, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you; for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

THINK IT NOT STRANGE

If, on the contrary, we find that in spite of our best endeavors we are beset by opposition, and are viewed with suspicion, if unworthy constructions are placed upon our unselfish efforts to do good and to carry to others the glorious light which has so blessed our own hearts, let us not be surprised or feel aggrieved; for undoubtedly it is for the same reason that Jesus was opposed.

The spirit of light is the spirit of Christ. The spirit of darkness is of the world. All who have sympathy for that which is evil, or have been so blinded that light appears as darkness, will oppose the light. There has been so much of selfishness in the world, and the people have been so often taken advantage of and duped, that we cannot wonder that they are slow to believe that there are any who can be actuated solely by the motive of blessing their fellows.

It will be to the interest of some to promote priestcraft, and they will, therefore, seek to break down whatever is inimical to their interests. They say, "You are opposing us." We reply that we are only holding up the light. But they feel that the light that is reaching the people is undermining their influence. We believe that this is the secret of much of the strong opposition to the Truth that is prevailing in some quarters. There is a large number, we believe, who in many respects are good men, but who are fighting the light. We may suppose that they do not realize what they are doing—that unwittingly they are holding on to the ignorance of error, in bondage to Sin and Satan. For this reason they are in antagonism to those who are lifting the veil from before the Lord's people and showing them the character of God, that He is Love. Hence the conflict which is going on.

Another phase of opposition is in respect to financial matters. When we claim that what is given to the Lord should not be obtained by cajoling the people, should not be pulled out of them, worked out of them, extorted from them, but that whatever is given should be a free will, voluntary offering, we are running counter to the custom of centuries. As one Baptist minister said to two of our brethren, "Think of Pastor Russell's advertising 'Seats free and no collections!' Where would *we* be if we did not have collections, or if the people got the thought that it is not the proper thing to pass the collection baskets?"

THE REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE SOON TO VANISH

As our Master was hated *without a cause*, so let this be our experience, as far as possible. Let us see to it that the hatred, the malice, the envy and spirit of murder which is heaped upon us is entirely undeserved. Let it be our earnest endeavor that our lives, as fully as we are able, shall reflect the light of the Truth, shall be as noble and upright as possible in all things; that our words and actions shall glorify the Lord whom we serve, and be eloquent of our love for all mankind, especially for the Household of Faith, whether enlightened by Present Truth as yet or not.

In a very little while, we believe, we shall be glorified with our Lord, if faithful. Then a new Dispensation will be inaugurated; and those who hate us now, chiefly because blinded and misled by the Adversary, will bow their hearts before us as the Anointed of the Lord, and we shall have the blessed privilege of uplifting them, of enlightening and forgiving them, of helping them to attain the perfect image and likeness of our God.

HOW FAR ARE OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED?

The question might arise with some, To what extent does God supervise the experiences of His children? The Master said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" Then how would it be with our cup? Is God not also our Father? Are not we members of Christ? Who, then, but the Father pours our cup? But we know that God is not a participator in any evil thing: how, then, has He anything to do with the evils that come to His people?

We answer, There are all manner of evil forces and influences surrounding us. These evil influences are of Satan and the fallen angels. "Our Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and the fallen angels also go about seeking how they may assault the children of the Lord. But they can have *no power whatever* against us except as the Father shall permit it. He will permit no evil influence to touch us to our injury as New Creatures, if we keep close to Him. And He will prevent harm or injury to our persons, unless he sees it will outwork good to us, if we are rightly exercised by it.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR OUR GOOD

We have also the opposition of the world. But Satan, the Prince of this world, succeeds in blinding the minds of men, putting error for Truth, and darkness for light, in order to make the way of righteousness and obedience to God appear foolish and undesirable and extreme. Those who have more or less of the spirit of the world bring against the Lord's children in a perfectly natural way, aside from the direct influence of the Evil One and his cohorts, a certain amount of opposition. For instance, our Lord, as the time of His death drew near, was speaking to the Apostles about the great climax of His experiences—that He would go up to Jerusalem, that men would crucify Him, etc. Then Peter said, Lord, Lord, do not allow your mind to run in this channel! You have come to earth to be the great King! Do not let the thought get into your mind that you are to be crucified! And the Lord turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind Me, adversary!" He was the Lord's adversary for the time.

So the world often become adversaries of the children of God in their zeal for what they think the more honorable and advantageous course for us. They urge, Do not take such an extreme view of things, and you will get along better. This is opposition to our consecration vow; and when we resist their well-meant efforts, they seek to thwart us and to bring us back to their views and ideas. The ideal of the world for us as Christians would be, Do good, and work for social uplift, for civic reform; build hospitals, establish orphanages, etc.; but do not spend so much time studying that old Bible, or they will call you an extremist or a heretic. So the world tries sympathetically to influence us. And our Father permits these influences to be brought to bear upon us for our proving. We may be sure that the Lord so supervises our experiences that nothing can come to us in any way whatsoever but what will work for our spiritual good so long as we keep ourselves in His love—so long as we wholly abide in Him. And death itself is powerless to touch us until God's time for us shall have come.

Our flesh is our constant, ever-present adversary. It tries to say, No, no! Do not carry this thing so far! Our flesh is inclined to be in harmony with the world. But our New Creature replies, Jesus walked the way of sacrifice and suffering—and St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John. Then the flesh suggests that *they were special* persons. But we know that the Bible teaches us that the same course is to be followed by all of the Lord's faithful people, and that *all* these will receive persecution.—2 Timothy 3:12.

All will not be crucified, nor will all be thrust in a caldron of boiling oil or be sawn asunder or beheaded. We shall probably not have any of these experiences; but we *must suffer*. So we bid our flesh be silent, and we rejoice in the experiences that we do have; for "if we suffer [with Him], we shall reign with Him." (2 Timothy 2:12.) Of course we rejoice! And the *world* says that we are going *insane!*

THE PRECIOUS PROMISES OUR STRENGTH

We are to remember, dear brethren—and this is to be a parting thought with us—that nothing can by any means harm us, aside from our Father's will. We are promised that not one hair of our heads shall be hurt—figuratively. And we have the guarantee from the Lord that "all things shall work together for good to those that love God," who put *their trust* in Him. Whatever would not be a blessing to us will not be permitted. Our trials and tribulations, rightly received, are to work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

As we look back, we can see that all who have walked in the narrow way have received persecution. Whoever has been in accord with God has been out of accord with the course of this world. There were the Baptists, and then the Methodists, who in the early days had persecution because they had more light than others. The Presbyterians also for a time, because they had greater light than others, received persecution.

THE NIGHT ALMOST OVER

And we must expect the same today. Persecution will come to those who have the courage of their convictions. The Lord tells us that the anointing that we have received of Him is for the very purpose that we may show forth His praises. (1 Peter 2:9.) We must examine ourselves to see if to any extent we have kept our light under a bushel. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews, St. Paul recounts the sufferings of the Prophets and worthies of old. Some of them were stoned to death, some sawn asunder; they were killed and persecuted in a variety of ways. These godly men endured much for righteousness' sake. "And *all* who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer* persecution."

But the night is almost over. Soon the Lord will rise up. He will stretch forth His hands—His Power—and His children shall be delivered. Soon will come the glorious Reign of Messiah. Then all who will live righteously shall have peace. Altogether, dear friends, our text is very precious—one that should encourage our hearts and help to guide us on our way, and bring us comfort and rejoicing in these closing days of our pilgrimage.

"Our God is love; He loves to hear our voices;
In Christ we share the riches of His grace;
He loves to fold His arms of comfort round us,
And let us nestle in the children's place.

"He loves to answer prayer, though not it may be

In just the way that we should think the best;
But in His own prospective, perfect judgment
He gives the blessings and withholds the rest."

FEBRUARY 12

Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing—Jas. 1:4.

Not one step of progress can be gained without the exercise of this grace of patience; and not one of the graces more beautifully adorns the Christian character, or wins the approval of the world's conscience, or glorifies the God of all grace whose Truth inspires it. It is long-suffering meekness earnestly striving to stem the tide of human imperfection and weakness, and endeavoring with painstaking care to regain the Divine likeness; it is slow to wrath and plenteous in mercy; it is quick to perceive the paths of truth and righteousness, and prompt to walk in them; it is mindful of its own imperfections and sympathetic with the imperfections and shortcomings of others—Z '93, 295 (R3090).

Patience is that quality of heart and mind that, meeting obstacles in a cheerful spirit, perseveres unto the end in the course it is following. This quality is absolutely essential to the attainment of a perfect character, under the conditions of obstacles connected with the Christian life; and such a quality will permeate and perfect every other quality required in the Christian; therefore it is one of the universal graces—P '36, 14.

Parallel passages: Psa. 37:7-9; Eccles. 7:8; Lam. 3:24-27; Luke 8:15; 21:19; Rom. 2:7; 5:3; 8:25; 12:12; 15:4, 5; 2 Cor. 12:12; Gal. 6:9; Col. 1:10, 11; 1 Thes. 1:3; Heb. 6:12, 15; 10:36; 12:1.

Hymns: 1, 130, 11, 44, 125, 136, 183.
Poems of Dawn, 288: *He Leads Us On*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 83 (R 5650).

Questions: What experiences of the week were along the line of patience? How did I meet them? How did they affect my character? What proved helpful therein?

HE LEADS US ON

HE leads us on, by paths we did not know,
Upward He leads us, though our steps be slow,
Though oft we faint and falter on the way,
Though storms and darkness oft obscure the day,
Yet when the clouds are gone
We know He leads us on.

He leads us on through all the trialsome years;
Past all our dreamland hopes, and doubts, and fears
He guides our steps. Through all the tangled maze
Of sin, of sorrow, and o'erclouded days
We know His will is done;

And still He leads us on.

And then, at last, after the weary strife,
After the restless fever we call life,
After the dreariness, the aching pain,
The wayward struggles which have proved in vain,
After our toils are past—
He'll give us rest at last.

R5650: PATIENT ENDURANCE THE FINAL TEST

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—James 1:4.

THE Scriptures everywhere represent patience as an important element of character. In every phase of human experience we can see its need. To be just under present conditions, one must be patient, not rash; for it would be unjust to be impatient and severe with the unavoidable imperfections and weaknesses of our fellowmen. Therefore the spirit of a sound mind demands that we be patient in dealing with fallen humanity. God Himself possesses this quality of patience, and has long exercised it. In dealing with the world in the next Age the Church will need to have much patience, and under our present environments we need it constantly in order to develop the character necessary for a place on the Throne with our Lord.

Patience is closely allied to love and mercy. If God were unloving, unmerciful, He would be without patience. In man's present blemished, fallen condition, patience is sadly lacking, although it is often exercised outwardly for policy's sake. This Godlike quality, like all the other qualities of character inherent in God and in all perfect beings created in His likeness, has been largely obliterated in humanity by the fall of the first pair.

In the New Testament there are two Greek words translated *patience*. One of these words signifies forbearance, longsuffering. The other carries the thought of cheerful or hopeful endurance. The latter is the word used in our text, and has a much deeper significance than attaches ordinarily to our word patience. This constancy—the endurance of evil in a cheerful, willing manner—represents an element of character, and not merely a temporary restraint of feeling or of action. It signifies a development of heart and character which manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full acquiescence in the requirement of Divine Wisdom and Love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised in due time to overthrow them.

It will surely be profitable for us to cultivate carefully this element of Christian character of which our Lord speaks in such high commendation, and without which, His Word assures us, our character cannot be perfected. The Christian requires patient endurance to put on the whole armor of God, and having put it on, to keep it securely

buckled. We need it in dealing not only with others, but also with ourselves, with our own blemishes. We should always take into account the various circumstances and conditions surrounding ourselves and others. As we look around, we see that the world is in a condition of blight, of sin. This knowledge should give us great sympathy with humanity, without which we would have but little patience. All of our brethren in Christ, like ourselves, are by nature members of this fallen human race. Therefore we should have a great deal of patient endurance with the Lord's people, as we would have them exercise this grace toward us.

THE PATIENCE OF GOD

As the quality of justice will always persist, so will the quality of patience, though not in the sense of patient endurance of evil. God patiently works out His own glorious designs, in perfect equipoise of mind. At present this requires the exercise of patient endurance with evil, sinful conditions; and in the Ages of glory to come God will, we believe, still work out His purposes in perfect patience, probably in worlds yet uninhabited.

But in the exercise of patience under present evil conditions, Wisdom must have a voice. God has declared that in His Wisdom the time will come when He will cease to exercise patience toward the world. That is to say, He will no longer bear with the world in their present sinful, imperfect condition. That time has almost arrived. The great cataclysm of trouble, now about due, will sweep away the entire present order preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. Then God will give men the fullest opportunity of coming into harmony with Himself and righteousness before He will deal with them summarily.

The time is coming when there will be no more sin. God will have a clean universe by and by. But He will first give everybody an opportunity to rise out of sin. If they will not avail themselves of the opportunity, then God's patience, longsuffering, will cease to be operative toward such. This will not mean that God's patience has ceased, but that its activity has ceased in that direction.

God's patience has arranged the thousand years of Messiah's Reign for man's blessing, and His Wisdom has decided that those thousand years will be sufficient for the elimination of evil. Whoever will not learn to live righteously under those favorable conditions would never learn, and it would not be the part of Divine Wisdom longer to exercise patience with such. Likewise also, in our dealings with ourselves and others, there is a limit to the proper exercise of patience—longsuffering. We should not be patient with ourselves beyond a certain point. There are circumstances in which we would properly feel that we should have *known* better and should have *done* better than we did.

LET US JUDGE OURSELVES

If a child of God realizes that he has been derelict with himself, he should say, I will not be patient with myself any further. I will take myself in hand and conquer this weakness which I have permitted in a measure to assert itself to the weakening of my own character and probably to the discomfort and pain of others. I cannot do this in my own unaided strength, but by the grace of the Lord I am determined to overcome in this matter.

Parents require much patience, forbearance, in dealing with their children. The limit of patience might differ in regard to different children. Therefore the wise parent will judge how nearly each child has been doing the right thing, and how well each has received and profited by instruction. If he finds that any child of his is wilfully doing wrong, he should not continue to be patient, but should administer the rod. This would not mean that the parent had ceased to be patient. He might have patience the next day with the same child, and subsequently the application of the rod might come again. We are rather to be too patient, too sympathetic, than to have too little patience, too little sympathy. Remembering our own weaknesses, we are to exercise patience toward others who are seeking to overcome their imperfections, even as we are seeking to overcome our own. We all need that patience, forbearance, be exercised toward us.

OUR LORD'S LESSONS ON PATIENT ENDURANCE

Recurring to the word patience as used in our text, let us glance backward to our Lord's Parable of the Sower, as recorded in Luke 8. In verse 15 we read, "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience," patient endurance, constancy. The thought here is that to be of the fruit-bearing class which the Lord will approve and accept in His Kingdom we must do more than to receive the Word of His Testimony, even though we receive it with joy. It means more; for the stony ground class at first thus received it. For a brief time these seemed to give evidence of fruitfulness and vigor; but when the hot sun of persecution arose, they withered away, because of lack of depth of soil.

In this parable the Lord shows that patient endurance, constancy, is the final test of character. It follows after the receiving and the sprouting of the seed; it follows after love, hope, joy and faith have caused the seed to spring forth and begin to bear fruit. Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the fruit may be developed and thoroughly ripened, that the grain may be made ready for the garner. Ah, how important this grace is seen to be, in the light of God's Word! But remember that the endurance must be *cheerful*. We cannot suppose that He who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with His children, even when He saw them bearing much for His sake, if they endured it in an impatient or dissatisfied or unhappy frame of mind.

Those who thus endure surely would not be copies of God's dear Son, whose sentiment found expression in the words, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O My God!" All of the Royal Priesthood are sacrificers, as was our great Chief Priest; and God who accepts our sacrifices through the merit of our dear Redeemer, informs us that He loves a *cheerful* giver—one who performs his sacrifices gladly, with a willing heart. This does not mean

that our bodies will never grow weary; but that our spirit will rejoice in the privilege of suffering weariness of the flesh in so noble and wonderful a service. But if our Father should see best to lay us aside from active work for a time, when our hearts are longing to serve, this too will be an opportunity to endure cheerfully His will for us. It may also be a test of our full submission of our wills to His, and thus be an important stepping-stone upward toward the Kingdom glories and privileges.

The other instance in which the Lord used this word patience, or patient endurance, is recorded in Luke 21:19. He had just been telling His followers that they must expect tribulations as the result of being His disciples during the present time, when sin abounds, when Satan is the prince of this world. They must expect opposition from various quarters; but He assured them that nevertheless they would be fully under Divine care and protection, even though persecutions would be permitted to reach and to affect them. Then follow the words, "In your patience [patient endurance, cheerful constancy] possess ye your souls."—Luke 21:19.

Our faith and our trust in the Lord and His gracious promises should be so strong and unwavering that they will far more than counterbalance the oppositions of the world, of false brethren, and of Satan's blinded servants. So implicit should be our faith in our Father's love and care that all these persecutions will be recognized and rejoiced in as the agencies of His providence in chiseling, shaping and polishing us as living stones for the glorious Temple which He is constructing, and which is now so soon, we believe, to be set up.

Viewing our trials from this standpoint, we can indeed rejoice and can possess our souls, our lives, as New Creatures, even amidst tribulations, with cheerful endurance. Yea, we may realize that the soul, the real being, to whom God has given the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the future, cannot be injured by the persecutions of the flesh, or by anything that man can do unto us, so long as we are faithful to the Lord, accepting every experience that He permits to come to us as ministrations of His providence for our ultimate good and His glory.

THE NECESSITY FOR PATIENT ENDURANCE

Let us here examine carefully into the reason why it is necessary for us to develop this grace of patient endurance. It appears that the development of this quality is one of the conditions which God has attached to the call to joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom, and one of the same conditions required of Him. The wisdom of this is manifest when we consider the work to which we are called—the work of blessing all the families of the earth, as God's Millennial Kingdom, in joint-heirship with the Only Begotten Son of God, our great Redeemer. That will be a mighty work; and it is eminently proper that Jehovah should require that those whom He shall account worthy of that exalted position shall not only appreciate His goodness and His glorious character, and prefer His service to sin and iniquity, but demonstrate their thorough loyalty to the principles of righteousness and to His will to the extent of a joyful willingness to suffer on behalf of these principles. A transitory endurance of one or two or three brief trials

would not prove the individual to have an established character for righteousness; but a patient, cheerful, endurance even unto death would be necessary to demonstrate such a character.

We might illustrate this with the diamond. Suppose that we were able to make diamonds out of some plastic material with the brilliancy of the real diamond; and suppose that they became hard, but not so hard as the genuine diamond. Would these imitation diamonds have the value of the true diamond? By no means. If they were subjected to severe pressure, they would be crushed. And so with the Christian. If we supposed him possessed of every grace of character that could belong to the sons of God, save this one of firmness, endurance, he would not be fit to be amongst the Lord's jewels. Hence we see the necessity of the Lord's demand that patient, cheerful endurance shall be a characteristic of each one who shall be accepted to a place in His Royal Diadem.

The importance of this quality in the Christian character is again emphasized by the Apostle Paul. In His Epistle to Titus (2:2), when enumerating the character-qualities of an advanced Christian, he declares that they must be "vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience." The final test of patient endurance must be passed before we can be accepted as of the Very Elect.

The same Apostle in writing to Timothy, thus reminds him, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patient endurance." We need this important grace more and more as we speed along on our race course and near the end of the way. Feet grow weary; trials and testings abound; therefore we need to "gird up the loins of our mind" and, looking to our great Exemplar for the needed inspiration and strength, to set our faces like a flint for the home stretch.

TRIALS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL

Our ability and strength to patiently endure should increase as we progress in the narrow way. We should grow "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." But we cannot possibly develop this essential trait of character without trials—experiences intended to call for the exercise of cheerful endurance. So let us not think it strange if we are called upon to pass through protracted trials which make necessary the nerving of ourselves to *bear*. But let us repeat that the virtue is not merely in the bearing; for the *world* has much to bear, but it is particularly in the *manner* in which we endure. At heart we must be sweet and submissive—in fullest harmony with the Lord's processes of development. This may be hard at times; but His grace will be sufficient, if we constantly apply for it. "Having done all," let us "stand!"

Ah, yes! We can see a new reason for the Lord's arrangement that we should have our trial as our Master had His—under an evil environment—that we might not only have all the necessary qualities of Christian character, but have them rooted, grounded, fixed, established.

The Apostle James likewise draws our attention to the importance of this quality. He says, "The trying of your faith worketh patience"; that is to say, if our faith stands the trial, it will work out in our character this patient endurance. On the other hand, if we do not attain this development, it will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactorily, and that we are not fit for the Kingdom. Thus we see clearly what a great mistake has been made among Christian people in general in supposing that religion is a thing to be gotten suddenly as an answer to prayer, or by going to the mourner's bench, or by standing up for prayers, or in response to some Divine or human appeal—just as one would get a dollar and put it into his pocket. On the contrary, the step of repentance from sin and justification is only the beginning, and not the end, of the Christian way. The next step is consecration of ourselves and our all to God. But this also is far from the end. Not only must we go on and on, to the attainment of faith, fortitude, self-control, meekness and love, but having attained all these, we must *patiently endure*. We must "run with patience [cheerful endurance] the race set before us." Or, to use another figure of speech, it is merely starting in the School of Christ; merely having our names enrolled as pupils, to be taught of the Lord.

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

The Church of the Philadelphia period were promised of the Lord that because of their faithfulness, because they had "kept the Word of My patience," they should be kept from "the hour of temptation" which was to come upon all the world a little later. The Church of Laodicea—the Church of our day—is not kept from entering into the "hour of temptation"; but we may be sure that we will be kept while *in* it, if we are faithful and true. Our dear Lord's special message to the Laodicean phase of the Church has been, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."—Revelation 3:20, 21.

Though we are not spared from this hour of temptation, we have a counterbalancing blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's parousia.* We may have His instruction, His dispensing to us of spiritual food, "meat in due season," in a manner and to a degree never before enjoyed by His saints. And, as we might expect, this greatest favor is offset by the subtle and severe trials and testings of this special "hour of temptation." If there was ever a time when patient endurance was needed by the Lord's faithful, it is *now*. If ever they needed the counsel, "In your *patience* possess ye your souls," they need it *now*. Those who are able to *patiently endure* will *stand* in this evil day. All others will fall. As the Apostle forewarned us, the fiery ordeals of this day "will try every man's work, of what sort it is."

We find this quality of patient endurance lacking everywhere throughout Christendom today, even among the majority of the professed followers of Christ. It is becoming more and more scarce. Few wish to endure anything—for righteousness' sake, for Christ's sake, or for any one else's sake; and if endurance of anything unpleasant is absolutely necessary, the trial is borne with much of impatience, complaint and chafing. Moreover, a

spirit of defiance and rebellion against everything like self-denial or resignation, a spirit of intense bitterness, is daily growing in the hearts of mankind.

This general tendency of the civilized world today toward non-endurance, impatience and rebellion against restraint necessarily has its influence upon those who are seeking to walk in the narrow way. Only by Divine grace can this tendency be successfully resisted, and progress be made toward the development of the likeness of Christ. This special grace, needed today by the Lord's children, will be withheld from those who are not walking close to the Lord, following in the footsteps of Jesus. It is because the professed followers of Christ are living so far from Him that we see today the tendencies are developing which we have noted amongst those who profess His name.

This spirit so prevalent is at the bottom of mob violence which is kept down largely by military force, in the outbreaks against law and order which we hear of so frequently. We may expect this spirit to continue to grow. There is a feeling amongst the masses that in the past they have been too patient, not sufficiently aggressive—the feeling that if they had taken things into their own hands long ago present conditions might have been averted. But those who have kept the Lord's Word of patient endurance, who have sought from Him the wisdom from on High, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and of good fruits," have learned that He has a due time in which His purposes shall be accomplished, and they are willing to abide His time patiently, knowing that it is best. They have learned that

"God's plans, like lilies white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the hidden heart of gold."

ONE OF SATAN'S SPECIAL DECEPTIONS

The Apostle counsels us respecting this "hour of temptation" which is now upon us. Its besetments and trials will be many, and some of them will be so subtle and deceptive that all who are not thoroughly rooted and grounded in the Truth will be carried away by the false arguments of those whom Satan is now permitted to use as his agents in trying all those who dwell upon the face of the whole earth.

Amongst these subtle theories of the Adversary, none seems more deceptive than Christian Science, falsely so called; for it is neither Christian nor scientific. Backed by the power of the Evil One, it is able to promise its dupes that if they will affirm an untruth, and *stick to it*, they shall have relief and cure of certain ailments and bodily afflictions. Those who have not learned to endure patiently all that the Lord permits them to experience in the way of pain and sickness—all that cannot be relieved by rational and reasonable methods—will be ready to accept almost any relief which the Adversary may bring to their attention. And as they learn to *deceive themselves* in respect to pain and sickness, and gradually to pervert words from their real meaning, and to ignore and deny *facts*, they become in time so confused in their minds that truth appears to them to be falsehood, and falsehood appears to be shining Truth.

SOME BEING FREED BY THE TRUTH

These deluded ones are led into this deception partly through curiosity. It seems so strange to them to hear one say, "There is no death; all is life! There is no pain; all is health! There is no evil; all is good!" They say to themselves, "These statements are certainly very inconsistent, yet I am curious to know how people reason them out. What is their philosophy?" This is just what the Adversary desires. He wishes thus to attract their attention, that step by step he may lead them from one falsity to another, until the whole brain and conscience are subverted. They have accepted darkness for light, lies for truth. For this they are rewarded with physical relief—small recompense!

This is the reward of selfishness, of unwillingness to suffer anything they could escape by any means. They preferred their own way, the way most attractive to the fallen flesh. They chose this rather than the *Truth*, which did not appeal to their flesh. They were ready to exchange the testimony of the Lord for the sake of physical ease and comfort, or to satisfy morbid curiosity. Thus they escaped troubles and pain which, if endured patiently and joyfully, would have worked out for them blessing and strengthening of character. Some who have been thus enslaved by the great Adversary, a very few, are being freed by the power of the Truth at this time. But it is a very difficult task to be thoroughly accomplished. In some cases the experiences undergone in the efforts to break the bonds so tightly binding them have been very painful, and accompanied by buffetings from the Evil One and his hosts, who have so long held them in bondage. But it is well worth the struggle and the pain to be free from all such slavery.

ST. PAUL'S PICTURE OF PRESENT CONDITIONS

The hour of trial is not coming alike upon all, for all of Christendom are not upon the same plane—mentally, morally or physically. The trial as it is coming upon Christendom in general, however, is pictured by the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. He here enumerates certain characteristics of this "hour of temptation." He says, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves—covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers [enticers to strife], incontinent [not under restraint, impetuous], fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors [those who cannot be trusted, would sell out their best friends for selfish considerations], heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a *form* of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

This is a graphic picture of present-day conditions in the Christian world, so-called. Because they received not the Truth in the love of it, therefore God has sent them "strong delusions, that they should believe a lie," and should be condemned thereby. This hour of temptation has not yet reached its greatest intensity, but we believe this stage will be reached in a very short time. Blessed are all they who have made the Lord, "even the most High, their Habitation." These shall not be moved; yet many of them will pass through most severe trials and temptations. Through the mails we learn of the struggles

and prayers of many of God's children—some because of their own imperfections and frailties, and some because of the imperfections of others; and still others are tried because of earthly cares and burdens which they seem unable to fully overcome or to cast upon the Lord.

LET US HAVE THE PROPER FEAR

We sympathize with these dear ones, and counsel them as best we can, remembering the Master's words, "Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh." (Luke 6:21.) Our heart is especially solicitous for those whose letters give evidence that they are in temptation, but realize it not—who are being swallowed up of ambition or business or other "cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches"—whose love for the Truth seems to be growing cooler instead of hotter, and who seem to *feel* less and *see* less than they did years ago. These seem to be sleeping when they should be watching and praying; and this hour of trial, we fear, is finding them unprepared; while some who are weeping, praying and striving are more like our dear Master in Gethsemane; and like Him, they will be strengthened for the final trial.

Let us each, dear brethren, be very solicitous for ourselves and for each other, and counting the prize held out to us as far dearer and more precious than all else beside, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left to us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." Let us so love all the Lord's dear children that their welfare will be our chief concern; and this will mean our own spiritual health. Yet we must not allow our love even for the brethren to hinder our fullest confidence in the Lord's love and wisdom in the choice of His Bride, even though siftings should take from us some whose fellowship we have cherished.

Let us patiently hold on our way—this blessed way! Let us do with our might what our hands find to do. Soon will come the Harvest Home! Soon, if faithful, we shall gather, as a glorious company, to go out no more forever. We shall come with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us! But let us remember that "we have need of *patience*, that after we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise!"—Hebrews 10:36.

"How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning Day!

* * * *

"Then peace, my heart! and hush, my tongue!
Be calm, my troubled breast;
Each passing hour prepares thee more
For everlasting rest!"

FEBRUARY 13

Love ... thinketh no evil—1 Cor. 13:5.

Whoever neglects the Lord's commands along this line of "evil surmisings" weaves a web for his own ensnarement, however "circumspectly" he may walk as respects other matters; for a heart impregnated with doubt and suspicion toward fellow creatures is more than half prepared to doubt God: the spirit of sourness and bitterness is at war with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love. Either the one or the other will conquer. The wrong spirit must be gotten rid of, or it will defile the Christian and make of him a "castaway." On the contrary, if the new nature conquer, as an "overcomer," it will be along this line: if evil surmisings are overcome, half the battle against present difficulties and besetments is won—Z '05, 212 (R 3594).

Love in its ultimate analysis is good will, a good will, however, which expresses itself variously as circumstances require. When its possessor is wronged he gives the wrongdoer credit for good motives, though his knowledge may have been deficient. Such a spirit cannot harbor suspicion, nor will it to another's disadvantage put an evil construction upon another's words and acts—P '30, 14.

Parallel passages: Matt. 9:3, 4, 33-35; Prov. 10:12; 24:17; Psa. 119:139; Acts 11:23; 1 John 3:14; 4:7, 8; 2 John 4; 1 Tim. 6:4; 1 Pet. 1:22; 4:8; 3:8; Col. 3:2-14.

Hymns: 165, 1, 4, 15, 166, 198, 201.

Poems of Dawn, 139: *If We Only Understood*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 195 (R 5265).

Questions: Have I been lovingly unsuspecting or not this week? What helped or hindered? What resulted?

IF WE ONLY UNDERSTOOD

COULD we draw aside the curtains
That surround each other's lives,
See the naked heart and spirit,
Know what spur the action gives—
Often we would find it better,
Purer than we judge we would;
We would love each other better
If we only understood.

Could we judge all deeds by motives,
See the good and bad within,
Often we would love the sinner
All the while we loathe the sin.

Could we know the powers working
To o'erthrow integrity,
We would judge each other's errors
With more patient charity.

If we knew the cares and trials,
Knew the efforts all in vain,
And the bitter disappointments—
Understood the loss and gain—
Would the grim external roughness
Seem, I wonder, just the same?
Would we help where now we hinder?
Would we pity where we blame?

Ah, we judge each other harshly,
Knowing not life's hidden force;
Knowing not the fount of action
Is less turbid at its source.
Seeing not amid the evil
All the golden grains of good,
Oh, we'd love each other better
If we only understood.

R5265: THE GREATEST THING IN THE UNIVERSE

PART I.

**"Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet I show unto you a more excellent way."—
1 Cor. 12:31.**

THE Apostle James has declared that every good and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness or shadow of turning. Hence every gift from God would be a blessing. Even those upon whom God will execute the sentence of the Second Death may be said to receive something that is not really an injury to their best interests.

In thinking over these different gifts of God, the Apostle Paul enumerates some of those that were given to the Church in the beginning of this Gospel Age. We read in the Psalms: "Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them." (Psalm 68:18.) Some of those gifts were given to the men who became followers of the Lord Jesus. After Jesus had ascended, all His followers were to particularly wait until He would send them, from the Father, the power and blessing of the Holy Spirit, which was to come to each sincere believer, and which was to be accompanied by gifts—by some outward gift and manifestation, useful and to be used.

In our context the Apostle enumerates some of these gifts—apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, pastors; others received gifts of tongues, healings, power to perform miracles, power to cast out Satan, power to interpret tongues, power to discern spirits. Some received one of these and some another; some received several. St. Paul had various gifts, and declared that he spoke more tongues than they all. (I Cor. 14:18.) It would appear that the early Church thought very highly of the gift of tongues. They became very anxious to have God give them this particular gift.

But the Apostle tells them that God had still more valuable blessings than this of speaking with tongues, which they so earnestly desired. They were to distinguish between the different gifts, and they were to desire, were to prefer, the best—to exercise discrimination of mind as to which would be the best gift. He declares that he would rather speak five words in a *known* tongue than to speak ten thousand in an *unknown* tongue, and not be able to *interpret*. He told them that they should pray for interpretation—that they should not only desire to speak in unknown tongues, but also desire to give the interpretation, or the proper meaning in order to be understood. In his letter to the Church at Corinth, chapters 12 and 14, he expressed the thought that these different tongues and gifts were all intended to minister to the Church for their benefit as a *whole*.

PURPOSE SERVED BY THE GIFTS

The gift of tongues was given at that time to supply their lack otherwise. The early Church had no Bible. Being put out of the synagogues, they had no access to the Old Testament, and the New Testament was not yet written. Therefore God's people without these gifts would have had very little to help them—to teach them. None were qualified to teach the brethren. Only the power of God could give them this ability to teach. Therefore the Apostle Paul urged them not to forsake the assembling of themselves together. As they saw the great Day of Christ drawing on, they should have great desire to come together and to discuss these things of God's Plan.

And when they were assembled, it was of great advantage to them that some one should rise to speak. And they might desire, or pray, as the case might be, that God would send them some interpretation. In this way the Church was drawn together and held together. They did not know what Message would come in this way from the Lord.

We are not to suppose that God would thus give any very deep doctrinal matters. But it does appear that in this way He gave His people some milk of the Word, until the New Testament should be arranged—written and collected in an available form. The Apostle Paul led off with these gifts to the Church. The gifts of tongues, nevertheless, were surpassed by higher gifts, some higher arrangements for them. St. Paul would rather that they should be orators, public speakers, or have an interpretation of an unknown tongue. This would mean more of personal contact with the Lord. Therefore they should desire such a gift in preference to one of less importance.

Then the Apostle proceeds: "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way!" something still better than those special gifts which he had been discussing—better than speaking with tongues, better than working miracles, better than interpreting. He goes on to show that these things would pass away, and be no longer necessary to the Church, but he was going to tell them of things that would *never pass away*. Therefore they should discern and seek especially the best gift. They should not only discriminate amongst these gifts and choose the best, but they should be looking beyond these to a developed condition of *heart* which would be specially pleasing to the Lord, and would bring them into closer relationship with Him.

He proceeds to explain that this is *Love*. They might have the gift of prophesying, of working miracles, of healing the sick, of speaking with tongues, of interpretation, and yet come short of ever attaining the highest blessing of the Lord, unless they should incorporate into their lives this better thing—LOVE. No matter how well able they might be to speak with tongues or to interpret or to work miracles, etc., this Love was a far more important thing for them to have. Then he enumerates the various qualities of Love—meekness, patience, brotherly kindness, etc. The *sum of them all* is Love. It is love for the brethren, love for friends, love for neighbors, love for our enemies, which would do them good, and not at all wish to see them suffer injury. This, then, is the more excellent thing.

Though the elements of Love are *developed* qualities and may, therefore, properly be called *fruits*, they may be called *gifts* also. From the apple-tree we get gifts of apples; from the peach-tree we get gifts of peaches; from the pear-tree, gifts of pears, etc. Since we have to do with the development of these qualities of the Spirit, they are styled *fruits* of the Spirit. And they are far more excellent and far more to be desired than the merely mechanical gifts, which at the first came to all of God's people, because of their special need, but many of which passed away shortly after the Apostles died.

LOVE—VARYING IN KIND

The question naturally and properly arises, What is Love? The Bible answers, "*God is Love.*" As it is impossible to fully describe God in all His greatness, so it seems impossible to fully describe all that would be comprehended in the word *Love*. Love is the most powerful thing in the world; therefore Love most nearly represents God, because He is the Supreme, Almighty One. We might say that God is not this, not that, not the other. And so with Love—we might describe it by saying what it is *not*. Nothing can be right that is out of harmony with Love, as nothing can be right that is out of harmony with God. The Apostle says, in describing Love, that it does not think evil, does not vaunt itself, has not the disposition to be puffed up, is not easily provoked, does not take pleasure in iniquity, etc.

We may, of course, remember that our word *love* is made to cover a variety of sentiments; for instance, the love of a hen for her chickens, her care over them; the love of a father and mother for their children, and their care over them. Love, then, includes this interest in all that are under one's care. God has this quality of sympathy which leads

Him to look out for the whole universe—all sentient creatures, all that have life. He is bound by Love to look out for all these.

In human love—natural love—we find sympathy a very strong quality. Then we have a higher than mere sympathetic love—we have esteem, appreciation of some admirable quality. We say that we love certain traits in the character of some one. Again we have something more than mere sympathy and esteem; we have affectionate love. That is a very real and deep interest in every affair of the one we love—a deep, sympathetic love which would stop at nothing—even though it is an earthly love. The only thing that could be superior to it would be our love for the Almighty, which should dominate us as superior to this affectionate love.

Later comes in the spiritual love for the Lord's people which seeks to avoid all fleshly preferences, seeking merely to live as a New Creature, and to look after the welfare of the New Creature. Thus doing, we become closely united to the things of God and to all who are associated with us in the work of this Gospel Age. This is the highest type of love on any plane of being—this into which we have entered. God is Love. The more we grow up into this proper, spiritual Love, the more we are growing up into the character-likeness of our Father, of which we read, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—Matt. 5:48.

This love does not stop with those who are appreciative of it, but also goes out to those who are unappreciative, knowing that something is hindering them from attaching any value to such love. Love, then, is so much of God's likeness, the thing to be most appreciated, the thing without which all else in life is useless. To be devoid of love is to be devoid of God-likeness. And so the Apostle goes on to enumerate the characteristics of this love—meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, godliness [God-likeness]—Love. All of these are merely parts or streams of Love flowing from the inexhaustible Fountain. These characteristics all proceed from Love, and are strong in proportion as our love is strong.

JUSTICE THE BASIS OF LOVE

Next we inquire as to the way in which Love fulfils the Divine Law. Divine Law is not necessary as respects restraint from *good* deeds. There is no need of a law to say, "You shall not do too much for your brother, or give him too much money." No law is necessary along these lines. But Divine Law steps in and says, "You shall not come *short* of a certain standard." So the Law calls merely for justice.

The Apostle Paul points out that since the Law calls for *justice*, we shall not murder our neighbor either by our act or by our tongue. We must be perfectly just in everything pertaining to our neighbor. Every thought of our mind must be just, absolutely just. This is the standard of the Divine Law. We are violators of the Law if we give *less* than justice to anybody. Therefore the Law as set forth to the Jews, told them what they should *not* do. "Thou shalt not bear false witness." "Thou shalt not steal," etc.—telling them merely the things that they should not do. Whoever *loves* his brother would not *wish* to steal

from him either his property or his good name. Hence love fulfils everything that the Law could demand.

Love has no limit in its capacity; as, for instance, God's sympathetic love was exercised toward mankind after He had pronounced the sentence of death. That death sentence must stand, yet

"Twas Love contrived the way
To save rebellious man;
And all the steps that Love display,
Which drew the wondrous plan."

Love has done this by providing for the satisfying of the Law in respect to Adam, so that Adam can be freed from the Law sentence. Justice could not lay this obligation upon the Logos; therefore God could not command. The only thing He could do was to set before Jesus certain incentives. God set before Him the joy of being the savior of men, and the additional joy of high exaltation in God's Love and favor and to the glorious Kingdom privileges. So Love might use various inducements.

Love with us must also be *just*. We can never take what belongs to one and give it to another. The sympathy may be there, but Love cannot act in violation of Justice. Hence the advantage that Christians have who are students of God's Word. The Bible gives us the true conception of what justice is. It gives us the balance of a sound mind. The Heavenly Father has sympathy and love, but He exercises these qualities according to the principles of justice. We are not limited to justice. It was not *our* law that condemned our brother, but God's Law of Justice. So we are at liberty to exercise our love beyond mere justice.

Jesus gave the example of one who owed his master a large sum of money; and when he could not pay, his master forgave him. Then this man went out to one who owed him a few pence, and, because he could not pay the debt at once, began to inflict punishment. We ourselves cannot render perfect justice, and we cannot rightfully require it of others. God, who is perfect and just, has a right to demand justice.

EVIL SURMISING NOT OF LOVE

Love, as we have seen, is that great and grand quality which more fully than any other quality represents our Heavenly Father. Love includes a great many things—not merely generosity and affection. It seems to include every good quality—things that can be appreciated outside of justice.

The Apostle's statement, "Love thinketh no evil," is not to be understood to signify that Love is blind to evil, or that those who have the spirit of love are blind to evil. On the contrary, Love is wounded every day by contact with evil influences, and Love cannot help knowing that it is an evil thing that is doing the wounding. Love is not, therefore, to be blind, and say that there is no evil thing—no such thing as sin, selfishness and

meanness; all these various things exist. Love is in contention with all these unlovely things.

Love thinketh that there is evil, and our quotation from the Apostle does not contradict this. The imperfection in the translation may perhaps be charged with the apparent difficulty. "Love does not *surmise* evil," would seem to be the proper thought. What is it to surmise evil? We answer that we have various means for arriving at conclusions. We *see* some things. We gain *knowledge* in various ways, direct or indirect. And for Love to have *knowledge of evil* is not wrong. But to *surmise* evil—to *imagine* evil when we do not have the *knowledge*—is wrong. Love does not surmise evil.

If we saw some one do an evil deed or knew in some way that the evil deed were committed, and it came under our jurisdiction, Love would not hinder us from punishing the guilty person. Suppose the matter is mere hearsay and the report not well founded; then Love would be prompt to say, "I do not *know* that this is so. I will need to have proof." Love would wish to think well of every circumstance, every condition. If we saw that murder was committed, we would not be justified in *surmising* who *did* it. We might think who were the most probable ones, in order to make an investigation. We would think of the persons who had less love, but we should not hastily decide who is the murderer, simply because he or she has an unsavory character, an unloving character. We are to give him the full benefit of the doubt. We are to make investigation.

It would seem that some of the most serious wrongs have been committed by surmising evil. Evil has been surmised against people without a shadow of proof. It is not for us to say that any are totally depraved. Very few are totally depraved. But whoever surmises evil, even a little, shows that he is lacking in the quality of Love. Whoever surmises evil *much* shows that he has a very small degree of Love. Evil surmising makes countless thousands mourn. *Surmising evil* of others has caused *more suffering* in the world than *all the battles that were ever fought!*

The Lord's people are being taught of God, and hence are learning more and more to control their thoughts and words and acts. Our thoughts are to be kind! Our thoughts are to be generous! Our thoughts are to be just! We are not to allow an evil suspicion to lodge in our minds against anybody. The common law of man decides that no judgment shall be passed against any one until the thing be proven against him. Those who have done the most evil and caused the most difficulty are those who have surmised evil against others. But it is better if we learn this as a precept from the Lord's Word, and happy are we if we see the degrading power of evil-speaking and evil-thinking and entirely refrain therefrom.

"LOVE YOUR ENEMIES"

The basis of this instruction—that we love our enemies—is evidently that our characters may be developed. Retaliation is a natural element of the mind, and particularly of the fallen mind—the fleshly mind. The more selfish we are, the more inclined we are to render evil for evil, slander for slander, blow for blow.

Our Lord taught the very reverse spirit. We are to love even our enemies, doing them good in return for their hatred, and ever sympathizing with their condition and desiring blessings upon them from the Lord, while they are feeling the very opposite toward us, as indicated by the persecutions they practise upon us. The Lord says that we are to do this in order that we may be the children of our Father who is in Heaven. We have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and by practising along these lines we become more and more like Him in character.

Possibly at the beginning of our experience we may not see why we should do this. We must practise along this line in order that we may develop His character. Some one might ask, Will not *God* punish *His* enemies? Yes! "All the wicked will God destroy." Does not God punish those who sin? Yes, all who sin will suffer. Then why should not *we* practise along this same line? Because we are not yet qualified to do so. In time, we shall be judges of mankind, but we shall not be prepared for this until we have first learned the lesson of love. We would be too severe, and would not be inclined to do them all the good that God would have us do them.

Does God require us to love where He does not love? Oh, no! "God *so loved* the world"—when they were yet sinners! Has God then not a love for mankind? Yes, He has a certain love for all mankind. He will see that every righteous act will have a just recompense of reward. And He will make reasonable allowance for all with whom He deals. He has a broad, sympathetic love, and wishes to make allowance for these in the way which He sees to be best for them.

When we practise this love to our enemies, we are developing a side of our character which is much unbalanced. If we get this side balanced, the other side will become balanced also. Naturally we wish to see that everything wrong is punished, and everything right rewarded. In other words, *justice* stands nearer to us in our imperfect condition than does *love*. Therefore, in order to be used of God we must cultivate this quality of love. We see why God is sympathetic with mankind. To all the wicked He is a consuming fire; that is to say, He is so opposed to everything that is impure that it will be destroyed, sooner or later.

It is because the Lord sees in our human family, the human race, certain elements of Godlikeness that He is dealing with them at all, we may be sure. If from God's standpoint He had seen that men were only evil, continually evil, we may feel sure that He would not have made any arrangement for Restitution in the next Age. It is because God sees that some of the human family would rather be right than wrong that He is going to all this trouble of redemption, taking all this time, etc., to give these everlasting life. In the meantime He is granting the experiences of the present, which will be helpful to them through all eternity.

OUR PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD ENEMIES

We do not suppose that God has a love for Satan, although at first He did have a love for him. But since Satan is now of an evil, vicious character, it would be wrong for God

to love him, and it would be wrong for us to love him. Even the worldly condition we must not love. We cannot serve God and Mammon. We cannot love God and Mammon, because they are opposite. But as regards Satan, it is not our part to slander him, nor to express vituperative sentiments toward him. He is God's enemy. And God is able to attend to that case much better than we. So we are not to judge Satan nor to revile him. We read that even Michael would not bring a railing accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee."—Jude 9.

We are to do all the good we can, and be as helpful as possible. We are not competent to judge, to decree. It is therefore our duty to be fully submissive, and in due time the Lord will manifest the principles of righteousness, as in contrast with the principles of error. He will render His just verdict in due time, through His appointed Channel.

In respect to those who ignorantly seem to be adversaries of the Church at the present time, we are to have a sympathetic love—not the love of a brother. God refuses to accept any of these as His children; He merely exercises toward them sympathetic love. He does not wish to do them any harm. Rather He is preparing to assist them. By and by He will provide for them everything that will be helpful in bringing them out of their sinful condition. We would rather assume that all of the human family are what they are because of *the fall* and not because of *wilful love of sin*. To take any other viewpoint would be judging, and we are not authorized to be judges now.

Taking this viewpoint, we recognize that some of our race fell more in one direction, and some more in other directions, and that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"—the glorious standard which God has set. We ourselves need Divine sympathy, and we ought to be glad to render sympathy to others.

PART II—PHILOSOPHY OF THE ATTITUDE OF SYMPATHY

BE ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." "For if ye do not forgive those who trespass against you, neither will your Father in Heaven forgive you." This means that if we would insist upon having from others abject acknowledgement of everything that is wrong, and if we carry this matter of judgment to an extreme, it would indicate that our own hearts are in a wrong condition. And then the best thing that could be done for us by the Lord would be to give us some of our own medicine. By this He would be teaching us a corrective lesson, that thus we might become sympathetic toward others.

This matter, then, of forgiveness and sympathy toward the world, is one that God inculcates or enjoins upon His children after they come into His family. And this is in order to give us education. "For what son is he whom the father correcteth not?" "For if we be without chastisement, ... then are...we not sons." These lessons are intensified to us as we grow in grace and in knowledge.—Hebrews 12:7, 8.

As our knowledge increases, we see how all fell through one man's disobedience. And this gives us a basis for sympathy. And our sympathy increases as we become more

mature children of God. God desires this, that by the time we are ready to graduate, we will be very helpful. This should become the pleasure of our hearts—to be sympathetic with our enemies, no matter how they treat us. We know that they are doing these things because of the Adversary's influence over them. And we should desire to bless them and to do them all the good we can. The fact that they have done evil to us should not alter our attitude toward them—to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, praying for those who spitefully use us and persecute us.

The thought would not be that we should especially devote our prayers to our enemies and persecutors, but rather that we should pray *for* them instead of *against* them. Some who are immature in spiritual things might think, "I will pray to God to punish them." But Jesus says we are not to do that. "Pray for your enemies." What shall we ask for them? He does not tell us this. The best thing we could ask for them would be that we might be used, or useful, if possible, in breaking this superstition upon them, that the eyes of their understanding might be opened. That is the very best thing we could ask for them. We may pray for them along that line, and God will bless *us*. And if it is possible for us to be helpful to them, God will show us how to do it.

JUSTICE FIRST, LOVE FOLLOWED

God is very great. We are very small. It is a wonderful thing to be informed that God loves us! The heathen religions seem to recognize nothing of this kind. The thought that pervades their votaries is that their gods need to be placated, or they will do them injury. And as for a God of love—that is a thought peculiar to the teachings of the Bible, and this feature of His character is not clearly exhibited in the Old Testament Scriptures—in His dealings with the Israelites. God manifested most plainly His Justice, and allowed the penalty to come upon the sinner. We are sure that He loves the angels. But man God placed under a ban and sentence. And year by year and century by century that sentence was executed.

Then the proposition was made by the Lord that Israel might come back into His favor, if they would keep the Law; and it again looked favorable for them. But Israel failed. When man became degraded, sick, dying, humanity lost their beauty in God's sight. Man lost the gem—like qualities that made him pleasing to God. "We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God."

We come down to the New Testament times, and find a new thing brought in—a double testimony—that God loved the whole world, even while they were sinners, and also the testimony that He loves the Church. "God so loved the *world* that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The penalty upon mankind was to *perish*, as being unfit to live and enjoy God's blessing. God had a sympathetic love for all His creatures who were under such condemnation. How was this love shown? We make inquiries and find out that the first manifestation of His Love was that He gave His Son to die for the world. Here He was merely beginning to show us how great He is and how great is His Love.

THE BASIS OF GOD'S LOVE

The Scriptures assure us that the great difficulty with mankind is that they are weak, fallen, ignorant, under bonds of superstition and misled by the Adversary. It is because God saw that the hearts of humanity are not really in that deplorable condition intentionally or deliberately that He has provided the way of escape. If we were wilfully, intentionally wicked, then the Lord would have no sympathy for us at all. When God looks at us as a race, He perceives that only very few have any knowledge of Him and of His character of Justice, Wisdom, Mercy and Love, and of the principles of His Government. And so God said, I will see what can be done with these creatures; I will make a Plan by which every one of them may be recovered through the gift of My beloved Son, the Logos. They shall be lifted up out of sin and degradation, and it will be the only lesson of the exceeding wickedness of sin that they will need throughout eternity. I will make the provision broad enough to include Adam and all his race.

THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S LOVE

The first feature of this Plan began to be manifested when our Lord Jesus came into the world. So the Scriptures say that Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." What *good tidings* did He bring? Blessings for all of humanity who would seek Him in honesty and earnestness of heart! He brought the *good tidings* that all who would manifest their love for Him should have eternal life; and that a special class, who would manifest special love for the Lord, might become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ His Son. "So great salvation began to be spoken by our Lord."—2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:3.

Not all can hear this Message, because some are so stupid through the blinding of the Adversary that they cannot believe it. To such it is not good tidings at all, but foolishness. Such have no ears to hear, the Bible says. Others can hear a little, and say that there is one chance in a million of escaping eternal torment. Others have their eyes and ears more widely open, and these are able to hear something, to appreciate something more than the majority. The Apostle tells us that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."—2 Cor. 4:4.

Looking back to the days of Jesus we find that, when He preached, many of the people delighted to hear His words. They said, "Never man spake like this man." He told the people that God loved them. And the people said, The Scribes and Pharisees will not have anything to do with us; but this man loves us and tells us that God loves us, that God does not despise even us poor miserable sinners! Oh, "never man spake like *this man*"!

But their minds not being free, they were not able to appreciate all that He said. They thought that this Message which He brought them might be fabrication, and they *dared not* believe it. They asked, Have any of the Scribes and Pharisees believed and become Jesus' disciples? And when they learned that not many of them had, they said: Perhaps we are incompetent to judge; these are our leaders, we must follow them.

But there were some who were able to take in the matter more fully. And to these Jesus said, "Blessed are *your* eyes, for *they* see; and *your* ears, for *they* hear." Then to these who could see and hear Jesus gave certain special lessons applicable to them—and not only to them, but to a certain like company, or class, all the way down through the Age. He told them that because they manifested a responsiveness of heart they were pleasing to Him. He told them that in proportion as they would make progress in imitating Him, in that same proportion they would come into fellowship with the Father and become participants in His Love.

And when some took this step of consecration, Jesus told them, "The Father Himself loveth you"—He loves you because you have taken a stand for righteousness; because when you saw these principles of righteousness you were willing to do in accordance therewith. And the Father loves you because you are seeking to walk in the narrow way—the way which is difficult. The other way is a *broad* way, leading now to death and destruction. But this *narrow* way that I am pointing out to you, My dear disciples, is the way to life. It will cost you a great deal to be My disciples. But the Father will love you, and I will love you, and We will manifest Ourselves to you. And although you will have trials and difficulties you will have the peace of God ruling in your hearts. Then the disciples said they would leave all to follow Him.

HOW TO KEEP OURSELVES IN GOD'S LOVE

The Apostle Jude admonishes, "Keep yourselves in the Love of God." Here the Apostle is addressing those who have passed from the condition of the world into this special love of God—those whom He has brought into His family, as His children by adoption, through Christ Jesus. God does not love us because we are doing great and wonderful things. His special love for us began when He begat us, because of the consecration we had made—because we had entered into the Covenant of Sacrifice. And the Father delights in all those who desire to be sealed with His Spirit—who desire to become His children. He began thus to love us as babes in Christ, and He loves us as we grow stronger, and He will love us to the end!

The Apostle intimates that there is a growth in us. We are babes at first, and then children, then young men, then more fully developed. As we learn the principles of justice which permeate the Heavenly Father's character, we are to rejoice in these, and to have no other standards before our mind. We are to say, That is our Father's instruction, our Father's standard. So we become transformed more and more, and all standards other than those of the Heavenly Father become more and more displeasing to us.

As we journey along, we need to keep ourselves in the Love of God. It is necessary as babes that we should keep ourselves in His Love; it is necessary as children; it is necessary when still further developed. How can we do this? By keeping His commandments. Thus we bring the body into subjection to the perfect will of God in Christ. Whoever does this finds himself growing. Day by day we are to grow and increase and become more and more Godlike; so we are more and more transformed as the days go by. Thus are we to keep ourselves in His Love.

But if at any time during the race we should drop out and cease to cultivate these qualities, cease to be obedient to God, then we would cease more and more to have His Love, until finally we would cease to be in His Love, and the curse, the wrath of God, would abide on us. Thus we would be in a far worse condition than at first, because in the second case it would be a matter of knowledge, whereas in the first case it was a matter of ignorance, a matter of heredity. In this worse condition God would have no sympathy for us at all.

Thus it will be with the world in the future, when they will be brought in God's providence to a full knowledge and full opportunity, when they shall come to understand God and His righteousness. If they do not seek to be in harmony with Him, they will be destroyed in the Second Death.—I Tim. 2:4; Acts 3:22, 23.

OUR HIGHEST AMBITION

The Lord Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." Our love for God and God's Love for us are two different matters, of course. We *revere* God even before we *love* Him. We do not know enough about Him at first to love Him. We know that we have very little power of ourselves, that we are surrounded by difficulties here, and that the Adversary has beset us on every side. And so this is the beginning of Wisdom, that we should have a reverential fear of God.

As we come to know God more and more, we see that He would not wish to do harm to any creature. And as we grow in our knowledge of God, our love for Him increases accordingly. We grow in our knowledge of how much He loves us. We did not know this at first. God is not pleased to reveal Himself to any except those who have His Spirit; therefore the very highest ambition any of us could have would be that we might know Him, that we might know more of His wonderful Love, His wonderful peace, because to have this knowledge draws us nearer to God. As St. Jude says, we must continue to keep ourselves in the Love of God.

Whoever would come to a full knowledge of God must first come to an appreciation of His Word and must follow a line of obedience such as would enable him to love the Lord and to appreciate His Plan. And all things working together—love, appreciation, desire to be obedient—lead onward and upward to the goal which the Lord has set before us.

WHAT CONSTITUTES GOD'S LOVE

The expression Word of God is sometimes used when speaking of the Bible, and sometimes when meaning a message of God. Our allegiance is due to the One from whom we have received every good and every perfect gift. There is an eminent fitness in the thought that the One who has given us *life* should have our attention to His Word, our

obedience to it. Some are disposed to be self-willed; some disposed to regard the words of man, the creeds of man. Such do not pay sufficient attention to the Word of God.

God's Word is the great Standard by which all of His people should regulate their lives. We might have some thought respecting the Divine Plan, or others might make suggestions to us respecting God's will. But any suggestions, whether from ourselves or others, are all to be subject to investigation in the light of God's Word. Of course, we are first to ascertain that the claim of the Bible to be the Word of God is supported by really good evidence; then we are also to notice whether various portions are interpolations, or additions, that we may have the Word of God as pure as possible. But having *found* the Word of God, we should *keep* it, in the sense of reverencing it and obeying it. We should strive to regulate our lives and all of our doings by that Word. Whoso keepeth God's Word will as a result find that God's Love is perfected in Him.—I John 2:5.

The question then arises, What is God's Love? and in what sense can it be perfected in us? The Apostle John evidently refers to that love which is most perfectly represented in God—that love which is pure, free from all selfishness, from all stain—God's Love, because it is the right principle, the very underlying principle of His character. And all those who are keeping God's Word must have the same kind of love that He has.

At first we had a duty love. We knew that God had done great things for us, for which we should be very thankful. There was a debt of obligation on us in that respect. Then, too, we loved God because He has indicated that He will give His favor to those who love Him. Therefore a measure of selfishness would be in our love for a time. But we believe it is possible for us to have this perfect love of God. If it were perfect works of the flesh that were required, we might doubt our ability to have perfection. But since it is a matter of the *heart*, it is possible for us to attain it; for we can be pure in heart. So as our hearts become more and more free from selfishness and sin, more and more will this proper, high standard of Love be appreciated by us and perfected in us. Our minds will be influenced by this Love; and all of our conduct, our thoughts, will come under the same regulation.

To have, then, this Love of God perfected in us, would seem to indicate that we would have the very highest ideal—that we love as God loves. We love our neighbor—we realize that he has certain rights which we are glad to respect. We would rather help our neighbors forward than to do anything which might hinder their progress in any way. God is not an envious, jealous, hateful God, but the God of Love. God is the *true* God, and not the one who is set up in our creeds.

As we appreciate the Word of God, it gives us the necessary instruction and guidance. All sin is selfishness, and all selfishness is sin. As the child of God comes to see the character of God more clearly, as he is desirous of being taught of God, he will come under the influence of God's Spirit. And he will study the Word and get clearer insight into it. Thus we grow in the knowledge of God. It is a progressive matter. God wishes all of His intelligent creatures to be animated by the spirit of His Word—Love.

LOVE BASED ON FAITH

We see that the love above described would not be a love based on ignorance. On the contrary, it is a love based on a clear knowledge of God, on an undissembled faith, a faith fully appreciating what He has said. For instance, one might have a certain love for God, and by and by a clearer understanding of God's character might shake that kind of love. God's intention is that mankind shall understand His arrangements thoroughly; and if they then appreciate His character, they will have the undissembled faith, and a love that appreciates all the features of His Plan.

We all see that in our experiences God gives us instruction respecting Himself. As we come to know Him, and to love Him *because* we know Him, we are proportionately getting this faith in Him of the undissembled kind. It is a faith based on a knowledge of God's character and Plan. An angel may be said to have faith—a well rounded out faith. "The Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth." And God wishes that all of His intelligent creatures shall worship Him from this standpoint of undissembled faith—a faith that is genuine, a faith that is well rounded out, knitted together, a consistent faith. Therefore God wishes to have all men come to the knowledge of the Truth.—I Tim. 2:4.

God's arrangement is that we first make use of what truth we have, and thus have more appreciation; then more knowledge, and then more appreciation. A *well rounded out* knowledge is not yet possessed by any except the Church, and we do not have *full* knowledge. But it is God's will that we shall all come to an *appreciation* of the Truth. It is not to be merely a *knowledge*, but a full *entering into* it that we may the more appreciate it. "This is life eternal, that they might *know* Thee," that we should become personally and intimately acquainted with the Lord. In order to this, it is necessary that we apply our hearts to this Wisdom, that we grow in grace, grow in knowledge, that we may know His Love.

This will also be the procedure in the next Age. The object of Christ's Kingdom will be to bring mankind to a full, clear appreciation of God's character. Such as attain this and sympathetically enjoy God's character will appreciate the principles of Justice, Love and Mercy represented in Him. Only as one appreciates these qualities in his own heart can he appreciate them in God. Only those who appreciate them will have everlasting life. Even though such should enjoy the full thousand years, they still might not be of the class to whom God would give everlasting life.

THE END OF THE LAW IS LOVE

It is not merely *faith* that is necessary—not even the well rounded out faith—there must be a *pure heart* also. We could not get the well rounded faith unless we had a pure heart. A pure heart would be a *fully consecrated* heart—the whole mind given up to the Lord's will. Such a condition is necessary before we can enter into and make progress in the Lord's way. God would not accept us at all unless we had love and purity of heart. And even more than this is necessary. We must maintain it with a good conscience. Our

consciences must be able to say, "I have not only a good *wish* respecting the right, but I have good *endeavors*." We should not only be able to say, "I did right," but our consciences should be able to say, "I did the very best I was able to do." Anything short of this would not be pleasing to God.

So, then, the end, or intention, of the Divine Law is to develop in us this love—a love fully consecrated to the Lord, a love like His, a love that will be in accord with a good conscience and an undissembled faith—a faith that is well founded on the teachings of God's Word, a faith that is anxious to know God's will, and that searches the Scriptures and delights in God's Law, and that can say as the Psalmist has expressed it prophetically, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God!"

A man may discern the principle of *justice* and say, "There is the standard one must go by." Another sees *love*, and says, "There is the best standard! Is not that grand? I wish to conform to that fully!" A third recognizes that *perfection* is the standard of the Divine Law, and having consecrated himself unreservedly to do the will of God, says, "Thy Law, O God, is my delight." This one delights in God's Justice, he delights in God's Love. He sees more than merely, Thou shalt, and Thou shalt not. He sees things from God's standpoint. He sees the principles of God's character which govern the universe. So all who will ever come to an appreciation of everlasting life must learn to view matters from the standpoint of Love.

WATCH AND PRAY!

Watch and pray, the storm clouds hover over,
Fierce billows gather near with threat'ning shock;
Watch and pray, no harm can e'er come nigh thee
If thou art safely anchored to the Rock.

Watch and pray, the powers of night and darkness
Determine to engulf thee in their sway;
But swift the answer cometh from our Tower,
"I still am with thee, loved one—watch and pray."

Watch and pray, temptations round thee gather,
Cling to the Rock—its shelter hideth thee.
Tho' thousands fall, thou'rt safe if thou art watching,
Safe, in its shelter, from the angry sea.

Watch and pray, trust fully, thou wilt never
Be swept away, then, by the seething foam.
A little while, the storms will all be over,
Then, child, a loving God will take thee Home.
—W. H. BUNDY.

FEBRUARY 14

By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned—
Matt. 12:37.

All our words are taken by the Lord as an index of our hearts. If our words are rebellious, or disloyal, or frivolous, or flippant, or unkind, unthankful, unholy or impure, the heart is judged accordingly, on the principle that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." That as imperfect beings we may always be perfect in word and deed is not possible. Despite our best endeavors we shall sometimes err in word as well as in deed, yet the perfect mastery of our words and ways is the thing to be sought by vigilant and faithful effort—Z '96, 32 (R 1937).

Words are an index of one's thoughts, except in the case of the hypocritical. Words rightly spoken, and conveying proper thoughts, win the approval of those who judge rightly, as words illy spoken, and conveying wrong thoughts, rightly merit the censure of the honest-hearted. If our hearts and heads are right, our words must be right; and if our hearts and heads are wrong, our words will be wrong—P '35, 15.

Parallel passages: Matt. 12:22-37; Psa. 10:7, 8; 12:3, 4; 34:13; 41:5-9; 50:23; 52:2-4; 64:2-5; 77:12; 102:8; 119:13, 27, 46, 54, 172; 145:5-7, 11, 12; 140:3, 11; Prov. 10:11, 19-21, 31, 32; 12:5, 6, 13, 17-19; 15:1, 4, 28; 18:8, 21, 23; 26:20-23, 28; Matt. 5:22, 37; Eph. 4:25; Jas. 1:26; 3:5-10.

Hymns: 116, 44, 70, 130, 136, 260, 272.

Poems of Dawn, 282: *And There Was a Great Calm*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 166 (R 5470).

Questions: Of what character have my words of this week been? How? Why? In what circumstances and with what results were they uttered?

"AND THERE WAS A GREAT CALM"

AS the green waves bear on their crest
The foam, and ever shoreward come,
So, moving surely to our rest,
Slowly we all like bits of foam
Come drifting home.

He whom we loved has reached the shore
In peace; and all the billows vast—
The stormy waves of life that bore
Him on—have ceased their strife at last.
The storm is past!

We thought, because the waves of life

Were high and rough, the end would be
 'Mid scenes of tumult and of strife,
 As mighty billows of the sea
 Break loud and free.

But there was calm instead! The waves
Of life were stilled, and up the strand
Slipped noiselessly, as ocean laves
 In quietness the silver sand,
 An ending grand!

How sweet to know his weary life
 At last to rest and quiet wore!
Oh, may we all, through peace or strife,
 Be gathered on that silver shore
 For evermore!

R5470: JUSTIFIED OR CONDEMNED BY WORDS

"By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."—Matthew 12:37.

THE word *justified* here used by our Lord is not the justification referred to generally in the New Testament. The "justification by faith" of which St. Paul writes is the clearing before God of those who have from the heart accepted Jesus as their Savior. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Our justification is on the basis of our faith in God; we cannot come into His family without faith. The Apostle James declares that a living faith shows itself by works. And in God's arrangement He has made it necessary that we manifest our faith by such good works as we are able to perform. So faith and works together are bringing us into the character-likeness of Christ, thus to be sharers in His resurrection. If we have only faith and not works, we shall never reach the goal; if we have all works and no faith, we shall likewise fail.

But "by thy *words* thou shalt be justified, and by thy words condemned": here our Lord is not addressing the Church at all. None were accepted to full justification and begetting of the Holy Spirit until Pentecost, which was some time after this statement was uttered. These words were spoken to the Pharisees, who were being reproved. The word justified is used here in a limited sense. For instance, we might speak of some transaction we have made, and say, I felt justified in taking that course. Jesus was here using this word in a similar manner. He was addressing those who professed to have a special relationship with God under the Law Covenant, and to be especially holy. The Jews were not justified to life, but merely to fellowship with God. And now they were in their trial time: would they prove *worthy*?

DAY OF THEIR VISITATION UNRECOGNIZED

We read that they did not realize that they were in a testing time—that they had come under a certain judgment of God as to whether or not they as a people might continue as His servants. "They knew not the time of their visitation." Our Lord said, when riding into Jerusalem, "Behold, your House is left unto you desolate!" They as the House of Servants were not worthy of a continuance of special favor at that time. For three and a half years there had been a certain kind of favor shown to them; the Gospel was preached in their midst. But the Gospel did not appeal to the nation; only to the "Israelites indeed" from among them, the faithful *remnant*. After the three and a half years which ended the "seventieth week," the Lord's favor to the Jews terminated, and from that time the door was thrown open to the Gentiles. And ever since then the Jews have had no preeminence over others.

The Pharisees professed entire consecration to God and great holiness. Jesus told them that they made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments; that they took the chief seats in the synagogues, and for a pretense made long prayers; and that they paid tithes even of the smallest seeds, mint and anise and cummin, but omitted the weightier matters of the Law, and that theirs was merely an outward, perfunctory observance of that Law. (Matthew 23:5, 6, 14, 23-25.) He declared that the Law commanded that they should love their neighbor as themselves. And He charged that they "devoured widows' houses"; they were ready to take advantage of the fact that these had no natural protectors. He told them that it would be foolish to think that by offering prayers on the street corners, etc., they were keeping the Law.

WORDS AN INDEX OF THE HEART

"By thy words thou shalt be condemned"; that is to say, they should lose God's special favor. By their words they proved themselves dishonest. They perceived the good works of Jesus, but through jealousy and spite they said all manner of evil against Him and crucified Him. Everything they said against Him showed their real heart-condition. They were demonstrating themselves as unworthy of God's favor. We are not to think, however, that the Jews came under God's everlasting disfavor. During this Gospel Age they have been under special chastisements: they have had much persecution; but their faith in God has brought them this persecution.

God's wrath came upon them "to the uttermost" during those forty years ending the Jewish Age. At the close of the year A.D. 70 the *nation* went to pieces. But the *people* have remained very much alive! And they are now soon to return fully to God's favor: "they are still beloved for the fathers' sakes." They have still a share in the arrangement made from the beginning, so their condemnation was not an everlasting condemnation. But they have lost the chief blessing.

Had they said, We are not yet able to see that this is the Messiah, but we are convinced that there is some wonderful power operating in Him—had they used such words, they would have demonstrated themselves as desirous of knowing the right way, which God

would have shown them just as some others were shown—especially after Pentecost. In such a case by their words and their conduct they might have been justified. They did not speak those words, however, because they did not have the right condition of heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Their heart-attitude was shown in their words; favor to their nation terminated.

WHAT CONSTITUTES EVIL-SPEAKING

The Apostle Paul says, "Speak evil of no man"; he does not say, Speak evil of no creed. Some of the creeds should be very evilly spoken of! It would do the people good who are bound by them. He does not say that we are not to speak evil of an evil principle, but brings the matter down to personality. The Bible speaks of mankind as evil-thinking, evil-speaking, evil-doing; they are all under the ban in this sense. And to say that the whole world are sinners, is not speaking *evil*; for all recognize the fact. It is true, and every person ought to know that all men are sinners: sin prevails.

But when we come down to personalities, we are getting on dangerous ground. Jesus said that the Pharisees were hypocrites and whited sepulchres. He did not thus address an *individual*, but He spoke evil of the *system*, and of a *class*. So if we call attention to pickpockets, we are not necessarily casting reproach on any one in our neighborhood. But when we single out an individual and speak evil of him, we are on wrong ground, according to the Scriptures, except as a matter of necessity. If you know of a pickpocket, the proper course is to have him arrested. If you know that at one time a certain person *was* a pickpocket, it does not necessarily follow that he is one *now*; he might have reformed.

Therefore, when giving advice respecting pickpockets, it would not be right to single out this person or that one, unless we have positive knowledge. There are some behind prison bars who are today serving Truth and righteousness. And so it is with some who have come out from behind prison bars. To keep up a reproach and brand one because of certain misconduct earlier in life is not right. It is not right to hold a reproach against any one, and hinder him from an honest course in the future. We would better say, Now you are a free man, and I believe you are determined to do right. The effect of this would be good—to let him see that some one who knew about the past was willing to help him. But if he gave no assurance of doing right, then we would feel free to put others on guard against him. If he were willing to do right, we should co-operate with him in any way possible.

THE WORLD FULL OF EVIL-SPEAKING

There is no doubt that there is much evil-speaking: the world is full of it. A man in business will often say of another, I would trust that man about as far as you could throw an elephant by the tail—a graphic way of saying how much confidence he has in him. Another expression is, I would not trust *him* with even a cellar full of cold water! The world has not come into the School of Christ; it is the Church, therefore, that is especially instructed to speak evil of no man. Of course, it is natural for our fallen flesh to "dodge"

nearly everything, and to try to think out some way by which we could justify ourselves in saying something unfavorable of another; and it seems that even the Lord's people have often "edged around" to see what excuse they could find for speaking evil and yet not feel condemned.

THE HUMAN HEART VERY DECEITFUL

It is to be assumed and presumed that every child of God has a heart that is desirous of doing the Lord's will, and that, therefore, none of them would *desire* to do that which is *contrary* to the Lord's will. But there is something in the fallen human heart which is very deceitful—determined to do the thing it used to do in the world. We have known people of the world who think nothing whatever of telling anything and everything about people. They will often say it in a whisper, knowing that the person to whom they tell it will whisper it to somebody else in five minutes. Even if they are not sure that it is true, it is too "good" to keep! They want others to share such a fine thing! They roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongue for awhile, and then hasten to spit it out to others, that they may help to carry it on! Evil burns to get out.

Well, it would not be wrong to tell the truth about a person, says one. Yes, it *would* be *wrong*! But, if I do not tell John Smith that Mary Jones owes me a bill, *he* may trust her. I must tell it to others because she may get in debt to *them*. I will not say very much: I will just shrug my shoulder and nod my head and say, You would better look out, or you will get bitten! And so if it were only a dime the person owes, she would be done a thousand dollars worth of injury.

Do we know something that we could tell, and is it "aching" to get out? If so, let us go before the Lord in prayer, and earnestly strive to follow out the injunction of the Apostle Paul: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and *evil-speaking*, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Ephesians 4:31, 32.

IMPORTANT TO THE LORD'S PEOPLE

We believe that this matter of evil-speaking, dear brethren, is one of the difficulties of Christians—to know how and when and where to hold our peace in respect to the reputation of others. We know of a brother who had been in prison, and was released. He told us that he was glad to get out. We asked, Have you been telling any one about your having been in prison? Yes, he answered. Well, do not tell it again. Very few of the Lord's people would trust you if they knew. We will go to these that you have told, and tell them not to mention it, at all. It is a trait of our fallen nature to speak of these things.

EVIL-SPEAKING DEFINED

Of course there are people who are foolish; they would tell unfavorable things about themselves as well as about others. But most people would not be willing to tell anything disparaging about themselves, and we should stop and think, Shall I say anything

detrimental about *anybody*? If the circumstances were changed, if I were in his place and he were in my place, would I like him to tell this about me?

But how would it be if we saw a man picking another man's pocket? Then we would feel fully justified in taking all the steps necessary for his arrest, because we would think that it would be the very best thing for that man as well as for others. We would think it right to shout, *Pick-pocket! Pick-pocket!* and have him arrested.

So far as we can determine, evil-speaking means the saying of anything that would be injurious to another, in a way or under circumstances that, if it applied to ourself, we would think unkind and injurious. In certain instances we have known of one who had been doing wrong, and we have sent him word that if he pursued such a course, we would believe it our duty to take some action in the matter; but that if he assured us he would abandon his course, we would do nothing. In this way, in several cases, the person has been kept from doing harm to others; and we were saved from openly making reference to the matter about which we knew, and which, perhaps, no other person in the world knew.

We need the wisdom from on High. And we believe that this attitude represents a *necessary* development of Christian character. If we really desire the good of our neighbor, and our own good, if we desire to honor him as we would wish him to honor us, then we must follow the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you."

Much evil-speaking would be avoided by remembering the following bright little jingle clipped from a secular Journal. The sentiment is wholesome and Scriptural:

"Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can."

St. Paul gives the same thought briefly, in the words, "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men."—Galatians 6:10.

FEBRUARY 15

Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected—1 John 2:5.

The test is *obedience*. In proportion as we keep the Lord's Word, in like proportion the love of God is perfected in us; for if we have received the mind of Christ, the holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the effect will be to cause us both to will and do His good pleasure—to the extent of our ability. And this ability should be continually on the increase year by year. And although we may not hope to be perfected until we shall be raised and be granted our new resurrection bodies, nevertheless all the while we may keep so closely in touch with the Lord in the spirit of our minds that we may have continual fellowship with Him (1 John 1:7)—Z '97, 312 (R 2235).

To keep God's Word is to hold by the new will the Word upon the affections until the affections respond to the Spirit of the Word. To continue in this process perseveringly amid all the circumstances of life will inevitably develop unto perfection in our hearts the Divine love, which consists in supreme love to the Father, a love next to supreme love to the Son, a love to the brethren more than to self, and a love equal to that for self to the world and to our enemies—P '34, 15.

Parallel passages: John 14:15, 16, 21, 23; Gen. 18:19; Ex. 19:5; 20:6; 24:7; Num. 9:23; 14:24; 1 Kings 3:14; Psa. 18:44; 25:10; 111:10; 143:10; Prov. 19:16; Matt. 5:19; 12:50; 13:23; Luke 6:46-48; John 15:10, 14, 16; Acts 4:19; 5:29; Rom. 6:17; 1 John 3:22, 24; 2 John 6, 9; Rev. 12:17.

Hymns: 315, 145, 20, 125, 130, 136, 1.
Poems of Dawn, 266: *A Life Well Spent*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 387 (R 4896).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

A LIFE WELL SPENT

SOFTLY, oh softly, the years have swept by thee,
Touching thee gently with tenderest care;
Sorrow and death they have often brought nigh thee,
Yet have they left thee but beauty to wear;
Growing old gracefully,
Gracefully fair.

Far from the storms that are lashing the ocean,
Nearer each day to the pleasant home-light;
Far from the waves that are big with commotion,

Under full sail and the harbor in sight;
Growing old cheerfully,
Cheerful and bright.

Past all the winds that were adverse and chilling,
Past all the islands that lured thee to rest;
Past all the currents that urged thee unwilling,
Far from thy course to the home of the blest;
Growing old peacefully,
Peaceful and blest.

Never a feeling of envy and sorrow
When the bright faces of children are seen;
Never a year from the young wouldst thou borrow—
Thou dost remember what lieth between;
Growing old willingly,
Thankful, serene.

Rich in experience that angels might covet;
Rich in a faith that hath grown with thy years;
Rich in a love that grew from and above it,
Soothing thy sorrows and hushing thy fears;
Growing old wealthily,
Loving and dear.

Hearts at the sound of thy coming are lightened,
Ready and willing thy hand to relieve;
Many a face at thy kind word hath brightened—
"It is more blessed to give than receive."
Growing old happily,
Ceasing to grieve.

Eyes that grow dim to the earth and its glory
Have a sweet recompense youth cannot know;
Ears that grow dull to the world and its story
Drink in the songs that from Paradise flow;
Growing old graciously,
Purer than snow.

R4896: FEEDING ON THE WORDS OF GOD

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."—Matt. 4:4.

WE READ that these words were a part of our Lord's answer to Satan when the Adversary exhorted Him to command the stones to be turned into bread, in order to satisfy His hunger, after fasting forty days in the wilderness. The Lord knew, however, that it would be unlawful for Him thus to use the superhuman power which came to Him as a result of His consecration to the Father's service. That power was not to be used for His flesh. Hence our Lord refused to use His superhuman powers for the gratification of the flesh, even though He hungered. Then Satan suggested, How do you expect to live if you do not exercise your power to live? Our Lord's answer, as we see, was that man shall not live by bread, merely, but by every word, every promise that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Our hope of eternal life, therefore, rests upon that obedience to God which would entitle us to eternal life, according to His arrangement. If our Lord had gratified the flesh He might have satisfied His hunger, but He would have violated His covenant of obedience to God. Whoever would have eternal life must seek to be obedient to God, to all that God has commanded, all to which He has directed the individual. Of course, He might have one command for the angels, another for man, and a third for the Church. But since we find that we are not able to obey perfectly every command of God, we cannot hope for eternal life by perfect obedience to the letter of the Word of God. Even though God has accepted us as His children, we can hope for life only by having the *spirit* of obedience to His Word.

One of the lessons to be learned in the School of Christ is that a "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"—food and raiment, etc.—but that his life, in the fullest, highest, grandest sense, is dependent upon his complete submission to the Divine will. Careful attention to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, to every admonition, every encouragement, every promise, is necessary to the development of those whom God is now calling to eternal life as joint-heirs with His Son in the Kingdom. Let us, then, more and more, as the disciples of the Lord Jesus, keep in memory the words of the text, and act upon them.

LIVE BY EVERY WORD FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD

But how is it possible for us to live by the words that proceed out of the mouth of God? What did Jesus mean? How can God's words give life?

He meant that all hope of attaining eternal life depends upon God—upon the Divine Plan and its promises. Looking into these promises we can see distinctly that the Divine Plan, dating from before the foundation of the world, is that all of God's creatures, created in His likeness and abiding in faith, love and obedience in harmony with Him, shall have life everlasting. This is God's Word upon the subject, namely, that *obedience* is the condition of life everlasting. This is, undoubtedly, what our Lord had in mind in the words of our text. He may also have had the thought that He had come into the world upon a special mission, to do the Father's will, and that His understanding from the beginning was that His perfect obedience to the Divine will would insure Him glory,

honor and immortality with the Father, eventually; but that any disobedience would mean the forfeiture of Divine favor and would involve the sentence of disobedience—*death*.

Our Lord's prompt decision, therefore, was that to disobey the Father's will and thus to secure bread for the sustenance of His body, would be a great mistake; that food thus secured could sustain life for but a little while; that His better plan would be to trust in the Word of God, the Divine *promise*, that those who love and serve and obey Him shall ultimately come off conquerors and more, and have eternal life with God. And this, our Master's conclusion, is full of instruction for us who are His disciples, seeking to walk in His footsteps.

DISCIPLINE AN EVIDENCE OF SONSHIP

One "word of God" which is very comforting to His children is His assurance of Parental care and discipline. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" (Heb. 12:7.) In this statement the word "chastening" should not be understood as meaning disapproval on the part of our Father, and sin on the part of the individual, but rather instruction. We are guided in the matter by remembering that although our Lord was a Son in whom there was no sin, yet He received, in the Father's providence, as a part of the "cup" poured for Him, various trials, disciplines. All of these experiences were very profitable, showing that the Father loved Him; that the Father had something which He was desirous that our Lord should do that He would not have been qualified to perform without some of these educational instructions and experiences.

Some disciplines, some chastisements, come as a result of our own mistakes and the natural consequences flowing from those mistakes and the apologies and heartaches which may necessarily follow them. God could save us from these experiences and so seclude and shelter our lives that we would not have anything to tempt us. But such is not His proposition. He wishes us to have these experiences that we may be guided in the right way and learn of our own weaknesses.

If we did not come into contact with various testing experiences we should not know where we are weak. Thus we learn where we can strengthen our characters and how we can be thoroughly developed as New Creatures. The Scriptures speak of our Lord Jesus as "enduring such contradiction of sinners against Himself." (Heb. 12:3.) Our trials, or disciplines, in meeting every opposition that can come to us, should bring more or less of correction in righteousness. Even if this would not mean outward stripes, we, in any event, would have our mental regrets as New Creatures, and thus we would get a form of correction, or discipline. Additionally, the Lord causes His children to come into peculiar trials as an example either to the brethren or to the world. In many of these, whatever the cause, we may understand them to be also corrections or instructions in righteousness.

TRIAL—DISCIPLINE—NECESSARY TO THE PERFECTING OF OUR CHARACTERS

Character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant. At first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love, frequent watering with the showers of His grace, much cultivating with the applied knowledge of His character as a good foundation for faith and inspiration to obedience. Then, when thus far developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. Little by little, as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, beauty and grace, until it is finally developed, perfected, fixed, established, through suffering.

This great work of developing and training character is necessarily a slow and tedious one, and not infrequently it is a painful process. But the Apostle plainly tells us that such things are necessary for the development of steadfast and enduring character. Consider how your own experience has verified this, you who have been for some time under the Lord's special care and leading. How much richer you are for all the lessons of experience, and for the patience and other spirit-fruits that experiences have developed in you!

Although, like the Apostle, you can say that "No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11.) The lessons of experience and discipline have made you stronger. They have increased your faith and drawn you into closer communion and fellowship with the Lord. They have made you feel better acquainted with Him and enabled you to realize more and more His personal interest in you and His love and care for you. And this in turn has awakened a deeper sense of gratitude and an increasing zeal to manifest that gratitude to Him. This also deepens the sense of fellowship with God, and gives confidence to the hope of final and full acceptance with Him as a son and heir, made worthy through Christ.

OBEDIENCE THE TEST

Another helpful "word of God" is found in I John 2:5: "Whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." Here we have a test by which to determine our development as a New Creature. Only those who have *received* the Word of God can *keep* it, can retain it and comply with its requirements. The text suggests that it is a difficult matter to keep the Word of God. On all sides we hear various reasons why we should retain, hold fast the world, the flesh, rather than that which the Lord's Word holds out to us. There are many allurements to entice us from the "narrow way." Hence these who hold fast to the Word of God are "overcomers."

The Scriptures intimate that to live righteously and godly in this present time will cost us our very lives. "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.) Under present conditions faithfulness means *faithfulness even unto death*. The intimation is that unless we have the love of God we will not undertake to be obedient to His Word; that otherwise we can neither retain the Word of God nor be in accord with it, serving it even unto death.

Our Lord Jesus illustrated the perfection of obedience to the Word of God when He said, "I come to do Thy will, O God!" Everything written in the Book; everything that was God's will, He was glad to do at any cost. Our Lord Jesus could not have reached this degree of submission to the Divine will unless He had had love for the Father. And so with us. Unless we have love for God and the principles of righteousness we cannot continue in this way.

Consequently, only those who so love God that they would surrender life to do His will, are properly keeping His Word. We may say that this condition is reached when we first make consecration, for the heart has given up its will and surrendered itself fully to the Lord—"Not my will, but Thine, be done." All those who are complying with the conditions of self-sacrifice have reached the mark of perfect love. Of course, there is another sense of perfecting which we shall attain in the resurrection. But only those who will keep God's Word by faithfulness even unto death will secure the prize and become partakers of the divine nature.

The *test* is OBEDIENCE. In proportion as we keep the Lord's Word, in like proportion the love of God is perfected in us; for if we have received the mind of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the effect will be to cause us both to will and to do His good pleasure to the extent of our ability. And this ability should be continually on the increase year by year. Although we may not hope to be perfected until we shall be "*changed*" and be granted our new resurrection bodies, nevertheless, we may keep so closely in touch with the Lord in the spirit of our minds that we may have continual fellowship with Him; and by confessing our faults daily and seeking his forgiveness we may continue to the end of our journey clean from sin, even though we must still acknowledge the infirmities of the flesh, that in our flesh dwelleth no perfection.

THE WORK OF RESURRECTION

A further word from the mouth of God assures us that He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are *dust*—weak, imperfect, dying; and that it is not His purpose that we shall continue always to be in conflict with ourselves—perfect will against imperfect body; but that He has provided that, in the resurrection, we shall have new, perfect bodies, in full accord with our new minds.

He assures us that He is able and willing to do all this and that He purposes to give to His *elect*, bodies of a much higher order than the human—that He will give us spirit bodies—and that of the *highest rank*. We shall have part in the First Resurrection, and will thenceforth be able to do the Father's will perfectly in every respect, as we now show ourselves desirous of doing His will so far as we are able. O gracious provisions! O wonderful words of compassion, inspiring us to wondrous hopes of eternal life and glory! It will be to such as thus overcome in spirit, in faith (I John 5:4), that the Lord will give the final Word of His mouth—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord!"

"A little while; now He has come;

The hour draws on apace—
The blessed hour, the glorious morn,
When we shall see His face.
How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning day!"

FEBRUARY 16

Through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true ... giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed—2 Cor. 6:8, 3.

While in the discharge of duty to the best of our ability, and when apparently we have the Lord's blessing and favor upon us and our affairs in a most marked degree, suddenly trouble may arise, adversity come, the powers of darkness seem to triumph, and for a moment we may be apparently culprits in the judgment of our fellow-men, and apparently forsaken by Divine providence. Such experiences, doubtless, are needful to us; for though we may sing:

*"I would rather walk in the dark with God,
Than go alone in the light",*

yet this might be but an empty boast unless we were put through the trying experiences which would develop such faith, trust, as would hold to the Lord's hand, and trust Divine providence in the darkest hour—Z '01, 314 (R 2885).

The Christian life is one of contrasted experiences, and amid these contrasted experiences the Christian must keep himself in *the love of God* and in the hatred of selfishness. No amount of love, honor or praise should sway him from loyalty to God, and no amount of dishonor, disrepute or false accusation should mar his heart and change him to a reprobate. Loyalty to righteousness under all circumstances is his slogan, which must finally triumph—P '33, 16.

Parallel passages: Acts 20:17-35; 24:16; Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 2:1-8; 3:5-15; 4:1-4, 9-16; 9:12-23; 2 Cor. 2:12-17; 3:1-12; 4; 5:11-21; 6:1-12; 1 Tim. 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:10; Heb. 13:7.

Hymns: 134, 277, 307, 273, 322, 325, 326.

Poems of Dawn, 281: *The Love light in His Eyes*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 291 (R 5773).

Questions: Have I this week suffered for witnessing to the Truth? How did it occur? How did I bear it? What were the results?

THE LOVELIGHT IN HIS EYES

IN my mem'ry there's a picture,
In a frame of gold 'tis placed,
And the years that fast are fleeting
Not one line have yet effaced;
'Tis the likeness of "that Servant,"
And fond memories arise
Of his wise and faithful service
And the lovelight in his eyes!

I have seen the smoke-wrapped sunset
Sink into a sea of blood,
And mirages in the desert
'Neath the sun's resplendent flood;
From the mast watched livid lightning
Leap across the tropic skies,
But their gleam had not the splendor
Of the lovelight in his eyes!

Not the canopy of starlight,
With the moon appearing new,
Nor the twilight dim and distant,
Fading to the deeper blue,
Nor the summer's silver moonlight,
With its halo in the skies,
E'er could light the way of Heaven
Like the lovelight in his eyes!

R5773: "AS DECEIVERS AND YET TRUE"

"Giving no offense in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed; ... by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true."

—2 Corinthians 6:3, 8.

HOW varied are the experiences of an active Christian—experiences of honor and of dishonor, of being well reported and evil reported, of suffering for righteousness' sake, of being called deceivers, etc.! Some may have a greater amount of publicity than do others and thus attract more attention. Some may have a wider field of service and greater opportunities than do others. But every faithful disciple of Christ will have more or less of these experiences enumerated in our text and in its context. Some will speak well of us and others will speak ill. Throughout the entire Gospel Age it has ever been true that "*all* who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12.) Especially has this been true of these last days.

Amongst the brethren of Christ all of the Lord's saints should have honor. While none should *seek* for honor of the brethren, nevertheless a great deal of esteem should attach to every one who has taken the great step of full consecration to God—no matter how ignoble the person may be according to the flesh. The fact that God has begotten any one of His Holy Spirit should make us wish to respect those whom the Lord has thus honored. Each of the saints, however humble, is greatly loved of our Lord Jesus; and therefore all of the children of God should take heed how they treat even the least of His little ones—their brethren.

"As deceivers, and yet true." On many occasions the great Apostle Paul was dishonored; at other times he was honored. He had evil reports spread abroad concerning him, as well as good reports. He was considered a deceiver by many who professed to be the people of God. Yet all the while he was true to the Lord and to His people. He was considered a renegade Jew, because he was not teaching obedience to the Law Covenant as the only hope of everlasting life. He was teaching what was far superior—salvation through faith in the merit of the sacrifice of Christ; and this doctrine made the Law look inferior. Therefore his fellow Jews accused him of being unfaithful to the Law of their fathers. To a Jew this was considered a great dishonor.

As a result, very evil reports of St. Paul went broadcast among the unbelieving Jews everywhere. He was branded as one of the greatest deceivers ever known. Everybody was warned against him—"Watch out for that man Paul; he is coming! Whoever will kill that fellow will do God a service and glorify His name!" "Why?" might be asked by some. "Because he is deceiving the people by telling them that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah—telling them that when they die to the Law they become alive through this man Jesus—telling them that the Law which we have had for sixteen hundred years is of no account! He is trying to draw people after that Nazarene!"

Then St. Paul was also accused of trying to draw followers after himself. Yet he was true to God in every sense of the word. He was true to the nation of Israel, to the Law, and to the Prophets. He was true to God and to the Lord Jesus Christ. He was no deceiver in any sense; he was merely *called* a deceiver by those who were blinded by the god of this world. He seemed "*as* a deceiver" to his blinded Jewish brethren and to those who served false gods.

CONCESSIONS FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

The Apostle's earnest desire and endeavor was to give "no offense in *anything*, that the ministry be not blamed." The word ministry is frequently used today in reference to the clergy as a whole. The ministers, or preachers, of the churches are spoken of as the ministry; such as the Presbyterian ministry, the Methodist ministry, etc. But we think St. Paul had a broader thought; namely, that of proclaiming the true Gospel of Christ or of serving the Lord in whatever manner. He used the word in the sense of *service*. A minister is a servant. All who serve the Lord, whether publicly or privately, are ministers, and should endeavor to live so true a life, so honorable a life, that even though they may be called deceivers, nevertheless others will take note of their exemplary walk. Each should try to live in so inoffensive a manner that the world will call it good, proper living. Live above reproach. Give no just cause for offense. This is the Apostle's thought, that we should not give any one just reason to be offended at us.

Among the Jews, for any one to eat pork would be an offense. He would be looked down upon and not considered properly religious. In our day, the eating of pork is not condemned by many. But failure to observe Sunday as the Sabbath would be considered a violation of a Divine command. We might, so far as our own consciences are concerned, do certain things; yet the ministry, the service of the Truth, might be blamed

for our so doing. Many are very scrupulous as to Sunday observance as the Sabbath. So, as the Apostle enjoins, we should, as children of God, be so careful in our conduct as to go to the extreme of faithfulness, wherever possible. The conscientious scruples of an individual are not to be treated lightly.

In some parts of the world it is the custom to remove the shoes before entering the house. If we were in such a locality we should conform ourselves to the general custom. We should ever be willing to adapt ourselves to the custom of those around us where we can do so without violating our conscience, if by conforming to their ways we would avoid offense or increase our influence for good. To fail to do this would be a lack of love and consideration, and hence in some manner, an injury to the Lord's Cause.

FEBRUARY 17

Take my yoke upon you ... for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light—Matt. 11:29, 30.

Those who wear this yoke have the assurances of the Divine Word that all things are working together for good to them; that the heavier the burden that may be attached, the greater will be the blessing and the reward by and by; the more severe the experiences during the present time, the brighter shall be the glory, and the brighter shall be their character, and the more sure shall they be of being fitted and polished for the Kingdom. From this standpoint every burden is light, because our yoke is appreciated, and is so easy, so reasonable; and additionally it is so light, because the Lord is with us in this yoke—Z '00, 137 (R 2623).

The yoke is our general acceptance of the Lord's will; the burden is the details the Lord wills us to do, even unto suffering for His will. In taking the yoke in the spirit of love, we find its weight is indeed light; and in drawing the burden of the details of the Lord's will, even unto suffering, by the assistance of the yoke of love, we find the burden is lightened. Love lightens every burden, eases every task, gladdens every sorrow, sanctifies every pain and surrounds with a halo of bliss even the smallest tasks and the most commonplace things—P '27, 15.

Parallel passages: Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34-38; Luke 9:23, 24; 1 John 5:3; Lev. 26:13; Isa. 9:4; 10:27; Jer. 2:20; 5:5; 30:8; Lam. 3:27; Prov. 23:26; Rom. 6:13, 16, 19; 12:1; 2 Cor. 8:5.

Hymns: 160, 8, 14, 114, 191, 208, 244.
Poems of Dawn, 190: "*Come Unto Me.*"
Tower Reading: Z '00, 134 (R 2623).

Questions: How have I found Jesus' yoke and burden this week? Why? What were the results?

"COME UNTO ME"

MATT. 11:28, 30.

COME to Me, all ye that labor,
Come, and I will give you rest.
Come to Me, ye heavy laden,
Come, and lean upon My breast!

Take Mine easy yoke upon you,
For My burden, it is light,
And My heart is meek and lowly,
Ever pleasing in His sight.

Come to Me, ye broken-hearted,
Let Me all your sorrows bear,
Faithful be till life is ended,
Then My glory ye shall share.

R2623: KNOWLEDGE INCREASES RESPONSIBILITIES.

**"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."
—Matt. 11:29, 30.**

OUR LORD would seem to have been somewhat disappointed at the result of his ministry, especially in Capernaum, where he had resided a considerable time, and our lesson opens with a warning to the people of Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida, that having been favored with many mighty works and many evidences of Jesus' Messiahship, and that the Kingdom was being offered to them, etc., they would be held correspondingly responsible. As Capernaum had been greatly blessed, highly exalted, or, figuratively, "exalted up to heaven" in its privileges and opportunities, the result to it would be greater degradation, and eventually it would be brought low into the dust—destroyed, "brought down to hell," in the text, signifying brought down to hades, the death-state. And surely this was fulfilled in the trouble which came upon the Jews, and which destroyed their nationality, as a result of their having failed to accept the Messiah and the Kingdom which he offered to establish.

But though our Lord was disappointed that he was so generally rejected, he cannot have expected that he would be widely welcomed by the people. He must have known, as he elsewhere describes to his disciples, quoting from the prophecies, that he would be rejected by Israel, and that the Kingdom offer would pass by them. As a matter of fact his rejection on their part incidentally permitted the sending of the gracious call to the Kingdom honors to believers among the Gentiles, and thus we are favored at the present time.

The contrast which the Master draws between Bethsaida and Chorazin and Tyre and Sidon is a strong one. The latter two were flourishing Gentile cities, yet, as was common in such, very full of wickedness and immorality, so that evidently their names were synonymous for that which was unholy, licentious, unclean. So then, for our Lord to say that if his mighty works had been done in those unholy cities they would have repented long ago in sack-cloth and ashes, that is, with deep contrition, was to say that the people of Bethsaida and Chorazin were in very much worse condition of heart than those Gentiles: further from such a condition as God could bless.

From this we may gather that God takes a different standpoint of viewing such matters from that taken by the majority of people. He does not merely say, Is this a moral or an immoral city? Are these people decent or indecent? The question which the Lord would examine rather would be, What is the heart attitude of this people or that people, this

individual or that individual? What is he aiming, striving, for?—how would he be effected thereby if granted clearer light respecting the divine will? Hence, if we look at ourselves, and find that we are not immoral, not coarse, sensual, brutish, but more refined than many others, this is well; it is what we should be in view of our favors, privileges and mercies; but we are to remember that we might still be very far short of what would be pleasing to the Lord, and that if God should favor us with certain privileges and blessings and opportunities, and we were to reject them, our attitude in his sight might be worse than that of the immoral.

Turning to Capernaum, most favored of all, our Lord contrasts her with Sodom, whose wickedness was very great, so that it brought upon her a fierce destruction from the Lord. Capernaum is clearly told that from the Lord's standpoint of view her people were more wicked, less worthy of divine favor, more worthy of punishment, than the people of Sodom. This was a severe arraignment, and yet, we can see, a just one, for the poor Sodomites, walking in the way of sin, ignorance of God, etc., gradually went down and down, according to the course of fallen nature, while the people of Capernaum had much advantage every way as Jews, whom the Lord had blessed with a knowledge of himself, and to whom now, finally, he had sent Messiah, and whose miracles they had seen repeatedly, and with whose beautiful character and teaching they had been brought much in contact through his considerable residence in their midst.

In view of these privileges and mercies, their rejection of Messiah and failure to grasp their opportunities branded them, so to speak, as being inferior to the Sodomites, in appreciation of righteousness and truth; for our Lord declares that the Sodomites would not have met the end they did had they had similar privileges and mercies bestowed upon them.

The question naturally arises, Why did not our Lord grant the Sodomites as good an opportunity as he granted the people of Capernaum, and why did he not grant the people of Tyre and Sidon, who were still living, as favorable an opportunity as he granted to the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida? We answer, that none of these people were granted a trial for eternal life. The Sodomites did not have such a trial; the people of Tyre and Sidon had no trial of any kind; nor did the people of Palestine have a trial for life eternal. The trial which they did have was a trial respecting their love for the Lord and for righteousness, and of their readiness to be his people and supporters of his Kingdom. The result of the trial showed that they were not sufficiently in love with righteousness to appreciate the Lord's Kingdom, nor to become its friends and servants; and in consequence of this their city and their land, and they as a people were rejected by the Lord from being his agencies in connection with the establishment of his Kingdom.

That no individual trial for eternal life had yet come to any of these people is evident from several facts: (1) that the whole world was under condemnation through Adam's transgression; (2) that no one could be relieved from that condemnation, so as to have a fresh individual trial for life, until the ransom price was paid, and it was not yet finished; (3) this is further implied by our Lord's statement (verse 24) that there would be a day of judgment future—a day of testing, a day of trial, a day to see who would be worthy of

eternal life and who unworthy. (Acts 17:31.) In that judgment day, the Millennial age, all are to have a chance for everlasting life; for the granting of this very chance to all of Adam's race was the very object of our Redeemer's death. Meantime, the people of Bethsaida, Chorazin and Capernaum, having rejected the Lord and having been rejected by him, he nevertheless found some there, and has been selecting others since, of a special class, which he is calling to joint-heirship with himself in that Millennial Kingdom, under whose beneficent reign of righteousness a full and impartial judgment or trial for life shall be granted to all. He would have his hearers understand, however, that in that future trial time the people of Tyre and Sidon and Sodom would be treated with more consideration and allowance than those who, having many more privileges, had hardened their hearts against what they did see and know. "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee," Capernaum.

How scathing was the rebuke of these words, that the people of Sodom, notorious for their wickedness, licentiousness, etc., should find more favor, more tolerance, at the Lord's hand, when he should begin the work of judging mankind, than themselves, who had been God's favored people, but who had not appreciated his favors, and had done despite unto his goodness! But if any infer from this that the people of Capernaum, when they shall be on trial for life during the Millennial age, will be unkindly treated, it would be a great mistake; because the declaration of the Lord's Word distinctly is that the world shall be "judged in righteousness"—not in wrath, malice, not with a desire to do them injury, but with a desire to do them every good possible—hence it will be "tolerable" for the people of Capernaum in that day—very tolerable—it will be a grand and blessed opportunity for them to come to a full, clear knowledge of the Lord; but it will be still more tolerable for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sins, although greater in some respects, were less heinous in the sight of God—they were less against character, more sins of ignorance.

We may assume, therefore, that during the Millennial age disciplines such people as those of Tyre and Sidon and those of Sodom, who had never known God to any degree, who had never known his laws, will be in a condition of heart much more readily amenable to the influences and requirements of that time than will be some others—the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, who having known more respecting God had misused the opportunities of the present life—who broke down their characters instead of building them.

And these are merely ensamples, for we know that all those that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth—"they that have done good [the saints, the overcomers] unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil [all mankind outside of the saints] unto the resurrection of judgment."—John 5:28, 29.

We can readily see, in harmony with our Lord's declaration in this lesson, that many who in the present life have no knowledge and no opportunity may be nothing disadvantaged thereby in that judgment time, but on the contrary may be more susceptible to the good influences of the Kingdom and its laws than some others will be who have had contact with the light to some extent in the present life, but who have

refused it. What a blessed promise is this one, of a future judgment or trial! How much it means to the whole groaning creation, that God, who let the sentence of Adam fall on all without giving them an individual trial, has provided a redemption for all from that first sentence, and has provided that each member of the race shall individually have a trial, a judgment, in due time, at the hands of him who died for all. And then, how favorable the conditions are to be, under which that trial will be granted! Satan is to be bound, and the earth is to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord and his goodness and his gracious arrangements on behalf of his fallen creatures, whom he desires shall not perish, but, if they will, have eternal life through Christ.

However, as our Lord distinctly intimates (v. 5), these things respecting the coming judgment and the blessed opportunities which shall be accorded to every member of Adam's race, are hidden from the majority—especially do they seem to be hidden from the worldly-wise and prudent, who instead of accepting so gracious a plan, are rather inclined to teach the people that the poor Sodomites went to eternal torment without ever having had a chance, and with no prospect of ever having a chance in the future, although our Lord declares that if they had had as good an opportunity as the people of Capernaum they would have repented with a deep contrition. The wise and prudent are inclined to tell us also that the people of Tyre and Sidon, although not favored with our Lord's blessing, are also to be considered doomed to eternal torment, though they would have repented had they had as good an opportunity as the people of Palestine; and finally they tell us that these people of Palestine, having rejected our Lord, must necessarily be sufferers of eternal torment, and not merely losers of the Kingdom. They fail to see; they are blind to the truth—blinded by the traditions of their religious teachers—as the Jews were.

Then, to add to their confusion, they begin to attempt to apply the Lord's words respecting a day of judgment, and of course interpret it to mean a day of damnation, instead of a day of trial. They fail to note that their claim is that the Sodomites were already in hell, suffering torments of the severest form for nearly two thousand years, at the time our Lord uttered these words. Do they think that the Sodomites could suffer any more after the day of judgment than they describe them as suffering now? What do they understand by the words "day of judgment," anyway? Evidently they have no proper conception of the meaning of the words. They see that our Lord referred it to a future time, and they are hopelessly confused and thoroughly unable to give any reasonable explanation of the matter, either in harmony with God's character or in harmony with their own wretched and God-dishonoring theories.—See DAWN, Vol. I, p.137.

How comforting are our Lord's words, that these things are revealed, nevertheless, to some—to babes, to those who are not great, not wise, according to the course of this world; to those who are of humble mind, ready to be taught of the Lord, instead of wishing to teach the Lord. This great blessing, dearly beloved, is ours, and let us be very careful that we maintain the attitude of childlikeness and simplicity, that we may continue to be taught of God, and to "know the things that are freely given unto us of God." Let us rejoice in them and use them, and let the light shine out to others. The explanation of the fact that the divine plan is hidden from the great majority of the learned, the doctors of divinity, etc., is that so it has pleased the Father to let "the wise be taken in their own

craftiness," and to reveal his purposes to those of an humble mind. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (1 Cor. 3:19.) The Father drew to the Son at the first advent, not the doctors of the law, the scribes and the notables, but certain "Israelites indeed," in whom was no guile, though they were but an humble few. And the same class has received the blessing all down the age.

The Master realized that his special instructions must be toward those whom the Father had given unto him, rather than toward the unready and unwilling ones who would not receive his testimony because not in a proper condition of heart to appreciate. To his faithful disciples, therefore, and to all of the same class since, he declared that all things he possessed he had received of the Father; he claimed nothing of himself; and further, he asserted that no one knew him truly, fully, intimately, but the Father, and that no man knew the Father except himself, the Son, and he to whom the Son revealed him. The average reader gets very little meaning out of this passage at first. The Christian who has been making progress for years, growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord, can appreciate it much better. He realizes that while he had some knowledge about Jesus and about the Father at first, from the very inception of his Christian experience, yet it was a different matter to come to know the Father and to know the Son in the intimate sense, in the sense of becoming well acquainted with them, knowing their mind as one knows the mind, the heart, of an intimate friend. It is a privilege to receive such an acquaintance. It is not to be had by everybody; it requires seeking for and knocking for, and such seeking and knocking implies an earnest desire to have an intimate fellowship and communion. Such a growth in grace should be earnestly sought by all of the Lord's true followers who seek to be his joint heirs in the Kingdom; for without it they cannot make progress. In proportion as we know the Father and know the Son we will love them and seek more and more to do those things which are pleasing in their sight.

COME! WEARY AND HEAVY-LADEN.

Still addressing the same class, and implying that there were some present of the right disposition who had not yet become his disciples, our Lord appealed to his hearers individually, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The difficulty with most of the people would seem to have been that they were neither weary nor heavy laden, but on the contrary pretty well self-contented. We cannot suppose that physical weariness and physical burdens was the thought before our Lord's mind, but rather the heart-burden and sin-weariness, which all true Israelites must have felt, if they were honest with themselves.

We are to remember that they were under the Law Covenant, that its requirements were very exacting, and that it made no allowance for weaknesses, imperfections, errors, etc.; consequently, all of those Jews should have felt themselves continually condemned in striving to carry the burden of the Law of Sinai. Not that the law was an unjust one or impossible to be kept by a perfect man, but because all being imperfect and fallen they were unable to keep the Law Covenant. So we may suppose that amongst the Jews at that time, while the majority were professing to be holy, law-keepers, who did no sin, there were some who honestly admitted to themselves and to others that they did not, could

not, keep the Law perfectly, and who therefore felt burdened and wearied with their fruitless endeavors. Such felt their need of a burden-bearer, such felt their soul-sickness and need of the good Physician, and to such Jesus addressed himself, inviting them to come to him and receive rest, relief.

This coming to Christ for rest is the first step toward a Christian life; it is justification, the acceptance of him as the satisfaction for our sins; and from the time we thus accept him, as the Apostle declares, we have joy and peace through believing. (Rom. 5:1; 15:13.) But having been thus received and blessed, there is something more for us to do, viz., to learn that there is another burden and another yoke which we should take upon us voluntarily.

A yoke is a symbol of servitude, and so our Lord implies that those who are set free (either from the yoke of the Law Covenant, as were the believing Jews, or from the yoke of Satan, as were the believing Gentiles) should become his servants, should take his yoke, should learn to do his will. A yoke generally is arranged for two, and our Lord speaks of it as his yoke, by which we are to understand that he also is a servant; having come to do the Father's will, and having put on the yoke of servitude, he invites us to become true yoke-fellows with himself in the doing of the Father's will, co-laborers together with Christ in the great work of the world's deliverance from sin and death.

The secret of the ability to wear this yoke, and to have companionship with Christ in his service, and to have as a result a great blessing in our own hearts, a rest unto our souls, lies, he explains, in our learning to be meek and lowly of heart as he was. It will be impossible for those who are proud, haughty, self-willed, ambitious, worldly-wise, etc., to labor in the same yoke with Jesus, or to find the true rest of soul which we properly seek. But if we are meek, teachable, humble-minded, ready to know and to do the Lord's will at any cost, then indeed we shall find rest to our soul's satisfaction—the peace of God which passeth all understanding will rule in our hearts.

We notice a difference between the two rests of vs. 28 and 29. Of the first it is said that the Lord will give it to him who comes to him in faith; of the second, it is said that he finds this rest to his soul through becoming a yoke-fellow with Jesus. And so it is: there are two blessings; the first blessing is that of justification—the joy of having our sins forgiven, realizing ourselves no longer strangers and foreigners from our heavenly Father, but brought nigh by the blood of Christ; the second is the joy which comes more gradually, a fruitage, a grace, a development in the heart, the growing and abiding peace and joy of the holy spirit. This second blessing, however, is attained by very few; the majority of nominal Christians know nothing of it; and yet it is the very object of the calling of this Gospel age, and those who fail to come to the Lord and to take his yoke, and to learn of him, to become thus "copies of God's dear Son," will fail utterly of the special purpose and call of this Gospel age, and will have neither part nor lot in the Kingdom. The blessing of justification by faith is merely to fit and prepare us to take the yoke and to become a co-laborer with the Lord in the Father's service.

This yoke which Jesus invites us to come under with him is a very formidable affair from the standpoint of the world: to them it seems to be a most unreasonable yoke, a most terrible burden—to consecrate life, time, means, everything to the service of God; but from the standpoint of those who have come unto Jesus, and to whom he has spoken peace and rest through justification, the matter is very different. To such it must seem a "reasonable service," that since the Lord has graciously redeemed our lives and our all, we should use what remains of that life to his praise and glory; and after we have fastened the yoke upon ourselves we find that it is an easy one, and that with it any burden, any duty, any trial, any difficulty, any vexation of spirit, any burden of any kind that could come to us, would be light indeed, because of this yoke.

Why? Because those who wear this yoke have the assurances of the divine Word, that all things are working together for good to them; that the heavier the burden that may be attached the greater will be the blessing and the reward by and by; the more severe the experiences during the present time, the brighter shall be the glory, and the brighter shall be their character and the more sure shall they be of being fitted and polished for the heavenly Kingdom. From this standpoint every burden is light, because our yoke is appreciated, and is so easy, so reasonable; and additionally it is so light because the Lord is with us in this yoke. He is the great Burden-bearer, and will not suffer us to be tempted nor to be pressed with more of the burdens of life than we should probably be able to endure. He is watching out for the interests of all those who take his yoke upon them. Their burdens are his burdens, their trials are his trials, their interests are his interests; yea, all things shall work for good to them because they love him.

Let us remember, however, that the Lord takes no slaves in this way; he does not fasten the yoke upon any; he merely invites us to come, and then to fasten his yoke upon ourselves, to make a full consecration of ourselves to him and to his service.

FEBRUARY 18

The LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul—Deut. 13:3.

The Kingdom is intended only for those who by God's grace shall at heart become like to the Lord Jesus, in that they will love the Lord with all their hearts, with all their souls, and be able to say, "Not my will, but thy will, O Lord, be done." No other condition than this of full submission to the Lord can make us acceptable for the Kingdom; for no other condition represents full self-submission and full love to God. And let us not forget that all the heavenly things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," God has reserved for them that love Him supremely—Z '98, 40 (R 2257).

God seeks a tested people, proven loyal in every point of character. For this reason He arranges the various providences in the lives of His people, so that they may demonstrate amid these providences their hearts' attitude, whether it be one of devotion to Him, to self, or to the world; and blessed is the Christian who demonstrates devotion to God!—P '32, 15.

Parallel passages: Gen. 22:1-14; Deut. 8:2, 5; 2 Chron. 32:31; Job 1:8-22; 2:3-10; Psa. 66:10-13; Dan. 12:10; Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:2, 3; 2 Thes. 1:4, 5; Heb. 12:5-11; Jas. 1:2, 3, 12; 1 Pet. 1:6, 7; 4:12-19; Rev. 2:10.

Hymns: 13, 3, 38, 56, 57, 93, 179.
Poems of Dawn, 286: *Let It Rest*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 341 (R 5799).

Questions: Have I had trials this week? What were they? How were they met? In what did they result?

LET IT REST

I LONGED for something—O so much:
So near it came, I almost touched
My heart's desire—when far away
'Twas drawn. Then seemed a voice to say:
"There, let it rest—God knoweth best."

Like children crying for the moon
I pleaded for this priceless boon;
I wanted it within my hand—
How could I then in patience stand
And let it rest? Doth God know best?

Then He who calmed the stormy sea

Came near to soothe and quiet me;
And to my longing, restless will
He gently whispered, "Peace, be still."
I let it rest—God doth know best.

R5799: WHY GOD HAS PERMITTED SATAN'S LYING DECEPTIONS

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

GOD'S children realize that this text is to them full of deep significance and import. It can scarcely be considered too often or be too strongly emphasized. The word *prove* has the sense of test, demonstrate. The words were addressed to Israel, God's chosen people who had entered into a special Covenant with Him, agreeing to be His people, set apart from the heathen nations by whom they were surrounded, to be a holy nation, Jehovah's peculiar treasure; and He had agreed to be their God. As they had promised to obey all God's requirements, so it was proper that the Lord should prove them. He did not prove the heathen nations; for they had made no covenant with Him and were not in relationship to Him as His servants. But Israel must be proved. The character of their testing is shown in the context. This proving would be accomplished by permitting false teachers, false prophets, to be amongst them.

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

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

One of the tests that spirit-mediums formerly used was to tell of the death of some one before it had become known. They would tell, for instance, of the death of some notable. They might declare, "The king of Sweden died today." There would be no means of verifying this information until some ship would come over; for in those days, before the invention of the telegraph and cable, news traveled very slowly. But in a month or two

the news would come, and it would prove to be true as foretold by the medium. It would sometimes be found that he had died at the very hour that the medium had declared. Mediums can do less along this line today because of modern inventions for the rapid transmission of news throughout the world; but they have many other means of ascertaining facts and communicating them.

GOD'S WORD HIS PEOPLE'S GUIDE

We are not informed regarding the power used by the fallen angels in their miracle working and cures, but we know that it is not from God. It is for the Lord's children to remember that He has given us His Word, and that He reveals Himself through this Word. It is sufficient that He warns us against having anything to do with these occult powers. Examples of such warnings are found in the following Scriptures: Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; 2 Kings 17:17; 23:24; 1 Chronicles 10:13; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Isaiah 8:19; Jeremiah 27:9, 10; 29:8, 9; Luke 8:26-35; Acts 16:16-18.

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

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

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

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

or make void the Scriptures, are deceived. The evil spirits are responsible for much of the confusion and difficulty in which the world is today.

The Apostle Paul, in referring to the close of this Gospel Age, declares that false doctrines will be multiplied. He tells us why many will be misled and deceived. He says, "They received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe *the lie* [Genesis 3:4]: that they all might be condemned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.) The intimation here seems to be that those who have come into touch with God and with His Truth will be so attracted by the Truth that it will be like the needle attracted to the pole. God is the great Pole. Those really drawn to Him will be difficult to swerve. Although a magnetic needle may be temporarily diverted from the pole, yet it will surely swing back and point in the right direction. And so it is with God's true people. They have an affinity for the Truth, they are influenced by it, magnetized by it, drawn.

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

FALLEN SPIRITS ESPECIALLY ACTIVE TODAY

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

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

Amongst mankind today the old time necromancy and incantations will not do; their intellects are too alert to be much or long hoodwinked by these things. Even the

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

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

DELUSIONS OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THEOSOPHY

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

The name "Christian Science" is a misnomer for the tenets of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy. Her teachings are devoid of scientific elements, and the word "Christian" attached as part of the name given her theories is only calculated by Satan to deceive and destroy God's people. To Christian Scientists Christ is not a Savior, nor was a Savior needed. Christ was only a good man, a Christian Scientist, who but imperfectly understood the new science which He introduced, but which in these latter times has been perfectly and fully set forth by the late Mrs. Eddy, of Boston. It has for its trademark, so to speak, "All is life; *there is no death!*" Thus they declare Satan's old falsehood started in Eden, "Ye shall *not* surely die." Jesus declared that Satan "was a liar from the beginning and abode not in the truth," not from his own beginning, but from man's beginning.

The various shades of Universalism unite in the same conclusion—Christ did not die to ransom man from the power of the grave, as the Scriptures declare. He was only a man like other men, a good and wise Teacher, but not a Savior in any substitutionary sense, they assert. Some hold that man evolved from an ape or a tadpole or from protoplasm;

that he was a very bad likeness and not at all an image of God; that he was like a "half-baked cake." But all unite in the belief that mankind are being gradually evolved to perfection. All assure us in Satan's very language, "Ye shall *not* surely die!"—death is only a process of evolution; man is his own savior.

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

In harmony with the philosophy of Socrates and Plato (while denying these as the authors or even the burnishers of their doctrine, and claiming that these Greek philosophers got their information, as *they* now get it, direct from God by communion and intuition), Theosophy claims not only that man will live forever future, but that he has lived forever past. It appeals to the weak-minded with the question, "Have you never seen places that seemed strangely familiar the first time you visited them? Those were places you had seen *before* your present existence began." And, as of old, Satan may sometimes assist a sluggish imagination with a dream. Theosophy holds that death is not death, but a new birth; and that each individual will be reborn again and again until he has developed sufficiently the Divine nature; and that then he will be reabsorbed into God for eternity.

MAN'S WISDOM IS FOOLISHNESS WITH GOD

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

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

and is willing to class as Theosophists all popular people. It favors alms-giving and good deeds, so done as to be seen of men.

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

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

SATAN'S LIE THE BASIS OF FALSE DOCTRINES

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

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

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

ALL BUT "VERY ELECT" TO BE DECEIVED

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

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

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

The doing of many wonderful works is one of the old tricks of Satan and his evil hosts. If disease and death are to a considerable extent under Satan's control during the reign of evil (Hebrews 2:14), why might he not, in his present emergency, when his fall is so near, reverse his methods of working and do some works of healing, thereby to clinch his errors and deceptions and to re-blind some whose eyes have been gradually opening under the light of the dawning Millennial Day, the Day of Christ?

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

to support it by many wonderful works, done by his unknowing as well as by his wilful agents, falsely and in the name of Christ.

THE FAITHFUL SOON TO SHINE FORTH

These various errors, "doctrines of demons," are gathering out of God's Kingdom "all that offend, and them which do iniquity" (and these constitute the great mass); while the faithful, who are to receive the Kingdom and be joint-heirs with Christ in His great Messianic Reign now about to be inaugurated, alone will stand. (Eph. 6:11-13.) When this separation is complete—and we believe it is now almost accomplished—the fire of the great Time of Trouble will make general havoc of present arrangements—social, financial, political, ecclesiastical. Then all errors and falsehoods in religion will go down forever. Then the Lord's faithful Little Flock, having received immortality and the Divine nature, "shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father," seated with Christ in His Throne. (Revelation 3:21.) For a thousand years they shall reign over the world, for the scattering of all ignorance and blindness and the uplifting of all the families of the earth, the living and the dead.

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

FEBRUARY 19

Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful nothing is pure; but both their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to have known God; but by their works they renounce him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work worthless—Titus 1:15, 16.

What a terrible condition this is, and how careful all of the Lord's people should be, not only to have pure hearts, pure minds, but also to keep their consciences very tender, in close accord with the Word of the Lord! This condition can only be maintained by judging ourselves, and that strictly and frequently, by the standard which God has given us, His law of love.

*I want the first approach to feel
Of pride or fond desire;
To catch the wand'ring of my will,
And quench the kindling fire.*

—Z '99, 214 (R 2516).

One's quality of heart attaches itself to everything he touches; to him it is either good or evil, as he is good or evil. They who are pure attach purity to that with which they come into contact, while the impure defile whatever they touch. This world of difference exists on account of the difference in their moral quality. If one who once belonged to God has become impure, he contaminates more than one who never was pure. His being is defiled—P '36, 14.

Parallel passages: Matt. 15:11; Luke 11:39-41; Acts 10:15, 28; Rom. 14:14, 17, 20, 23; 1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23-25; 1 Tim. 5:8; 2 Tim. 3:5; Heb. 6:4-8; 10:26-31; 2 Pet. 2:20-22; 1 John 5:16; Jude 11-13.

Hymns: 20, 13, 1, 196, 198, 266, 267.
Poems of Dawn, 254: *The Wrath of God*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 245 (R 5746).

Questions: Have I this week kept myself back from presumptuous sins? What helped or hindered therein? What were the results?

THE WRATH OF GOD

THE wrath of God is love's severity
In curing sin—the zeal of righteousness
In overcoming wrong—the remedy
Of justice for the world's redress.

The wrath of God is punishment for sin,
In measure unto all transgression due,

Discriminating well and just between
Presumptuous sins and sins of lighter hue.

The wrath of God inflicts no needless pain,
Merely vindictive, or Himself to please;
But aims the ends of mercy to attain,
Uproot the evil, and the good increase.

The wrath of God is a consuming fire,
That burns while there is evil to destroy
Or good to purify; nor can expire
Till all things are relieved from sin's alloy.

The wrath of God is love's parental rod,
The disobedient to chastise, subdue,
And bend submissive to the will of God,
That love may reign when all things are made new.

The wrath of God shall never strike in vain,
Nor cease to strike till sin shall be no more;
Till God His gracious purpose shall attain,
And earth to righteousness and peace restore.

R5746: "BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART"

"Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful is nothing pure; but both their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to have known God, but by their works they renounce Him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work worthless." "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—Titus 1:15, 16; Proverbs 4:23.

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

The Apostle's statement is very strong, very forceful—"Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful is nothing pure." We understand him to mean by these words, not literally that the pure could find nothing that is impure, nor

that the impure could find nothing pure, but that this is true in a broad, general way. Those who are themselves pure can see righteousness in the Divine Law and in the Divine arrangement. They can see the true, pure hearts of God's sincere "little ones," in spite of the weaknesses of their fallen flesh. But the unfaithful become defiled, their consciences become perverted, so that they are unable to see anything or anybody in a proper light. They have permitted ill-natured thoughts to enter the mind and lodge there—suspicions, evil surmisings, such as, "Every man has his price. Every man can be bought. There is not one that is honest"; and all that sort of thing. They have been more or less judging others by themselves.

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

FAULT-FINDERS, ACCUSERS OF THE BRETHREN

These defiled ones deny God, renounce Him in their works—as St. Paul declares, they are "abominable, and disobedient" to God, walking contrary to His instructions. This is surely an abominable thing to do—after knowing the Lord to go in an opposite direction, and set His counsel at naught. Such are "to every good work worthless." They do not accomplish anything good, but the very opposite; yet they find fault with everybody else.

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

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

NECESSITY FOR GUARDING THE HEART

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

The great Adversary also gives his assistance in attempts to thus mislead. The heart—the will, the affections—of every human being should be loyal to God and to righteousness. It was made so originally. As the magnetic needle turns to the pole, so the human heart should turn to the Lord. Anything to the contrary represents a sinful, distorted, perverted condition. But as a matter of fact, sin has become firmly implanted in the fallen human nature. During these long centuries of sin many people have striven to keep their hearts right with God. But after *getting right*, the majority fail to *abide* in that condition, to keep their heart in God's love, to keep it from going into wrong avenues, from getting into the wrong condition.

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

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

"For out of it [the heart] are the issues of life," declared Solomon. From this organ—the heart—the blood is pumped out to all parts of the body. The body is thus dependent upon the heart for its strength, its vitality, its very life. The body would be dead if the heart did not continually propel the blood through the system. So the issues of our bodily life are going forth from the heart every day, yea, every moment. It is either issuing little life or much life each day. So it is with the seat of our affections—so it is with our will. All who come in contact with us day by day are influenced for good or for evil by the spirit we manifest. It is highly important that all our conduct in life should be under the

proper direction of a pure heart—one that is carefully watched and kept under inspection, so that today as we go forth, a good issue shall flow out from our heart to others. Thus the Lord will be pleased with us, and will count us "dear children." Thus shall our minds and consciences be kept undefiled.

THE FINAL ISSUE—LIFE OR DEATH

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

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

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

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

FINAL ISSUE OF LIFE DIFFERING IN DEGREE

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

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

FEBRUARY 20

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue ... this man's religion is vain—Jas. 1:26.

Because the tongue is the index of the heart, because "out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh," therefore the unbridled tongue, speaking selfishly, enviously, bitterly, boastfully, slanderously, proves that the heart from whose fullness these overflow is un sanctified, unholy, grievously lacking of the spirit of Christ; hence, whatever religion it may have attained is thus far vain, as that heart is not saved, nor in a salvable condition. But the Good Physician has pointed out antidotes for soul-poisoning—medicines which, if properly taken according to directions, will sweeten the bitter heart—Z '99, 215 (R 2517).

To bridle the tongue means to control and direct it. Controlling the tongue from saying evil things, and directing it in saying good things, is a part of the bridling of the tongue. He who allows his tongue to become the instrument of a depraved disposition is not a man of true religious character, whose chief element is love for God and man. Such a tongue violates the law of love, inasmuch as it inflicts injury upon all whom it berates. Therefore let us control our tongues, keeping them from running away in evil and directing them in talking rightly—P '30, 14.

Parallel passages: Jas. 3:1-12; Psa. 18:21; 12:3; 34:13; 39:1; 140:3; Prov. 16:27; Matt. 15:18, 19; Acts 5:3; 2 Tim. 2:23-25; Matt. 6:5-9; 23:14-22, 27; Eccles. 5:2; Jas. 1:27.

Hymns: 136, 78, 13, 20, 1, 82, 130.

Poems of Dawn, 301: *A Wrecker or a Builder?*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 245 (R 5517).

Questions: How have I used my tongue this week? What helped or hindered therein? What resulted therefrom?

A WRECKER OR A BUILDER

I WATCHED them tear a building down,
A crew of men in a busy town;
With a ho and a heave and a lusty yell,
They swung a beam and down the wall fell.

I asked the foreman, "Are these men skilled?
The kind you would hire if you would build?"
The foreman replied, "Why, no, indeed!
Common laborers are all I need,
For they can wreck in a day or two
That which has taken years to do."

So I asked myself as I went on my way,
"What part in the game of life do you play?
Are you shaping your life to a well-made plan,
Patiently doing the best that you can?
Or are you a wrecker that walks the town,
Content with the pleasure of tearing down?"

R5517: CONTROL OF THE TONGUE A NECESSITY

"I say unto you, that every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment."—Matthew 12:36.

OUR LORD was addressing some of the Scribes and Pharisees who were trying to "catch Him in His words"—to take advantage of technicalities of language. In their endeavor to oppose Him, those Scribes and Pharisees were doing everything they could to discomfit or vanquish Him in His reasoning, even going to the extent of using arguments which they did not really believe. This is a very dangerous procedure. No matter how just we think our cause to be as a whole, we are not to resort to any misuse of language to uphold what we believe to be the Truth.

Possibly those Pharisees might have said amongst themselves, "We must use strong arguments to keep ahead of that Nazarene. He uses strong language Himself. We must hold up our end of the controversy, and not show the white feather." But this position did not justify their conduct. Since Justice is the foundation of the Throne of God, any attempt to take advantage of another in any manner whatever will surely bring its own punishment.

From our Lord's comments at various times on the subject of the *tongue* we realize that in His day there must have been some seriously wrong condition prevailing amongst those with whom He came in contact. The Scribes and Pharisees attributed evil power to Him, and declared that He was the tool of Satan—that Satan was speaking through Him, etc. At first our Lord told them in a general way that they deceived themselves. Later, He reproved them severely and showed the fallacy of their arguments. In connection with our text He declared that by their words they should be condemned—be dealt with, corrected in righteousness and brought to true reformation, or else perish in the Second Death.

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

Human beings are the only earthly creatures that can talk—whether orally or in writing or otherwise. More and more the people of God realize the wisdom of the Apostle James' statement that although the tongue is a little member, yet it is the most dangerous of all, because it has the widest influence. If a man sin not with his tongue, he is a perfect man. (James 3:2.) We cannot estimate the possible results of our words. This influence may reach even to the ends of the earth. Therefore we are to consider carefully what we may say, in order to determine whether our words will glorify God or whether they will

dishonor Him—whether they will stir up good thoughts and impulses in the minds of others or whether they will stir up that which is evil.

In His Wisdom God has seen fit so to create us that our conduct of today has much to do with our character of tomorrow. Thus we are either making or breaking character continually. It is well that all should know this fact. Not only worldly people, but Christians also, should understand this principle; for Christians are now on trial for glory, honor and immortality. Therefore by neglecting to weigh carefully their words they might lose the great prize for which they are striving.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

By way of emphasis our Lord declared that every idle word—every unprofitable utterance—must be accounted for in a day of reckoning. With the Church, we understand the Scriptures to teach that this day of reckoning is this Gospel Age. Daily are we to go to our Heavenly Father and say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us." Not only must we render up our account daily, but at the end of our course there will be a general summing up. By this we do not understand that at the end of our race course we shall be lined up and questioned about every word of our experience, but that each one who comes into contact with the Truth is either building up character or else breaking it down, and that his character at the end of his probation will determine his reward. As a pupil daily learns his lessons and prepares himself for the final examinations at the end of the year, when there is a general testing of his knowledge, so with the pupils in the School of Christ. Day by day our Master deals with us; but at the end of our course there is to be a summing up.

Doubtless there are in every one of us some things that are disapproved of the Lord; for we all have the treasure of the New Mind in earthen vessels and therefore cannot do as we would. But we have pledged ourselves to serve the Lord and to be loyal in doing His will. Therefore He is dealing with us *now*. In so doing, He warns us that the tongue is a very important member of our body, and that we are to be careful how we use it; for it will have a bearing upon the final decision in the end of this Gospel Age, when the returns are brought in. Then it will be determined whether we are worthy of the highest honor—joint-heirship with our Savior—or whether we shall be servants to that class or whether we shall be unworthy of life upon any plane of existence.

OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF SLANDER

But there is also a reckoning with us now. Our Lord declares that the tongue is so important a member that it represents our hearts more accurately than does anything else. The hand might do a good deed, yet the heart might be very different from the hand. In fact, the hand might not express the real sentiment of the heart at all. But the tongue is sure to give utterance to what is really in the heart. Therefore by our words we are daily either building up or tearing down character.

There is a spirit which shoots out bitter words. From the standpoint of the Lord, this is MURDER. Thus at the end of the Jewish Age the Scribes and Pharisees criticised and slandered our Lord. Although from their knowledge of the Law they knew that they would be accountable for their actions, yet they did not appreciate the fact that they would be judged by their words.

So will it be in the world's Judgment Day—the Millennium. Mankind will be held responsible for the work of their tongues. But they will have a more favorable opportunity than if judged now; forces will then be at work which will give them a more prompt judgment; and therefore they will learn their lessons quickly. They will have a responsibility for their words. Those that "knew not will be beaten with few stripes"; but those who "knew and did not" act according to their knowledge, "will be beaten with many stripes."

SPECIAL BRIDLES FOR THE TONGUE

Under stress of sudden temptation the Lord's people, who are now on judgment, might impulsively say that which is not pleasing to the Master. But we must *learn* not to speak thoughtlessly; we must learn to weigh our utterances. Since we are servants of God, we should ever take heed to our ways, in order to render the best possible service. We are not merely to have a good will to do that which is right; we are to seek to bridle our tongues. Whatever vows or resolutions or restraints we may seek to put upon our tongues may be considered as bridles, by which we are determined to bring ourselves into full subjection to the will of God.

So long as Satan and his demon host are at large, the Lord's people will do well to take heed to their ways, that they sin not with their tongue. Satan and his angels are seeking to subvert those who have given themselves to the Lord and to catch them in their words. So while we are in their presence we must be especially on guard, that they may not entrap us. As the Psalmist says, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked [One] is before me."

AN IMPORTANT LESSON FOR ALL

Although our Lord declared that men should give account for every pernicious word, yet He referred to the thoughts behind the words. It was the attitude of heart that distressed Him. He knew the attitude of heart displayed by the Scribes and the Pharisees would bring injury upon them.

Amongst the Lord's people there is nothing more important than that they should learn to be very just. While it is right to be loving, kind, generous, yet *justice* is the very foundation of character. All love and kindness not based upon justice are neither satisfactory nor pleasing to the Lord. In dealing with others, a child of God will not think, What will my fellow-men let me take from them? but, What are the rights of others, and what would my Heavenly Father have me do?

It is very natural for one to recognize his own rights in any matter, but the fallen nature does not so quickly perceive the rights of others. Therefore one of the most important lessons for the Lord's people to learn is to do unto others as they would have others do unto them—simple justice.

We fear that many of the Lord's dear people have not fully realized that obedience to the rules which govern the New Nature means absolutely the "Golden Rule" on their part toward all others. They must not do to others what they would not have others do to them. It is the duty of the New Creature to bring the body into such subjection that justice shall rule in every act and word, and so far as possible in every thought. One must be just in his thoughts before he can properly be just in his dealings. Whoever thinks unjustly will act unjustly in spite of endeavors to the contrary.

THE TREASURE STORED IN OUR HEARTS

As we reflect that the Church is standing before the Bar of Divine Judgment, under the personal inspection of our Lord, and that in His estimation our words are a criterion of judgment, we cannot weigh too carefully the underlying principles upon which His decision will be made. Our Lord's words, as recorded in Matthew 12:34-36, indicate that both the heart and the mouth are under special scrutiny. How necessary therefore is a right condition of heart, in order that the words of our mouth may be acceptable to our Lord and Redeemer!

In our Lord's statement, the heart is *representative* of the character, and the mouth is the *index* of that character. The word *heart* is sometimes used in Scripture with the force of the word *mind*. Out of the abundance of the mind the mouth speaks. A good man brings forth good things out of the treasure of his mind. But all mankind are by nature sinners; therefore all are by nature evil to some extent. God does not approve of any who are under the sentence of death. Nevertheless there are those of the condemned race of Adam who are relatively good—those who, despite the imperfections under which they were born, the blemishes of their fallen nature, are desirous of being in harmony with the One who is all-good.

We find nothing in Scripture to support the doctrine of total depravity—to imply that there is nothing whatever of good in humanity. Even though no one is perfect, nevertheless, there are some who have at least a good will, good intentions. Such superior characters of past Ages were represented in the Ancient Worthies—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the Prophets of Israel, etc., who fully demonstrated their obedience to God and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness.

THE CLASS APPROVED OF GOD

During this Gospel Age also there are some who are good. Amongst the heathen, as well as in Christian lands, there are those who are well-meaning, well-intentioned, those who are not malicious, not striving to do wrong, but endeavoring to do right. In order to have the Divine approval in this Age, however, one must be of those who come unto the

Father through Jesus; for none others are accepted of God. The Father will not receive any one whose heart is not sincere, who does not have good intentions, who does not manifest loyalty to Him and to the principles of righteousness.

Therefore any whom we have reason to believe are accepted of God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, are no longer to be counted as "children of wrath, even as others," but as of the Household of Faith. Despite the frailties of their flesh, they are good at heart; else God would not accept them. With these there is a constant conflict between the New Will and the desires of the flesh.

When we come to consider those who are good at heart, we find that all of them have imperfect bodies—some more so than others. Shall we give up the struggle for the prize because we cannot do perfectly? No! The Lord assures us that He looks at the heart, not at the flesh; that He has made a very gracious arrangement through our Lord Jesus by which the imperfections are cleansed away. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Therefore all His children may come with courage to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, there to obtain mercy and help in every time of need.

CHIPS OR APPLES—WHICH?

The good things brought forth from the treasure of a good man's heart will be those things which he has stored up from time to time. As the Psalmist says of the godly man, "His delight is in the Law of the Lord; and in His Law doth he meditate day and night." And of himself he declares, "Mine eyes prevent [anticipate] the night watches, that I may meditate in Thy Word," Law, precepts—the spirit, the purpose of that Law, not merely the outward form. So should we meditate upon the spirit of the Law of God. The sentiment of our heart should be the desire to get the Divine Mind as nearly as possible on every subject. All who are eager to be in harmony with God and to attain His character-likeness will think upon things that are good, pure, holy.—Psalm 1:2; 119:148; Philippians 4:8.

As one thinks upon things that are good, the mind becomes stored with good. Wherever there is a mouth disposed to speak upon things that are evil, there is an evil disposition—a mind in which evil has been stored. Whatever one has stored up in the mind will be *topmost* and sure to be spoken. An evil treasure will show itself, despite all endeavors to hide it; and likewise a good treasure will manifest itself; for the mind can hold only a certain amount.—Luke 6:45.

A father saw his son reading a novel. He knew that his son was in the habit of reading along this line. Calling the boy, he said, "John, I wish you to empty the apples out of that basket, and then take the basket to the woodshed and fill it with chips." The son did as he was directed. When he returned the father said, "Now put in the apples." The son replied that he could not do this, because there was not room enough in the basket for both chips and apples. Then the father said, "That is just what you are about to do with your mind. You have been filling your mind with chips; and when you try to put in apples, there will

be no room." Thus it is with all of us. If we fill our minds with jokes, foolish sayings, etc., we shall not be able to fill them with the things of the Holy Spirit.—Ephesians 5:1-7.

Many of the Lord's people find that, while their hearts are good, there is in their flesh a tendency for certain things that are not good. Thus there is a continual struggle between the flesh and the spirit as to whether the treasure stored up shall be chips or apples, so to speak. It is for each New Creature to decide which shall fill his mind—what kind of society he will choose, where he will go, what he will read, what kind of influences he will come under, what kind he will resist, etc. If in the past he has to any extent treasured up evil things, he should now try to rid himself of them. If his mind has been filled with jokes and levity, things not proper to the child of God, he should seek to put these away.

HOW CHARACTER IS BUILT

Finally, there is a relationship between this laying up of a good treasure in our minds and that of which our Lord spoke when He said, "Lay up for yourselves treasure in Heaven." In laying up treasure in our minds and hearts, we are building character. Whoever goes into a man's house and sees what he has gathered in the way of treasures can easily perceive the direction in which that man's mind is bent. His preferences demonstrate his character. Thus it is with us all; the things which we cultivate are an index to our character.

When we come to render up our account as New Creatures, character will decide whether we shall be esteemed worthy to be of the Lord's elect Little Flock. Only those who have laid up the treasure of a character like that of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Pattern, will be fit for an inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. Our eternal destiny therefore will be decided by the way in which we now use our minds and the thoughts which we now accumulate. Whoever cultivates good thoughts will receive a blessing, not only in the present life, but throughout the future.

Our first concern, then, must be for the heart—that its affections and dispositions may be wholly under the control of Grace Divine; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, meekness, self-control, faith, brotherly-kindness, love, supreme reverence for God and for Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles are established in the heart, we shall have no difficulty in controlling our tongue; for out of the good treasure of our heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace.

FEBRUARY 21

Thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me—Psa. 31:3.

After the Lord has given us certain lessons and experiences, some of which come to us under quiet and restful conditions, the order of procedure may be changed, and the indication of the Lord's providences may lead to some breaking up of conditions which had been both favorable and unfavorable in some respects, leading into new circumstances and conditions. It is not for the true spiritual Israelite to murmur or complain, or even to express a choice; but to look to the Lord for guidance. If he can discern the leadings of Divine providence, even though it be to a wilderness condition more arid and undesirable than that in which he has previously been, he is to follow the Lord's leadings unquestioningly, and with songs of faith and confidence—Z '02, 249 (R 3060).

God, as our Rock, is our Protector, even as a rock rising high above the stormy waves protects the one who has taken refuge upon it from the storm. As our Fortress, not only does He protect us against the onslaughts of our enemies, but also He strengthens us to repel their attacks, and to inflict all the greater injury upon them. As our Protector and Strengtheners, He leads us by His Truth and guides us by His providences for our attainment of His character. As our Leader, He directs our steps; as our Guide, He shows us our course over ways unknown to us, even to the Kingdom—P '35, 15.

Parallel passages: Gen. 28:15; 49:24, 25; Ex. 6:6, 7; 12:13, 17, 23; 14:29, 30; 19:4; 23:20; Num. 23:23; Deut. 32:4; Job 1:10; Psa. 34:15, 17, 19, 20; 41:1-3; 46:1-7; 91; 121; 125:1-3; 146:7, 8; Matt. 10:29-31.

Hymns: 126, 63, 67, 99, 286, 288, 293.

Poems of Dawn, 112: *Lead Me*.

Tower Reading: Z '02, 248 (R 3060).

Questions: How have I submitted to God this week as my Strengtheners and Guide? Why? In what circumstances? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

LEAD ME

I DO not ask, dear Lord, that life may be
A pleasant road;
I do not ask that Thou wouldst take from me
Aught of its load;
I do not ask that flowers should always spring
Beneath my feet;
I know too well the poison and the sting
Of things too sweet.
For one thing only, Lord, dear Lord, I plead:

Lead me aright,
Tho' strength should falter, and tho' heart should
bleed,
Through peace to light.

I do not ask, dear Lord, that Thou shouldst shed
Full radiance here;
Give but a ray of peace, that I may tread
Without a fear;
I do not ask my cross to understand,
My way to see;
Better, in darkness, just to feel Thy hand,
And follow Thee.
Joy is like restless day, but peace Divine
Like quiet night;
Lead me, O Lord, till perfect day shall shine,
Through peace to light.

R3060: JOURNEYING TOWARD CANAAN.

Golden Text:—"For thy name's sake lead me, and guide me."—Psa. 31:3.

ISRAEL spent nearly a year in the vicinity of Mt. Sinai. It was about a year and fifty days after their departure from Egypt that, by the Lord's instruction, they broke camp to journey toward the promised land—Canaan. Doubtless, their first impressions respecting the matter were that the Lord, through Moses, would lead them directly into the Land of Promise, and no doubt they wondered at the delay. We can see, however, that a nation reduced almost to the condition of slavery, would need many lessons to prepare the people for the glorious heritage which the Lord had promised them. In previous studies we have seen how the Lord inculcated lessons of trust, duty, obedience, worship and temperance, and subsequent events will prove to us that even with all these instructions the people were not yet ready to trust and obey the Lord so as to be properly fit for their inheritance.

During the eleven months spent in the vicinity of Mt. Sinai, important arrangements were effected—all tending to a larger degree of organization, government and personal responsibility amongst the people. When ready to leave Mt. Sinai they had not only their tribal organizations, but were additionally grouped in companies of ten and these into fifties and these again into larger groups or commands, so that the entire host was well marshalled. Besides this, they had in each tribe a Judge or lawgiver for minor questions; weightier matters being brought to Moses and through him to the Lord. Moreover, the Lord put his spirit upon seventy of the elders of the people, of all the tribes, so that they prophesied or taught the people, each in his own department; while the tribe of Levi had been specially set apart to the divine service. The Tabernacle had been made with all its

appurtenances, and the regular order of worship had been established—typical, like the people, of the better things coming afterward.

If, as we see, it was appropriate that Israel according to the flesh should have training-lessons in trust, obedience, etc., we can readily understand that their antitype, spiritual Israel, has much need of instruction, much need to learn lessons along the same lines,—and still more particularly, if they would be prepared to enter into typical Canaan. We need to learn to trust the Lord implicitly after we leave Egypt, the world, and set forth on the way to our Canaan; we need to learn that he alone is able to deliver us from the spirit of the world which would still pursue us and bring us back into captivity; we need to learn to trust the Lord for the heavenly manna and to gather it day by day; we need to learn confidence in the Lord, not only in the presence of the leaders whom he raises up for us, but also in their absence, and not to set up for ourselves earthly idols to draw our hearts away in any measure from the Lord and his arrangements, and the great purpose for which we have started under his leadership; we need to learn the import of the Covenant which he has graciously made with us, sealed with the precious blood;—to be faithful to our share therein to the extent of our ability, and to trust the remainder to our great Mediator.

We need also to learn the Tabernacle lessons—how and under what conditions we may have fellowship with God—may enter into the court and still further into the Holy, and ultimately, as members of the High Priest's body, into the Most Holy. We need to learn order in respect to natural as well as spiritual things; and that while the liberties of the Lord's people are to be conserved and bondage to evil is to be avoided, that, nevertheless, in all of the Lord's arrangements there is order, as represented in the order established amongst the Israelites. We are to learn first of all to be subject to the Lord, and secondly, to every ordinance of God; we are to consider the truly consecrated people of God as a unit and are to seek to co-operate one with another, and to remember the Apostle's words, "Remember them which have the rule over you," (Heb. 13:7), and again, "Yea, all of you be subject one to another." (I Pet. 5:5.) All of these lessons are necessary to us, as similar lessons in type were necessary to typical Israel.

The cloud, representing the Lord, rested over the Tabernacle during the sojourn in the vicinity of Sinai; but in harmony with the instructions given through Moses, when the appointed time had come, the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle and went before the people and about one hundred and fifty miles distant, rested over another wilderness nearer Canaan. The people followed it in marching order and apparently at first with great enthusiasm, praising the Lord. Vs. 35 seems to refer to Psalm 68 which describes the journey; see also Psa. 132:8. But whatever were the joyful anticipations of the people, they found the wilderness of Paran into which the Lord led them the scene of great trial, for it was much more rugged than the wilderness of Sinai and much less adapted to the care of their flocks and herds. This brought to the people fresh trials of faith and courage and endurance and confidence in the Lord and appreciation of his promises.

So with spiritual Israelites: after the Lord has given us certain lessons and experiences, some of which come to us under quiet and restful conditions, the order of procedure may

be changed, and the indication of the Lord's providences may lead to some breaking up of conditions which had been both favorable and unfavorable in some respects—leading into new circumstances and conditions. It is not for the true spiritual Israelite to murmur or complain or even to express a choice; but to look to the Lord for guidance. If he can discern the leadings of divine providence, even though it be in a wilderness condition more arid and undesirable than that in which he has previously been, he is to follow the Lord's leadings unquestioningly and with songs of faith and confidence. We are marching toward Canaan and know that other experiences are due us and must be undergone ere we can inherit the promises. The lesson for us is prompt and thorough obedience to the Lord's leadings without murmurings—with joyfulness; and this can only be expected on the part of those who have learned the lessons previously given them, and above all the lesson of faith,—confidence in the Lord's power and goodness and faithfulness.

REBELLION AGAINST GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

It was while in Paran that the people began to murmur again—for the leeks and onions and garlic and fish, etc., of Egypt. As little children to a father, they lamented to Moses—even regretting that they had been led out of bondage. Moses appealed the matter to the Lord, and the latter granted the request in displeasure, telling Moses that he esteemed the people to be murmurers against himself; because he was the real Leader and Moses merely his servant. The people wanted more *meat*, expressing themselves as wearied of the manna, so God sent them quails. An immense flock of quails was blown by a providential storm from the south and east over the Elantic Gulf into their camp. A writer on Eastern subjects says:—"These quails cannot sustain themselves long on the wing, and after crossing the desert 30 or 40 miles they would scarcely be able to fly. ... When exhausted they would easily be taken as they flew at a height of about two cubits (3 or 4 feet) from the ground." The people got an abundance; but ate so greedily that a pestilence broke out among them, which cost the lives of many, so that they called that place Kibroth-Hattaavah—"Graves of Greediness." Thus the Lord permitted their discontent and spirit of rebellion to work out a severe penalty in a natural way.

Is it not sometimes after the same manner with the Spiritual Israelites? Do not some after being well fed on spiritual manna permit a selfish, craving spirit to interrupt their fellowship with the Lord to some extent—hankering for earthly, fleshly, good things;—forgetting the wisdom of our Leader, the Lord, and that his love which thus far has delivered us, and fed and led us, is still with us, as wise and as good as ever? Sometimes it is a repining against our lot in life, a desire for more ease and comfort and wealth and social influence, than are within our reach: sometimes it is a protest against our share of the aches and pains of the groaning creation and our inability to get rid of these: sometimes it is a protest against the illness and death of a loved one.

How unwise! Should not those who have been fed on the spiritual manna realize that all of Spiritual Israel's affairs are under the Lord's care and supervision? Should they not remember that,—He doth not willingly afflict the children of men, but for their good? (Lam. 3:33; Heb. 12:10.) Ah! some have found that the prayers of murmurers, even when answered, as were Israel's, sometimes bring unexpected drawbacks;—that selfish prayers

are too expensive. Some have gained wealth and lost the truth and its service: some have gained health only to find that with it they gained other trials no less severe: some have had their dear ones restored to them from the very jaws of death, only to wish afterward that God had not answered their prayers;—or, more correctly, to wish that they had accepted the Lord's wisdom and providences trustfully, contentedly, uncomplainingly.

The lesson to Israel was, that they should trust the Lord implicitly; and accepting and using all that they had, all that the surroundings would supply, they should have used it as wisely and as thoroughly as possible—accepting all things, natural as well as miraculous, as God's gifts. And therewith they should have been content, thankful, happy. So, too, Spiritual Israel should use wisely such things as are within their reach—accepting all as God's gifts with thanksgiving; but their petitions should be for spiritual gifts—including patient-endurance and heart-contentment.

REBELLION AGAINST THE DIVINE ORDER.

It was in Paran that Miriam and Aaron rebelled against Moses' leadership asserting themselves his equals in authority. Miriam, the prime mover in the matter, referred to Moses' marriage to a negress (Ethiopian) as an evidence of his general incapacity to manage his own affairs, much less those of a nation. The text of the complaint is given only in part, but undoubtedly the fact that they were now near to Canaan and well organized and that it was now comparatively easy to lead the people, led to this wrong position. Both were quite willing that Moses should be leader when the start was made and when all the chances seemed to be against the success of the movement.

Poor Moses! If it almost crushed him when the people murmured against him, how must he have felt when his two most trusted advisers thus showed that they too had a wrong view of the Exodus, and considered Moses a self-appointed leader! True, it does appear to us as though his meekness had led him into a marriage in every way beneath his education and station in life; but then, was he not under divine supervision in all his affairs? And could not the Lord have hindered the marriage unless he saw some way in which it could prove advantageous? And should not Miriam and Aaron have remembered this, and minded their own business? As a matter of fact we believe that the Lord was favorable to the marriage;—that thus he forestalled any inclination on the part of Israel to accept the children of Moses as their kings and lawgivers to the subversion of the divine program.

The Lord's indignation was shown in smiting Miriam with leprosy and refusing to heal her for seven days even at the entreaty of Moses;—that thus the camp of Israel might also get a lesson in harmony with a subsequent statement,—"Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

The lesson of trusting to the Lord's vigilance in minding his business and the lesson that each Israelite indeed should mind his own business, are still closely identified. Many, nay all, still need to learn these lessons. The officiousness which inclines so many to think that the Lord's work will go to wreck unless they control the lever and pass their

judgment upon everybody and everything, is dangerous to all who have it, and their name is legion. It is born of too great self-conceit mixed with lack of respect for God's wisdom and with a desire to meddle as "busybodies in other men's matters." Each should early learn that while doing his own part with his might he should trust much to the Lord, and that to him each servant stands or falls. Failure to do this leads to leprosy—sin.

**"COME THOU WITH US AND WE WILL
DO THE GOOD."**

Hobab, here introduced to our attention (vs. 29), was Moses' brother-in-law. (Judg. 4:11—R.V.) Raguel is here given as the name of Moses' father-in-law and is supposed to refer to the same person called Jethro in another place. The explanation offered is that Raguel was his proper name and Jethro, which signifies *Excellent*, was his title as a chieftain of the Midianites, of the clan known as Kenites which dwelt in Midian east of Sinai. Hobab, therefore, was also a chieftain amongst the Kenites and undoubtedly, as Moses' words suggest, was well acquainted with the country through which Israel would pass. Moses invited him to cast in his lot with the Israelites promising him that thus he, and such of his tribe as would come with him, should become joint-participators with the Israelites in the promises God had made them,—“Come thou with us and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel ... and it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall do to us, the same will we do unto thee.” Although Hobab at first refused, the promise of a share with Israel apparently influenced him favorably; because mention is made elsewhere of the Kenites as having share with Israel in the promised land.—Judges 1:16; 4:11; I Sam. 15:6; I Chron. 2:55.

Doubtless this narrative of divine arrangement with Hobab through Moses, was intended to convey a lesson to spiritual Israelites also. It represents that some who are not children of the promises according to the flesh, were, nevertheless, accepted of God because of the exercise of faith,—because of their willingness also to endure the trials and difficulties and warfare of the children of Israel, that they might be participators with them in the rewards and promises. So to-day, we may say to those who are still aliens, strangers, foreigners to the Lord's covenants, “Come thou with us and we will do thee good.” We may tell whoever has an ear to hear of the gracious things which the Lord has promised, of everlasting life in Paradise, to all who are his,—faithful to the end of the journey; and yet, it will be a matter for the exercise of their wills: if they share in the blessings, they must also be willing to share the difficulties of the way, and the reproaches of the Lord's people. Not only may we thus speak to people orally, inviting them to join with us, but our lives in general should be “living epistles,” giving testimony of our faith in the Lord and in his promises;—helpful, encouraging and attractive to others.

Our Golden Text applies to every spiritual Israelite, and surely all such must recognize the leadership of the Lord, else they cannot have peace and joy and blessing, and cannot make progress toward our Canaan. The Israelites learned to look for the movement of the cloud by which the Lord led them, and only once is it recorded that they ever disobeyed its leading—and that once was accompanied by their reverse in battle before their

enemies, which doubtless impressed the lesson. (Num. 14:44, 45.) Similarly, one of the most important lessons for the spiritual Israelite is to learn to look to the Lord for leading in all of life's affairs—never to attempt any undertaking either temporal or spiritual without seeking to note the will of the Lord concerning the same.

The sooner this lesson is learned, the sooner disasters in life will be obviated; nevertheless, we are to remember that the Lord's providences may lead us into trying circumstances and conditions, and not always into pastures green. Yet in these, faith will be tested and developed and faithfulness to the Lord's leading will gradually bring us assurances that all things are working together for our good, for our spiritual welfare—the matters which appear to be favorable and comforting, and the experiences which seem to be rough and distressing. We are not to ask or expect the Lord's leading for our own sakes, nor for any merit or worthiness in us, but, as our Golden Text expresses it, for the Lord's sake—in accordance with his promise to us as spiritual Israelites, the seed of Abraham;—for his own name's sake and work's sake, in that he has purchased the blessing of the world, and is now taking out a people for his name to be his agents in this work of blessing,—for his own name's sake in that he has invited us, promised us the victory if we abide in his love.

FEBRUARY 22

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have—Heb. 13:5.

Selfish prayers are too expensive. Some have gained wealth and lost the Truth and its service; some have gained health, only to find that with it they gained other trials no less severe; some have had their dear ones restored to them from the very jaws of death, only to wish afterward that God had not answered their prayers—or, more correctly, to wish that they had accepted the Lord's wisdom and providences trustfully, contentedly, uncomplainingly. ... Spiritual Israel should use wisely such things as are within their reach, accepting all as God's gifts with thanksgiving; but their petitions should be for spiritual gifts, including *patient endurance* and *heart contentment*—Z '02, 250 (R 3061).

For the Christian's life to be one of covetousness not only would make him selfish but also would prompt him to inflict injury upon others; therefore, it is not a quality to be cultivated in one whose highest aim is to give up all things for others' good. The spirit of contentment with what we have will prove a wholesome restraint upon the disposition of covetousness—P '34, 15.

Parallel passages: Ex. 18:21; 20:17; Job 31:24, 25, 28; Psa. 10:3; 119:36; Prov. 11:24; 21:25, 26; 23:4, 5; 30:8; Isa. 5:8; Matt. 6:19-21, 24, 25, 31-33; 16:26; 1 Tim. 6:6-10; Psa. 37:16; Prov. 16:8; 17:1; Eccles. 4:6; 1 Cor. 7:17, 20-22, 24; Phil. 4:11, 12.

Hymns: 145, 22, 60, 94, 170, 321, 322.

Poems of Dawn, 278: *This Too Will Pass!*

Tower Reading: Z '11, 349 (R 4876).

Questions: Was I covetous or contented this week? Why? Under what circumstances? With what results?

THIS TOO WILL PASS!

POOR heart, break not, though cruel be thy wound—
This too will pass!

The weariest day will end in sunset light,
And dawn must follow e'en the darkest night!

Nor drink too deeply of Joy's honeyed cup—
This too will pass!
Caressing hands will lose their loving touch,
And words mean nothing, that once meant so much.

Ah, then, whate'er thy state, seek thou *content*—
This will not pass!

True rest is found in God, He knows and cares.
His heart of love thy every sorrow shares!

R4876: COVETOUS CONVERSATION

"Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have."—Heb. 13:5.

THE Authorized Version of the Bible uses the word *conversation* in the broad sense of *conduct*, including, not only the words, but the looks and the acts of life. The force of the text, therefore, is, Let your conduct be without covetousness. How could a covetous thought affect our conduct? As some see others possessed of larger wealth or larger opportunities in the service of the Lord, of better conveniences than they possess, or who are better looking than themselves, etc., they have a spirit, or disposition, of covetousness, dissatisfaction with what Divine providence has shaped for them.

When we say, "what Divine providence has shaped for them," we do not mean that one should make no endeavor for advancement. If a person is happy, he should still strive to attain to something more than he possesses. A certain amount of ambition is laudable. The ambition against which the Apostle is speaking is that of a dissatisfied heart, mind, overlooking the blessings already possessed and desiring the things that he has not. Rather, such a one should say, God could grant greater blessings to me if He chose. I am His child and what, therefore, He grants me in the way of reward for my endeavors must be all right. I shall not envy others their possessions; but I shall wait for the Lord and believe that what He gives me is best for me, and much better than anything I could carve out for myself.

Covetousness is a desire to have, keep, enjoy—especially applied to something that belongs to another and which we do not possess. The principle of covetousness is a principle of *selfish desire*. It may manifest itself in two ways: First, when it extends to another man's goods; and, second, when it pertains to things already in our possession. This is specially true of Christians, who have given themselves and all they have to the Lord. From the moment of such consecration all the powers possessed or to be possessed belong to the Lord; and to seek to use these for one's self and to refuse to use them in the service of the Lord would be holding back what belongs to the Lord according to our own arrangement with Him. What distribution should be made of whatever one may have, as the Lord's steward, is to be left to the individual himself. Under some very special conditions another might give counsel, in the way of helping a brother to do a service which he was apparently overlooking, or respecting an element of character which the brother was evidently cultivating, contrary to the spirit of his covenant of sacrifice.

Some of the Lord's dear children fail to realize their privileges of (1) sacrifice, and (2) the cultivation of the spirit of contentment and generosity. There are some who, after being well fed on spiritual manna, permit a selfish craving or a covetous spirit to interrupt their fellowship with the Lord to some extent, hankering for earthly, fleshly, good things,

forgetting the wisdom of their Leader, the Lord, and that His love, which has thus far delivered them and fed and led them, is still with them, the same as ever. Sometimes the covetousness is a repining against their lot in life, a desire for more ease and comfort and wealth and social influence than are within reach. Sometimes it is a protest against their share of the aches and pains of the groaning creation and their inability to get rid of these. Sometimes it is a protest against the illness and death of a loved one.

How unwise! Should not those who have been fed on the spiritual manna realize that all of Spiritual Israel's affairs are under the Lord's special supervision? Should they not remember that "He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men," but *for their good?* (Lam. 3:33; Heb. 12:10.) Ah! some have found that the prayers of murmurers, even when answered, have brought unexpected drawbacks.

Covetous (selfish) prayers are too expensive. Some have gained wealth and lost the Truth and its service. Some have gained health only to find that with it they gained trials no less severe. Some have had their dear ones restored to them from the very jaws of death, only to wish afterwards that God had not answered their payers, or more correctly, to wish that they had accepted the Lord's wisdom and providences trustfully, contentedly, uncomplainingly. Spiritual Israel should use wisely such things as are within their reach, accepting all as God's gifts with thanksgiving. Their petitions should be for spiritual gifts, including *patient endurance* and *heart contentment*, accompanied with heartfelt thanks for blessings already received.

FEBRUARY 23

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye—Psa. 32:8.

One of the most important lessons for the spiritual Israelite to learn is to look to the Lord for leading in all of life's affairs—never to attempt any undertaking, either temporal or spiritual, without seeking to note the will of the Lord concerning the same. ... We are marching toward Canaan and know that other experiences are due us and must be undergone ere we are to inherit the promises. The lesson for us is prompt and thorough obedience to the Lord's leadings without murmurings—with joyfulness; and this can only be expected on the part of those who have learned the lessons previously given them, and above all the lesson of faith, confidence in the Lord's power and goodness and faithfulness—Z '02, 251, 249 (R 3062, 3061).

Our Heavenly Father trains His children in their course of life. Three means are used whereby He gives the instruction. The primary one is His Word, whereby He enlightens their minds and guides their hearts. The secondary one is His Spirit, whereby He energizes them in knowledge, grace and service. The tertiary one is His providences, amid which they are given the opportunities through the exercise of their various qualities of heart and mind to develop their characters by the power and along the lines of His Word. Thus His wisdom guides them in their conduct—P '33, 16.

Parallel passages: Ex. 13:21; 15:13; 33:13-15; Psa. 23:2, 3; 25:5, 8, 9; 27:11; 31:3; 48:14; 73:24; 78:52; 107:7; 139:9, 10, 24; Prov. 8:20; Isa. 40:11; 42:16; 48:17; 54:13; Luke 1:79; John 10:3, 4; 16:13.

Hymns: 87, 293, 46, 63, 11, 110, 99.
Poems of Dawn, 122: *Divine Guidance*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 223 (R 4858).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What helps and hindrances accompanied them? How did they affect me?

DIVINE GUIDANCE

LORD, when I strive to serve Thee most,
Yet toil in vain;
When I can see but labor lost,
Instead of gain;

When plans fall out another way
From what seems best,
And failure comes though I obey
Thy clear behest;

When hopes whereon I dare to lean
Thou dost deny;
When Thou forbiddest me to glean
The fields near by;

When fairest prospects, opening wide
Before mine eyes,
Thou wallest in on every side,
And mountains rise

That faith seems powerless to remove—
Then, dearest Lord,
Draw near to me, draw near and prove
Thy written Word!

That Thou in all things dost ordain
Thy children's good;
That joy shall be the fruit of pain,
When understood.

I know, and yet—O, slow of heart—
But half believe;
And when I fail, in secret smart,
And fret and grieve,

Fill me with faith's complete content
In Thee, O, lord,
And make me willing to be spent
Without reward—

Of earthly sort, but heavenly gain—
To seek alone
For other's good, by toil and pain,
Not for mine own.

And when my failures cast me down,
Make me to rest,
In glorious hope of victor's crown,
Forever blest.

I would not look at "things behind"
With wistful eye;
Nor seek in earthly things to find
A comfort nigh.

The weary sea-bird goes to sleep

On tossing waves,
Untroubled by the storm, the deep,
In trust that saves.

It is the hollow of Thy hand
That shapes its nest;
So, though I may not understand,
Make me to rest.

R4858: GUIDED BY GOD'S EYE

"I will guide thee with Mine eye."—Psa. 32:8.

THE EYE is one of the most important organs of the body with which to give expression to the feelings. Either anger or pleasure are usually expressed by this means. One thought which we may take from the text is that one may be so desirous of doing the Divine will that he will be continually on the alert to please, just as a dutiful child, being on the alert to do the will of the parent, would look at the parent's eye, not waiting for the rod. So all of God's dear children of the Church should be looking unto Jesus for the expression of the Father's will concerning them. They look to Jesus as the Author of their faith and the One who shall be the Finisher of it. They look to Him as the great Counselor and Guide of life. As we sometimes sing:

"Oh, let no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes!"

Another thought is that as the eye is the symbol of wisdom, so God guides all things in wisdom. He sees to it that His children receive the necessary counsel, the necessary aid. Since He is the All-Wise One, nothing can escape His attention. Still another thought is that as we recognize the Divine purpose, the Divine will, the Divine outworking of that will, we see that in the present time God is not trying to save the world, but only "the called," "the elect," who are obedient in sacrifice. All who are of the First-Borns should seek to follow the same course as God, to be co-workers with Him. They should have no will of their own, but do the Father's will.

One of the most important lessons for the spiritual Israelite to learn is to look to the Lord for leading in all of life's affairs—never to attempt any undertaking, either temporal or spiritual, without seeking to note the will of the Lord concerning it. We are marching toward the antitypical Canaan and know that other experiences are due us and must be undergone ere we can inherit the promises. The lesson for us is prompt and thorough obedience to the Lord's leadings without murmurings—with joyfulness; and this can be expected only on the part of those who have learned the lessons previously given them, and above all, the lesson of faith—confidence in the Lord's power and goodness and faithfulness.

FEBRUARY 24

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit—Rom. 8:3, 4.

What comfort and consolation are in these assurances! These are wonderful words of life, indeed! They inspire us with hope. If God will accept perfect heart-intentions, as instead of the absolute perfection of the flesh, then indeed we have hope of attaining to the standard which He has marked for us, the standard of perfection. ... We can walk *after* the Spirit, though, so far as our mortal bodies are concerned, we cannot walk *up to* the Spirit's requirements. Our minds can walk up to the Spirit, our intentions can be perfect; and this is what our Heavenly Father seeks in us, *perfection of intention—Z '02, 248 (R 3060).*

On account of the fall our physical, mental, moral and religious faculties are imperfect, and we are unable to fulfill the Law, which is the measure of a perfect man's ability; but Christ's sacrifice on our behalf furnishes us in faith a robe of righteousness, which covers all our sins of weakness and ignorance. These thus not counting against us, we can in the new heart, mind and will fulfill the righteousness of the Law, inasmuch as we walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit—P '27, 15, 16.

Parallel passages: Acts 13:39; Rom. 3:20; 7:5-11; 10:4; Gal. 2:16; 4:4, 5; Heb. 7:18; 10:1, 2; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 5:16, 25; Titus 2:11, 12.

Hymns: 5, 9, 15, 54, 124, 187, 246.

Poems of Dawn, 89: *Filled with Christ's Fulness.*

Tower Reading: Z '12, 239 (R 5070).

Questions: Have I this week trusted in the finished work of Christ? How? Why? How did it affect me?

FILLED WITH CHRIST'S FULNESS

JESUS, my Lord, Thou art my life,
My rest in labor, strength in strife;
Thy love begets my love of Thee;
Thy fullness that which filleth me.

Long, long I struggled ere I knew
My struggling vain, my life untrue.
I sought by efforts of mine own
What is the gift of Christ alone.

I prayed, and wrestled in my prayer,

I wrought, but self was ever there;
Joy never came, nor rest, nor peace,
Nor faith, nor hope, nor love's increase.

Mine effort vain, my weakness learned,
Weary, from self to Christ I turned,
Content to let His fulness be
An unbought fulness unto me.

Life's heavenly secret was revealed—
In Christ all riches are concealed.
We try and fail; we ask, He gives,
And in His rest our spirit lives.

O peaceful rest! O Life Divine!
Mine efforts cannot make Thee mine.
I yield my sinful heart to Thee.
And in Thy love Thou fillest me.

R5070: THE LAW MAGNIFIED AND MADE HONORABLE

"The Lord will magnify the Law and make it honorable."—Isa. 42:21.

"WHERE THERE IS NO LAW there is *no transgression*" (Rom. 4:15), would seem to be an axiom—a self-evident truth. *No one could transgress a law that was not given to him, that was not applicable to him.* In his discussion of the Jewish view of the Mosaic Law, St. Paul used this statement to show that the Jews misunderstood the matter. They had the thought that because God had given them the Law at Mt. Sinai, they were justified in God's sight by that Law. But *receiving* a Law is not *keeping* that Law. Therefore, the Apostle shows them that by the deeds of the Law no flesh could be justified in God's sight.—Rom. 3:20.

Continuing the argument a little further, St. Paul shows that the entire human race was once in God's favor, as represented in Adam before sin entered. While the race was in that condition of perfection mankind was *just* before God. But when sin entered, it brought the penalty of alienation from God and of death. Thenceforth the human race was dead in trespasses and in sin, having no right to everlasting life. In that condition God did not give mankind a law, but permitted the world to go without law up to the time of Moses. And even in the time of Moses God did not give the Law to the whole world, but only to the Jewish nation. If Israel had been able to keep the Law that was given to them at Mt. Sinai, they would have been a living nation—not a dying nation, as the other nations are.

The Apostle proceeds to say that the commandment, which was ordained to life, Israel found to be unto death. (Rom. 7:10.) A man cannot be justified by receiving the Law, but

by keeping the Law. The rest of the world were less condemned than the Jews, for, says the Apostle, God did not give them that Law and they never came under the penalty of that Law. So, then, Israel found the Law to work death; and they were under more condemnation than were any other people in the world; for they were condemned, not only in Adam, but also by failure to keep the Law. By the Law Covenant given on Mt. Sinai, they were lifted out of the Adamic condemnation and put on trial afresh; and when they failed to keep that Law, they had a second condemnation put upon them.

St. Paul is here demonstrating the mistake of thinking that the Law Covenant gave Israel a special immunity from condemnation. Then he shows that there are some Gentiles who have never come under the Law Covenant, as did the Jew, but who, nevertheless, show a work of progress, which the Jew had not done; for these Gentiles show a law of love ruling in their hearts. In some respects they judge themselves, and in other respects their consciences excuse or accuse them.

GOD'S LAW ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN MAN'S HEART

The Apostle says that since the Jews are condemned by the Law given at Mt. Sinai, and since the rest of the world recognize by their consciences that they are condemned, then the whole world stands guilty in God's sight. What then is that which condemns the Gentiles? The answer is, the original Law of God remaining in their hearts, though marred by the fall.

God created our first parents in such a condition of perfection that the Law of God was clear, or manifest, to them instinctively. Now, because of the fall, if a man were to use his moral perceptions alone, one man might say that a thing is wrong, and another might say that it is right; each would be guided by his own mind, his own conscience. St. Paul's argument is that no matter how fallen a man may be, he still has so much of the original Law in his heart that his conscience will either accuse him of wrong-doing or excuse his conduct; and unless extremely degraded he will know that it is wrong to steal or to take human life.

To whatever extent a man retains this original Law of God to that extent he is responsible. No one can sufficiently excuse himself so as to say that he is worthy of eternal life. The Jew could not claim that he had kept the Law, for his atonement for sin was an acknowledgment that he had failed to do so; and the Gentile's conscience testified to his unworthiness. Therefore, neither was deserving of eternal life. Continuing his argument the Apostle explains that none of the fallen race can obtain eternal life except by the way that God has provided; and that way is in Christ alone. By the Divine arrangement Christ, who was perfect, was made flesh and gave Himself on behalf of Adam and his race, so that God can be just and still be the Justifier of him who believes in Jesus.—Rom. 3:26.

Neither Jew nor Gentile can have eternal life except as the result of faith in Jesus Christ. The Apostle tells us that we cannot *merit* eternal life, but that we must do all in our power to manifest that if we were perfect we would keep God's Law, and that in

proportion as we know the Divine will, the Divine Law, we should *prove* our desire to be in harmony with God by doing His will to the best of our ability. The merit of Christ will off-set, compensate for, the weaknesses of the flesh through heredity, and ultimately we shall attain to full perfection. But none except those who show their willingness to keep the Law will reach this perfection; they must be willing to spare no efforts to keep that Law, so far as in them lies.

TWO CLASSES RELEASED FROM ADAMIC CONDEMNATION

"Where no Law is there is no transgression," for "sin is not imputed when there is no Law." (Rom. 4:15; 5:13.) The world has not yet come under individual condemnation; for the world has not yet been placed under Divine Law. Why not? Up to the present time the world is under the Adamic sentence, and only those who are lifted out of that condemnation can come under another sentence. The whole world was condemned to death under Father Adam, and mankind cannot be sentenced again until they get out from under the first condemnation. The only ones who have, in any sense of the word, been released from this Adamic condemnation are two classes; the Natural Israelites and the Spiritual Israelites. The Jews could not be tried for life or death without a release in one form or another from the Adamic condemnation. This release they obtained by the Law Covenant; but it was only typical, for the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin.—Heb. 10:4.

The only ones who have been actually released are those Jews who came under the Covenant of sacrifice, the Covenant which began with the Gospel Age with Christ, and those Gentiles who have entered into this Covenant relationship with Christ. As many of these as have entered into this relationship are on trial before Divine Law, and subject to eternal life or eternal death under that Law. If obedient to that Law they will get eternal life. If disobedient to that Law of the spirit of life, and if they wilfully sin after having been begotten of the Spirit, they will get death.

In the case of the Jew it would be the Second Death if their Law Covenant had been the full and complete Covenant which God intended for them. But it was not; it was merely a tentative Covenant to give them a tentative offer of eternal life; it was simply a typical Covenant. The real one is that which God intended should come in the New Covenant. "The days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt" (Jer. 31:31, 32); God will make a New Covenant with them. He will take away the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them a heart of flesh, that they may keep His statutes and ordinances and do them (Ezek. 11:19), under this New Covenant—the real Law Covenant.

Under that real Law Covenant every Jew will have the fullest opportunity of coming into harmony with God. And the basis of that harmony will be the "better sacrifices" than the typical ones, which Moses offered. The great Mediator will be the Messiah—Christ the Head and the Church His Body. And that great Mediator has the basis of His power in

the fact that *He has provided* the "better sacrifices." He provided first His own sacrifice; and during the Gospel Age He has been providing other sacrifices—those who come unto the Father by Him.

THE LAW AN INDICATION OF GOD'S WILL

The Church of this Gospel Age is not under the Jewish Law Covenant; for that Law Covenant was given to the Jew and not to the Gentile nor to the Christian Church. We are not to speak of ourselves as "Gentiles" or as "Jews," but as the *Church of God*. God has made a different Covenant with us; it is spoken of as a Covenant of sacrifice: "Gather My saints together unto Me; those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) This Covenant has been made individually with the entire Church of Christ.

Shall we say, then, that the Gospel Church is without a Law? By no means! We are not under that Law Covenant—the Covenant which demands of us to keep that Law and which binds us to keep it. But we are under a Covenant of *Grace*—a Covenant which makes special provision for us—for our inability to do perfectly. Nevertheless we are still under Divine Law. Every intelligent creature is under Divine Law. To the extent of her knowledge the Church will be responsible to the Law of God.

How may we know the Law of God? We may know of it in part by the Jewish Law and the Ten Commandments. Do we ignore the Ten Commandments? By no means. We appreciate them as showing us the Law of God. It is one thing to strive to keep them in mind, in spirit, and a totally different thing to keep them inviolate, as those under the Law covenanted to do; for whoever breaks *one* of the commandments breaks them *all*. (James 2:10.) We are therefore not under the Law, but under grace. (Rom. 6:14.) That same Law which God gave to Israel, so beautifully represented on tables of stone, is not over us; but the spirit of that Law is applicable to us. St. Paul says that the righteousness of the Law, the true keeping of the Law, is fulfilled in us, the Gospel Church, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.—Rom. 8:4.

With the Gospel Church God is dealing differently from the manner in which he dealt with the Jewish people. God's arrangement with the Jews was that they should keep that Law both in letter and in spirit, or else they would be condemned. His arrangement with the Gospel Church is that they should fulfil that Law to the best of their ability, and that the merit of Christ will make up for their deficiency. While we of the Gospel Church would like to keep the Law we are as unable to keep it, as were the Jews, on account of the weakness of the flesh. Every Christian should feel that he is strictly under obligations to the Divine Law more than are those who are not Christians, because of his greater enlightenment in Divine things, in the instructions of Christ and the Apostles and of the Holy Spirit. Not only is he to seek to live up to the requirements of the Law, but he covenants to do *much more*. He covenants to sacrifice even those rights which he would have under the Law, and to present his body a sacrifice, not even calling for his own rights under the Law.

OBEDIENCE TO THE EXTENT OF ABILITY

We keep the spirit of the Ten Commandments because it is the spirit of righteousness, the Spirit of God. We have become God's children; and having His Spirit, we are to do those things which are pleasing to Him. If, therefore, we can from the Ten Commandments learn what things are pleasing to Him, then they are lessons that we should learn. If any other thing shows us what is pleasing to God, we are to do it. But we are not *under* the Law Covenant. We do not hope for eternal life by keeping it. God's arrangement for us is that being obedient to the extent of our ability and having the *spirit* of the Law in our hearts, we are counted as perfect in His sight and will receive His blessing.

Some of the Jews thought that they kept the Ten Commandments, yet to their surprise they did not get eternal life. The teachings of Jesus and the Apostles show us that every one of the commandments of the Law had a deeper meaning than the Jews could discern, and that their failure to perceive the spirit of the Law was one of the reasons why they could not get eternal life. Take the commandment which says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." Some people really have another god *in their hearts*; some idolize their husbands; with others their wives have the first place; with some it is their stocks and bonds. This is idolatry.

The Scriptures tell us that the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," has a still deeper signification than to take life. He who is angry with his brother, he who would like the opportunity to kill and who abstains from so doing merely because of fear, is in his heart a murderer. Similarly, the Master says, He that looks upon a woman to lust after her commits adultery in his heart; he is restrained only because of lack of opportunity.

When we begin to get this deeper view of the teachings of the Ten Commandments we see how the Lord magnified the Law and made it honorable. (Isa. 42:21.) But the fact that Jesus was able to keep the Law shows that God did not give an unjust Law; that it could be kept; that the weakness was in the fallen condition of humanity, and not in the Law.

THE SABBATH OF FAITH IN JESUS' FINISHED WORK

Now as these other commandments have a higher and deeper meaning than that which appears upon the surface, so also has the Fourth Commandment, which relates to the Sabbath Day. The Apostle Paul gives us the key to this higher meaning when he says that this Seventh Day typifies the *rest of faith* for the people of God. (Heb. 4:9, 10.) Whoever *abides in Christ* is a Sabbath-keeper, and those who do not abide in Him lose this rest and thus fail to be Sabbath-keepers. There is a still further expansion of the Sabbath in its typical significance to the Thousand-Year Day. Then humanity will be at rest from Satan, from sin, from the trials, besetments and difficulties of the present time; and all mankind will have an opportunity of entering into this rest. The Church will enter into it first, in her resurrection. Next the Jew will enter into that rest, when he shall understand God's plan and become the recipient of God's blessing and eternal favors in the Millennial Day; and finally, before its close, all the world will come under its blessed influences. This was the promise of God to Abraham when He said, "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the

families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3.) They will be blessed in the wonderful provisions of that great Sabbath Day.

The Fourth Commandment was never given to us, and we are *not* enjoined to keep the seventh day either in the letter or in the spirit. The Sabbath Day was never given to the Church. A higher thought than that of physical rest is given to us. God has provided for us a *rest of faith* in Christ's finished work. We may enjoy our rest seven days of the week, and every day in the year. If we begin to appreciate that thought we have a rest about which the Jew knows nothing. This is an earnest of the future when we shall be through with all our difficulties and shall remain ever in the rest of God.

SUNDAY AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE NEW ORDER OF EVENTS

We are not under commandments ourselves in God's sight; we are not under obligation to keep any day of the week. Why do we observe a Sabbath? Because of our own volition. The Law of this land provides for the keeping of Sunday. We are glad that the Law makes this provision for a quiet day once a week. We are pleased to have it so, and would not have any objection if there were two Sundays each week. We do think that the day chosen is a beautiful reminder of our Lord's resurrection. It is also a very fine illustration of the new order of things so soon to be established; and it is a very appropriate day for us. As for the world, quite probably, under the New Covenant there will be a day set specially for them in which they will rest from labors, etc. Perhaps it will be the seventh day.

SONS NOT UNDER LAW OF SERVANTS

It is nowhere said that Christians are to keep both the spirit and letter of the Ten Commandments. If it were so stated, we would be under that Law as were the Jews, who although bound by their Covenant to keep every jot and tittle of the Law, could do no more than to observe the *spirit* of the Law and to endeavor to keep, so far as possible, the letter also.

Christians are under grace; for they are sons of God by adoption. A son has many privileges which a servant does not have. To illustrate: Suppose we had been adopted into a millionaire's family. Upon going to the new home, as we look around we notice certain inscriptions over doorways; as, for instance, "Servants' Entrance," "Tradesmen's Entrance," "Servants' Washroom," "Servants' Quarters," etc. Upon further observation we discover various rules put up, regulating the duties and affairs of the servants in general. These we read, and thereby gain information as to the will of our kind friend. We ask ourself, "Do I come under this classification? No, for I have been adopted into the family. These are not for me. Yet, from these instructions I perceive something of the law of the house, but I have duties and privileges far beyond those of a servant; I am a son and have privileges corresponding thereto."

So, the Apostle says, God deals with us as with sons. He has not given us the Ten Commandments. Why not? It would be an insult to give us of His Spirit, His mind, etc., and yet put us under a command which would imply that we had not received His Spirit. It would be quite inconsistent to say to a New Creature, "Do not steal, do not commit murder." The New Creature would not want to steal or to murder. The more we know about the Law given to Israel the more we appreciate it, the better we comprehend the Divine standpoint for everything. So while we may get some good out of that Law given to servants, we realize that it is not a command given to us, although it gives us some idea of what a son should do. Those commands should make us know better what is the Father's will; and thus we are the better able to do that will.

In proportion as we learn to appreciate the Father's will and to copy the principles underlying the Divine Character, we as New Creatures are "changed" from glory to glory of *heart* quality. And thus changed in our hearts, our minds, our wills, our conduct, we become fit or "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."—Col. 1:12.

"THE MYSTERY HIDDEN FROM AGES"

"Wondrous mystery, long concealed,
Unto us has been revealed.
Herald wide the gracious story—
'Christ in you, the hope of glory!"

"Christ in you the world's sore need,
Christ in you the promised Seed.
Canst receive it? Then thou art
Of the Christ, indeed, a part."

FEBRUARY 25

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God—Matt. 4:4.

We are to learn the lesson that a man's life consists not in the abundance of things which he possesses—food and raiment—but that his life, in the fullest, grandest, highest sense, is dependent upon his complete submission to the Divine will—his careful attention to every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God—every admonition, every encouragement, every promise, is necessary to the development of those whom God is now calling to eternal life as heirs with His Son in the Kingdom. Let us then, more and more, as the disciples, pupils, of the Lord Jesus, keep in memory and act upon the suggestion of the words of this text—Z '02, 246, 248 (R 3058).

A man's life consists not in the abundance of the earthly things he enjoys. The things that really count, both in giving and sustaining life, are the teachings of the Word of God. Greatly mistaken, therefore, are those who seek to sustain their lives with sin through earthly things. Since to responsive and obedient hearts the Word of God is spirit and life, it is to them powerful and life-giving—P '32, 15.

Parallel passages: Deut. 8:3; Psa. 17:4; 19:7-11; 43:3; 107:19, 20; 119:11, 14, 24, 25, 28, 41, 54, 69, 72, 77, 81, 92, 93, 103, 144, 159, 173, 174; Isa. 30:21; Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 3:3; Amos 8:11, 12; Matt. 7:24-27; Luke 11:28; John 5:24, 39; 15:3; 20:31; Acts 20:32; 1 Tim. 4:5, 6.

Hymns: 22, 332, 264, 49, 296, 79, 311.

Poems of Dawn, 52: *He Leadeth Me*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 387 (R 4896).

Questions: By what have I been living this week? How? Why? With what results?

"HE LEADETH ME"

IN pastures green? Not always; sometimes He
Who knoweth best, in kindness leadeth me
In weary ways, where heavy shadows be.
Out of the sunshine, warm and soft and bright,
Out of the sunshine into darkest night;
I oft would faint with terror and with fright,
Only for this—I know He holds my hand;
So, whether in the green or desert land,
I trust, although I may not understand.

And by still waters? No, not always so;
Ofttimes the heavy tempests round me blow,

And o'er my soul the waves and billows go.
But when the storm beats loudest, and I cry
Aloud for help, the Master standeth by,
And whispers to my soul, "Lo, it is I!"
Above the tempest wild I hear Him say,
"Beyond this darkness lies the perfect day,
In every path of thine I lead the way."

So, whether on the hill-tops, high and fair,
I dwell, or in the sunless valleys, where
The shadows lie—what matter? He is there.
And more than this, where'er the pathway lead,
He gives to me no helpless, broken reed,
But His own hand, sufficient for my need.
So, where He leads me I can safely go;
And in the blest hereafter I shall know,
Why, in His wisdom, He hath led me so.

R4896: FEEDING ON THE WORDS OF GOD

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."—Matt. 4:4.

WE READ that these words were a part of our Lord's answer to Satan when the Adversary exhorted Him to command the stones to be turned into bread, in order to satisfy His hunger, after fasting forty days in the wilderness. The Lord knew, however, that it would be unlawful for Him thus to use the superhuman power which came to Him as a result of His consecration to the Father's service. That power was not to be used for His flesh. Hence our Lord refused to use His superhuman powers for the gratification of the flesh, even though He hungered. Then Satan suggested, How do you expect to live if you do not exercise your power to live? Our Lord's answer, as we see, was that man shall not live by bread, merely, but by every word, every promise that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Our hope of eternal life, therefore, rests upon that obedience to God which would entitle us to eternal life, according to His arrangement. If our Lord had gratified the flesh He might have satisfied His hunger, but He would have violated His covenant of obedience to God. Whoever would have eternal life must seek to be obedient to God, to all that God has commanded, all to which He has directed the individual. Of course, He might have one command for the angels, another for man, and a third for the Church. But since we find that we are not able to obey perfectly every command of God, we cannot hope for eternal life by perfect obedience to the letter of the Word of God. Even though God has accepted us as His children, we can hope for life only by having the *spirit* of obedience to His Word.

One of the lessons to be learned in the School of Christ is that a "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"—food and raiment, etc.—but that his life, in the fullest, highest, grandest sense, is dependent upon his complete submission to the Divine will. Careful attention to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, to every admonition, every encouragement, every promise, is necessary to the development of those whom God is now calling to eternal life as joint-heirs with His Son in the Kingdom. Let us, then, more and more, as the disciples of the Lord Jesus, keep in memory the words of the text, and act upon them.

LIVE BY EVERY WORD FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD

But how is it possible for us to live by the words that proceed out of the mouth of God? What did Jesus mean? How can God's words give life?

He meant that all hope of attaining eternal life depends upon God—upon the Divine Plan and its promises. Looking into these promises we can see distinctly that the Divine Plan, dating from before the foundation of the world, is that all of God's creatures, created in His likeness and abiding in faith, love and obedience in harmony with Him, shall have life everlasting. This is God's Word upon the subject, namely, that *obedience* is the condition of life everlasting. This is, undoubtedly, what our Lord had in mind in the words of our text. He may also have had the thought that He had come into the world upon a special mission, to do the Father's will, and that His understanding from the beginning was that His perfect obedience to the Divine will would insure Him glory, honor and immortality with the Father, eventually; but that any disobedience would mean the forfeiture of Divine favor and would involve the sentence of disobedience—*death*.

Our Lord's prompt decision, therefore, was that to disobey the Father's will and thus to secure bread for the sustenance of His body, would be a great mistake; that food thus secured could sustain life for but a little while; that His better plan would be to trust in the Word of God, the Divine *promise*, that those who love and serve and obey Him shall ultimately come off conquerors and more, and have eternal life with God. And this, our Master's conclusion, is full of instruction for us who are His disciples, seeking to walk in His footsteps.

DISCIPLINE AN EVIDENCE OF SONSHIP

One "word of God" which is very comforting to His children is His assurance of Parental care and discipline. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" (Heb. 12:7.) In this statement the word "chastening" should not be understood as meaning disapproval on the part of our Father, and sin on the part of the individual, but rather instruction. We are guided in the matter by remembering that although our Lord was a Son in whom there was no sin, yet He received, in the Father's providence, as a part of the "cup" poured for Him, various trials, disciplines. All of these experiences were very profitable, showing that the Father loved Him; that the Father had something which He was desirous that our Lord should do

that He would not have been qualified to perform without some of these educational instructions and experiences.

Some disciplines, some chastisements, come as a result of our own mistakes and the natural consequences flowing from those mistakes and the apologies and heartaches which may necessarily follow them. God could save us from these experiences and so seclude and shelter our lives that we would not have anything to tempt us. But such is not His proposition. He wishes us to have these experiences that we may be guided in the right way and learn of our own weaknesses.

If we did not come into contact with various testing experiences we should not know where we are weak. Thus we learn where we can strengthen our characters and how we can be thoroughly developed as New Creatures. The Scriptures speak of our Lord Jesus as "enduring such contradiction of sinners against Himself." (Heb. 12:3.) Our trials, or disciplines, in meeting every opposition that can come to us, should bring more or less of correction in righteousness. Even if this would not mean outward stripes, we, in any event, would have our mental regrets as New Creatures, and thus we would get a form of correction, or discipline. Additionally, the Lord causes His children to come into peculiar trials as an example either to the brethren or to the world. In many of these, whatever the cause, we may understand them to be also corrections or instructions in righteousness.

TRIAL—DISCIPLINE—NECESSARY TO THE PERFECTING OF OUR CHARACTERS

Character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant. At first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love, frequent watering with the showers of His grace, much cultivating with the applied knowledge of His character as a good foundation for faith and inspiration to obedience. Then, when thus far developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. Little by little, as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, beauty and grace, until it is finally developed, perfected, fixed, established, through suffering.

This great work of developing and training character is necessarily a slow and tedious one, and not infrequently it is a painful process. But the Apostle plainly tells us that such things are necessary for the development of steadfast and enduring character. Consider how your own experience has verified this, you who have been for some time under the Lord's special care and leading. How much richer you are for all the lessons of experience, and for the patience and other spirit-fruits that experiences have developed in you!

Although, like the Apostle, you can say that "No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11.) The lessons of experience and discipline have made you stronger. They have increased your faith and drawn you into closer communion and fellowship with the Lord. They have made you

feel better acquainted with Him and enabled you to realize more and more His personal interest in you and His love and care for you. And this in turn has awakened a deeper sense of gratitude and an increasing zeal to manifest that gratitude to Him. This also deepens the sense of fellowship with God, and gives confidence to the hope of final and full acceptance with Him as a son and heir, made worthy through Christ.

OBEDIENCE THE TEST

Another helpful "word of God" is found in I John 2:5: "Whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." Here we have a test by which to determine our development as a New Creature. Only those who have *received* the Word of God can *keep* it, can retain it and comply with its requirements. The text suggests that it is a difficult matter to keep the Word of God. On all sides we hear various reasons why we should retain, hold fast the world, the flesh, rather than that which the Lord's Word holds out to us. There are many allurements to entice us from the "narrow way." Hence these who hold fast to the Word of God are "overcomers."

The Scriptures intimate that to live righteously and godly in this present time will cost us our very lives. "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.) Under present conditions faithfulness means *faithfulness even unto death*. The intimation is that unless we have the love of God we will not undertake to be obedient to His Word; that otherwise we can neither retain the Word of God nor be in accord with it, serving it even unto death.

Our Lord Jesus illustrated the perfection of obedience to the Word of God when He said, "I come to do Thy will, O God!" Everything written in the Book; everything that was God's will, He was glad to do at any cost. Our Lord Jesus could not have reached this degree of submission to the Divine will unless He had had love for the Father. And so with us. Unless we have love for God and the principles of righteousness we cannot continue in this way.

Consequently, only those who so love God that they would surrender life to do His will, are properly keeping His Word. We may say that this condition is reached when we first make consecration, for the heart has given up its will and surrendered itself fully to the Lord—"Not my will, but Thine, be done." All those who are complying with the conditions of self-sacrifice have reached the mark of perfect love. Of course, there is another sense of perfecting which we shall attain in the resurrection. But only those who will keep God's Word by faithfulness even unto death will secure the prize and become partakers of the divine nature.

The *test* is OBEDIENCE. In proportion as we keep the Lord's Word, in like proportion the love of God is perfected in us; for if we have received the mind of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the effect will be to cause us both to will and to do His good pleasure to the extent of our ability. And this ability should be continually on the increase year by year. Although we may not hope to be perfected until we shall be "*changed*" and be granted our new resurrection bodies, nevertheless, we may keep so closely in touch

with the Lord in the spirit of our minds that we may have continual fellowship with Him; and by confessing our faults daily and seeking his forgiveness we may continue to the end of our journey clean from sin, even though we must still acknowledge the infirmities of the flesh, that in our flesh dwelleth no perfection.

THE WORK OF RESURRECTION

A further word from the mouth of God assures us that He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are *dust*—weak, imperfect, dying; and that it is not His purpose that we shall continue always to be in conflict with ourselves—perfect will against imperfect body; but that He has provided that, in the resurrection, we shall have new, perfect bodies, in full accord with our new minds.

He assures us that He is able and willing to do all this and that He purposes to give to His *elect*, bodies of a much higher order than the human—that He will give us spirit bodies—and that of the *highest rank*. We shall have part in the First Resurrection, and will thenceforth be able to do the Father's will perfectly in every respect, as we now show ourselves desirous of doing His will so far as we are able. O gracious provisions! O wonderful words of compassion, inspiring us to wondrous hopes of eternal life and glory! It will be to such as thus overcome in spirit, in faith (I John 5:4), that the Lord will give the final Word of His mouth—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord!"

"A little while; now He has come;
The hour draws on apace—
The blessed hour, the glorious morn,
When we shall see His face.
How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning day!"

FEBRUARY 26

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice—Phil. 4:4.

We cannot have too many rejoicing Christians, nor can they rejoice too much, if they rejoice in the Lord. This rejoicing is not necessarily boisterous, nor of necessity the reverse. It implies serenity, happiness, peace, pleasure of soul, however, and does not mean that noisy demonstration is essential, as some seem mistakenly to think. ... The only ones who can rejoice *always* are those who are living very near to the Lord, and who can feel always their oneness with Him, and that His protection and care are over them, and that His promise is sure, that all things shall work together for their highest welfare, as Christians—Z '03, 7 (R 3127).

The Christian's rejoicing is always to be in the Lord; not in the things of time, but in the things pertaining to eternity; in the matters of consecration, its obligations, its privileges, its lessons, its growth, its precepts and its attainments. A constant counting of our blessings will make us rejoice, joy over and over again. How could it otherwise be than occasion for rejoicing, when we consider our justification, consecration, spirit-energizing, spiritual light, food, growth, victories and service, sonship with God and heirship with Christ!—P '36, 14.

Parallel passages: Deut. 12:18; 1 Sam. 2:1; Job 22:26; Psa. 5:11; 9:2; 32:11; 35:9; 43:4; 63:11; 64:10; 97:11; 104:34; Isa. 29:19; Joel 2:23; Hab. 3:18; Luke 10:21; Rom. 5:2; 12:12; 15:13; 1 Cor. 12:26; Phil. 2:18; 3:1; 1 Thes. 5:16; Heb. 3:6; 1 Pet. 4:13.

Hymns: 248, 94, 100, 149, 179, 203, 204.

Poems of Dawn, 291: *Yet Will I Rejoice in the Lord.*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 291 (R 5544).

Questions: Have I been joyful this week? Why? How? What resulted therefrom?

"YET WILL I REJOICE IN THE LORD"

THOUGH the fig tree shall not blossom,
Though no fruit be in the vines,
Though the fields shall yield no fruitage,
Of the herd there be no signs—
Yet I'll joy in God's salvation,
As my faith in Him reclines.

While the nations reel and stagger,
And the Dove of Peace has fled,
While the land and sea are groaning
'Neath the burden of their dead—
Yet, amide the awful tumult,
I rejoice and lift my head!

Though the vision seem to tarry,
And the waiting time prolong,
Though my faith be sorely tested
In the conflict fierce and strong,
Yet *His grace* will be sufficient,
And the burden of my song!

Though He slay me, I will trust Him,
Though my very heart He break,
For I know with loving wisdom
He has planned the way I take—
Thus my dying breath shall bless Him,
And I'll praise Him when I wake!

R5544: REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you."—Matthew 5:11, 12.

THESE words of our Lord are addressed to His disciples—not merely His Apostles, who were chosen to be His special messengers, but all His followers throughout this Age. A disciple is a pupil—one who is being taught by another. All who are Jesus' disciples are to take the message of our text to themselves. "Blessed are ye," signifies that *persecution* is a favor from God. Consider it as a favor from the Father when men shall revile you—not because of the reviling, but because they shall say these things of you *falsely*, for Christ's sake.

No one would choose naturally to be persecuted or to have evil spoken against him. The Scriptures say that a good name is more to be esteemed than great riches. But if it is for Christ's sake that we suffer, we may know that the Lord will recompense us. In the Lord's arrangement there is to be a time of "evening up" for all we suffer here. Thus we lay up treasure in Heaven. All that we suffer now is storing up for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if borne for Him.

From this standpoint we should really desire persecution. We are not to strive for it, not to endeavor to bring it upon ourselves unnecessarily; but realizing that if we lack persecution we lack one of the evidences of being true disciples of the Lord, we rejoice when in the providence of God it is our portion. Some, it is true, might be reviled for something evil or unwise that they had done. There would be no blessing in such an experience. The blessing comes when the accusation against us is false and is for the Truth's sake.

"All who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution." Hence we should investigate our lives to see whether we have this evidence that we are living godly. The Lord is the "True Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We are the lesser lights. In letting our lights shine faithfully, we shall bring upon ourselves persecution. Let us not imagine that escape from persecution in our own case is the result of superior wisdom or tact on our part. "*All* who will live godly shall suffer persecution," is the promise, the assurance of Scripture. We should not court it, but should desire this evidence of our faithfulness, and should wish to be one of the "blessed" ones, of whom the Master speaks in our text. Then let us ask ourselves, Do I have persecution for Christ's sake? We should make a prayerful examination of our hearts to see whether we are fully loyal to God, to see whether we are letting our light shine out properly. If we lack this proof of sonship, we should inquire, What is the reason?

PERSECUTION A SURE RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS

A sister once said to the Editor, "I have no persecution, no opposition. Everything seems to be going favorably with me." She seemed troubled. We asked the sister to study her own heart to see whether or not she was as faithful as she knew how to be. Upon her reply we said, "Probably you take your persecutions with such grace that you are happy under them." The sister replied that she *would* be happy if she thought that was the case. Then we told her that the only other explanation we could think of was that the Lord was allowing her time to gain strength in order that she might bear what would come to her later. We told her to pray about it. A year or two after we again saw the sister. We recalled the circumstance, and asked her if she had yet had any persecution. She answered, "Oh, yes. I have had plenty of persecution, but I am happy and rejoicing in it!"

It is impossible to rejoice in persecution until we get the right focus on the subject. We cannot do this of ourselves, and need, therefore, to take the matter to the Lord and confer with Him. After we have had "a little talk with Jesus," our faith takes hold on Him. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to be exceeding glad and joyful in persecution and affliction for Christ. The Apostle Peter also declares, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as ... an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters; yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him glorify God on this behalf."—1 Peter 4:14, 15.

The Master was not surprised at the attitude of the chief priests and religious leaders of His day. He knew from the beginning that he would have their opposition and hostility, and He warned His disciples not to expect otherwise. As to the reason why there should be persecution against the Lord and those who faithfully follow in His footsteps, He himself tells us, saying, "The darkness hateth the light." Darkness stands for Satan, for sin, for everything contrary to righteousness. God is represented as the great light, "and in Him is no darkness at all." Light is healing, beneficial, health-giving.

They who are of the darkness hate those who are of the light, because the light reproves the darkness, and the darkness does not like to be reproved. Wherever

righteousness is, it is a rebuke to that which is sinful, dark. Our Lord stood for the light. He represented the Truth, the Heavenly Father. And those who were in darkness were in opposition to Him in proportion to their darkness—some of these knowingly, others in more or less of ignorance. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all them which believe not." Satan has been skilful in putting darkness for light and light for darkness.

IN GOOD CONSCIENCE MANY HAVE OPPOSED LIGHT

The fact that many of the world are in opposition to God and righteousness is not because as a rule they are evil of heart, but because Satan has succeeded in making the darkness seem desirable and the light undesirable. It was thus in the religious systems of Jesus' day, and we believe that it is the same in the religious systems of today. Saul of Tarsus was for a time one of those blinded by Satan. In persecuting the followers of Jesus he verily believed that he was doing God service. But when he was apprehended by the Lord and the light was revealed to him, he proved himself loyal to God.

And so we trust it is with some who today oppose the light and truth now being proclaimed. They are deluded; but if their hearts are fully loyal to the Lord, if they are true to their consecration vows, the Truth will be revealed to them before "the door is shut"; for "ye, brethren, are not in darkness; ye are the children of light." "The wise shall understand." Soon the knowledge of the Truth will come to the "foolish virgins," and they will wash their soiled robes in the blood of Christ—during the great tribulation shortly to come to the whole world. And soon, too, the light of the knowledge of God is to fill the whole earth. But so long as Satan is "the Prince of this world," and there are those in the world who have his spirit, and those who are followers of the Lord and have His spirit, just so long must there be conflict.

The opposition of the darkness to the light may be manifested in different ways. In the days of our Lord and the Apostles there were persecutions of Christians by Jews. Later, during the long centuries in which the Word of God was neglected and the Truth was obscured by gross errors, there were persecutions of Protestants by Catholics and of Catholics by Protestants and of Jews by both—all because of failure to study the Word of God and to follow its teachings. But very few in these dark times had access to the Word.

Some of the opposition to our Lord was open, and some of it was hidden. Many of the Apostles, like their Master, suffered death by violence; and many of the faithful down through the Gospel Age have suffered violent deaths. At the present time, outward persecution is not sanctioned by law, nor is it tolerated to any great extent.

PRESENT METHODS OF PERSECUTION

Persecutors have all along used the weapon of reviling, slander, saying all manner of evil falsely against those who are God's true people. As the Bible declares, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Today slanderous charges are made and villainous, opprobrious expressions indulged in by opponents of the Truth, and this is the

chief weapon, because the defamers have not the power at present to use open, personal violence. Public sentiment and law would not permit it. But the persecution is of the same brand, the same spirit—merely governed by circumstances and conditions. Those who would say all manner of evil falsely, knowing the charges are false, are the very kind who would crucify or burn at the stake, had they the power. Not being permitted to use personal violence by the present laws and the general sentiment, these are forced to content themselves with bringing all sorts of false charges—seeking to assassinate the reputation and destroy the influence of those who are proclaiming the Truth, the Word of God.

The right attitude of the persecuted ones is indicated in our text. Instead of feeling downcast and discouraged by these experiences, and thinking them strange, evidences that God is against us, we should conclude the very reverse. We should say to ourselves, "This is the same kind of experience that the Lord had, and that His people of the past have had." So, "Marvel not if the world [especially the religious world—the world that hated Him] hate you. Ye know that it hated Me before it hated you," forewarned our Master. So far from being discouraged, we are to rejoice—not that any could rejoice in the persecution for its own sake, for persecution is grievous; but we are to rejoice because "great is your reward in Heaven." What we do not get here of prosperity, we shall get *there*—in the Kingdom.

The Socialists say that they intend to have some of the good things *now!* They have not sufficient faith in the future blessings to be willing to wait. But the class addressed in our text are those who have faith in God and His promises, those who are associated with Christ, who understand that the experiences of this time are working out for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and they are content to await God's time. These are rejoicing in their hearts, realizing that they are enduring for righteousness' sake, that they are on the side of God, the side of right, the side of Truth, and realizing that these afflictions are only momentary, as it were; for the present life is but a mere span compared with the eternal life, the glorious immortality, so near at hand, in which we shall receive the blessings promised—joy forever with the Lord.

"FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED"

The Master gave all His followers fair warning that they were not to expect the world to appreciate their attitude. One might well reason that if one gave up sin and adopted a righteous course, the world would esteem him; that all would see the worthiness of his character and would show him special deference. But we must not expect this under the present reign of Sin. It would be a very broad way into the Kingdom, and a great many then might take this course for the favor of man, for the prosperity which it would bring them. The Lord could never demonstrate our fitness for the Kingdom honors under such conditions.

If our great Master was called Beelzebub, we cannot expect that the members of His Household will be treated any better. If He who was perfect was held up to scorn as the Prince of Devils, we may expect similar treatment to be meted out to His followers by

those whom the Adversary has blinded; for we are less able to uphold the standard of righteousness than was He. When His enemies attempted to make His character appear vile in the sight of others, He did not retaliate. Jesus did on proper occasions point out the wrong-doing, the wrong character, of those who were the religious leaders and teachers; but He did not do this in a retaliatory sense. On various occasions He accused them of being untrue, unholy, hypocritical; but He said nothing with a view to injuring them, but with the desire to show them their improper condition of heart, that they might profit by His instruction. He endeavored to help others to see the real condition of these blind leaders of the blind, in order to prevent them from falling into the ditch toward which their leaders were hastening.

THE MASTER'S CRUCIAL TEST

When the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law tried to trump up charges against the Master and to put evil constructions upon what He said, He was patient under all these trying conditions. He submitted to the treatment. It might be asked, Why did God permit His Holy Son to suffer such revilings? Why did He not smite down those who did so wickedly? The answer is that the Father wished to demonstrate the kind of character that was pleasing to Him, and He wished to test the loyalty of Jesus Himself. Would He be submissive and obedient or would He resent these affronts? Would He say, "I will have none of this! I did not come into the world to bear such indignities"? His painful experiences were thus tests of His loyalty to the Father.

Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that He should submit Himself, even unto death, and He had agreed to do this. Now the crucial test was: Would He continue loyal to the Father and carry out His purposes? If so, He would be worthy to be the Messiah, worthy to be the Divine Son of God throughout eternity. Our Lord's experiences had all been foretold in prophecy. In order to fulfil these prophecies it must be that He receive revilings, and He must accept them properly. The Apostle Peter shows that in this He was a worthy Example to all of His followers. As He who was holy, harmless, undefiled, did not seek to have the Father bring upon the revilers some punishment for their misdoings, so this is an example for us; so we should walk in His steps.

SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION STILL HERE

We realize that in our case there is none righteous, not one who is perfect. So we see that our enemies might have some cause to revile us. They might see some of our imperfections and have something that they could pick at and exaggerate. The Apostle Peter says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." As they said all manner of evil against our Lord falsely, we may be sure that they will say all manner of evil falsely against us. And as He bore it patiently, so are we to take patiently everything that comes to us, and to recognize that nothing can possibly happen to us except what the Father will foreknow and permit for our good and for His glory. Our Master left us a portion of His cup that the Father poured for Him. After the cup has all been drained, then will come the glory and the honor—but not now.

We might naturally expect under the changed conditions of the present day, that those who are loyal to God and His Truth would not be maltreated and persecuted as in Jesus' day. But we believe there is another way of viewing the matter. We believe that Jesus, if He were here in the flesh today, would be persecuted and maligned by the worldly-minded, especially in the nominal Church systems. Now, instead of crucifying Him literally, or roasting Him at the stake, they would "roast" Him before the public—a more refined form of persecution—for the spirit of persecution is still here.

In proportion as the followers of Jesus are faithful to the teachings of the Master, in that same proportion they will be out of harmony with everything opposed to the spirit of Christ, and in that same proportion they will be misrepresented and persecuted. In Jesus' day there were plenty of people who did reverence to the Doctors of the Law, who made broad their phylacteries and were very exact as to the letter of the Law, the paying of tithes, etc. Jesus did not seek honor and high position. But He appealed to the people to turn from sin, to walk in His steps, to stand for the Truth as against all unrighteousness and untruth. This appeal touched no responsive chord in the hearts of the worldly-minded.

For this reason, we say that the world has not changed, that the world is still in opposition to the Word and its spirit—particularly the religious world. It is still true, however, as in the days of our Lord in the flesh, that the common people are inclined to hear the Gospel gladly, if not blinded by the religious leaders. But today, as in Jesus' time, many are influenced by the false representations of those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual shepherds. If then the world should come to be in sympathy with us as a people, and should speak well of us, and we should become popular, we should come under the condemnation expressed in the Master's words, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you; for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

THINK IT NOT STRANGE

If, on the contrary, we find that in spite of our best endeavors we are beset by opposition, and are viewed with suspicion, if unworthy constructions are placed upon our unselfish efforts to do good and to carry to others the glorious light which has so blessed our own hearts, let us not be surprised or feel aggrieved; for undoubtedly it is for the same reason that Jesus was opposed.

The spirit of light is the spirit of Christ. The spirit of darkness is of the world. All who have sympathy for that which is evil, or have been so blinded that light appears as darkness, will oppose the light. There has been so much of selfishness in the world, and the people have been so often taken advantage of and duped, that we cannot wonder that they are slow to believe that there are any who can be actuated solely by the motive of blessing their fellows.

It will be to the interest of some to promote priestcraft, and they will, therefore, seek to break down whatever is inimical to their interests. They say, "You are opposing us." We

reply that we are only holding up the light. But they feel that the light that is reaching the people is undermining their influence. We believe that this is the secret of much of the strong opposition to the Truth that is prevailing in some quarters. There is a large number, we believe, who in many respects are good men, but who are fighting the light. We may suppose that they do not realize what they are doing—that unwittingly they are holding on to the ignorance of error, in bondage to Sin and Satan. For this reason they are in antagonism to those who are lifting the veil from before the Lord's people and showing them the character of God, that He is Love. Hence the conflict which is going on.

Another phase of opposition is in respect to financial matters. When we claim that what is given to the Lord should not be obtained by cajoling the people, should not be pulled out of them, worked out of them, extorted from them, but that whatever is given should be a free will, voluntary offering, we are running counter to the custom of centuries. As one Baptist minister said to two of our brethren, "Think of Pastor Russell's advertising 'Seats free and no collections!' Where would *we* be if we did not have collections, or if the people got the thought that it is not the proper thing to pass the collection baskets?"

THE REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE SOON TO VANISH

As our Master was hated *without a cause*, so let this be our experience, as far as possible. Let us see to it that the hatred, the malice, the envy and spirit of murder which is heaped upon us is entirely undeserved. Let it be our earnest endeavor that our lives, as fully as we are able, shall reflect the light of the Truth, shall be as noble and upright as possible in all things; that our words and actions shall glorify the Lord whom we serve, and be eloquent of our love for all mankind, especially for the Household of Faith, whether enlightened by Present Truth as yet or not.

In a very little while, we believe, we shall be glorified with our Lord, if faithful. Then a new Dispensation will be inaugurated; and those who hate us now, chiefly because blinded and misled by the Adversary, will bow their hearts before us as the Anointed of the Lord, and we shall have the blessed privilege of uplifting them, of enlightening and forgiving them, of helping them to attain the perfect image and likeness of our God.

HOW FAR ARE OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED?

The question might arise with some, To what extent does God supervise the experiences of His children? The Master said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" Then how would it be with our cup? Is God not also our Father? Are not we members of Christ? Who, then, but the Father pours our cup? But we know that God is not a participator in any evil thing: how, then, has He anything to do with the evils that come to His people?

We answer, There are all manner of evil forces and influences surrounding us. These evil influences are of Satan and the fallen angels. "Our Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and the fallen angels also go about

seeking how they may assault the children of the Lord. But they can have *no power whatever* against us except as the Father shall permit it. He will permit no evil influence to touch us to our injury as New Creatures, if we keep close to Him. And He will prevent harm or injury to our persons, unless he sees it will outwork good to us, if we are rightly exercised by it.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR OUR GOOD

We have also the opposition of the world. But Satan, the Prince of this world, succeeds in blinding the minds of men, putting error for Truth, and darkness for light, in order to make the way of righteousness and obedience to God appear foolish and undesirable and extreme. Those who have more or less of the spirit of the world bring against the Lord's children in a perfectly natural way, aside from the direct influence of the Evil One and his cohorts, a certain amount of opposition. For instance, our Lord, as the time of His death drew near, was speaking to the Apostles about the great climax of His experiences—that He would go up to Jerusalem, that men would crucify Him, etc. Then Peter said, Lord, Lord, do not allow your mind to run in this channel! You have come to earth to be the great King! Do not let the thought get into your mind that you are to be crucified! And the Lord turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind Me, adversary!" He was the Lord's adversary for the time.

So the world often become adversaries of the children of God in their zeal for what they think the more honorable and advantageous course for us. They urge, Do not take such an extreme view of things, and you will get along better. This is opposition to our consecration vow; and when we resist their well-meant efforts, they seek to thwart us and to bring us back to their views and ideas. The ideal of the world for us as Christians would be, Do good, and work for social uplift, for civic reform; build hospitals, establish orphanages, etc.; but do not spend so much time studying that old Bible, or they will call you an extremist or a heretic. So the world tries sympathetically to influence us. And our Father permits these influences to be brought to bear upon us for our proving. We may be sure that the Lord so supervises our experiences that nothing can come to us in any way whatsoever but what will work for our spiritual good so long as we keep ourselves in His love—so long as we wholly abide in Him. And death itself is powerless to touch us until God's time for us shall have come.

Our flesh is our constant, ever-present adversary. It tries to say, No, no! Do not carry this thing so far! Our flesh is inclined to be in harmony with the world. But our New Creature replies, Jesus walked the way of sacrifice and suffering—and St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John. Then the flesh suggests that *they were special* persons. But we know that the Bible teaches us that the same course is to be followed by all of the Lord's faithful people, and that *all* these will receive persecution.—2 Timothy 3:12.

All will not be crucified, nor will all be thrust in a caldron of boiling oil or be sawn asunder or beheaded. We shall probably not have any of these experiences; but we *must suffer*. So we bid our flesh be silent, and we rejoice in the experiences that we do have;

for "if we suffer [with Him], we shall reign with Him." (2 Timothy 2:12.) Of course we rejoice! And the *world* says that we are going *insane!*

THE PRECIOUS PROMISES OUR STRENGTH

We are to remember, dear brethren—and this is to be a parting thought with us—that nothing can by any means harm us, aside from our Father's will. We are promised that not one hair of our heads shall be hurt—figuratively. And we have the guarantee from the Lord that "all things shall work together for good to those that love God," who put *their trust* in Him. Whatever would not be a blessing to us will not be permitted. Our trials and tribulations, rightly received, are to work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

As we look back, we can see that all who have walked in the narrow way have received persecution. Whoever has been in accord with God has been out of accord with the course of this world. There were the Baptists, and then the Methodists, who in the early days had persecution because they had more light than others. The Presbyterians also for a time, because they had greater light than others, received persecution.

THE NIGHT ALMOST OVER

And we must expect the same today. Persecution will come to those who have the courage of their convictions. The Lord tells us that the anointing that we have received of Him is for the very purpose that we may show forth His praises. (1 Peter 2:9.) We must examine ourselves to see if to any extent we have kept our light under a bushel. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews, St. Paul recounts the sufferings of the Prophets and worthies of old. Some of them were stoned to death, some sawn asunder; they were killed and persecuted in a variety of ways. These godly men endured much for righteousness' sake. "And *all* who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer* persecution."

But the night is almost over. Soon the Lord will rise up. He will stretch forth His hands—His Power—and His children shall be delivered. Soon will come the glorious Reign of Messiah. Then all who will live righteously shall have peace. Altogether, dear friends, our text is very precious—one that should encourage our hearts and help to guide us on our way, and bring us comfort and rejoicing in these closing days of our pilgrimage.

"Our God is love; He loves to hear our voices;
In Christ we share the riches of His grace;
He loves to fold His arms of comfort round us,
And let us nestle in the children's place.

"He loves to answer prayer, though not it may be
In just the way that we should think the best;
But in His own prospective, perfect judgment
He gives the blessings and withholds the rest."

FEBRUARY 27

Let your moderation be known unto all men—Phil. 4:5.

The Greek word here rendered "moderation" seems to carry with it the thought of *reasonableness* (gentleness), and of not exacting our rights too vigorously. Mercy and leniency are certainly qualities required of all who would be in the Kingdom with our Lord. Faithfulness in the performance, as far as possible, of all that justice would require of us, and mercifulness in respect to all our requirements of justice from others should be our rule; so shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven, for He is kind and merciful to the unthankful—Z '03, 7 (R 3128).

True Christianity does not breed fanaticism. Blending as it does in the character wisdom, justice, love and power, it is considerate of others' rights; full of justice and love to them and powerful to hold one in harmony with these principles. It therefore avoids extremes of thought, word and action and takes a middle course in life's affairs, whereby it exercises gentleness, which is the meaning of the word rendered moderation in our text. True to God, it is just to man. It preserves the love of devotion in harmony with respect for others' rights, and is therefore gentle toward all—P '30, 30.

Parallel passages: Isa. 40:11; 42:3; 2 Cor. 10:1; Matt. 11:29; 23:37; 2 Sam. 22:36; Psa. 18:35; Gal. 5:22; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:1; Jas. 3:17; Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:15.

Hymns: 198, 23, 38, 43, 96, 104, 293.

Poems of Dawn, 62: *Our Bow of Promise*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 167 (R 5249).

Questions: Was I gentle this week? Why? Amid what circumstances? What helped or hindered therein? What were its results?

OUR BOW OF PROMISE

A RAVELED rainbow overhead
Lets down to earth its varying thread—
Love's blue, joy's gold; and fair between
Hope's shifting light of emerald green.
On either side in deep relief
A crimson pain, a violet grief.
Wouldst thou amid their gleaming hues
Snatch after those, and these refuse?
Believe, could thine anointed eyes
Follow their lines, and sound the skies,
There where the fadeless glories shine
Thine unseen Savior twists the twine!
And be thou sure what tint soe'er
The broken ray beneath may wear,

It needs them all that, fair and white,
His love may weave the perfect light.

R5249: "LET YOUR MODERATION BE KNOWN"

ST. PAUL urged, "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." (Phil. 4:5.) The latter clause of this exhortation implies that it belongs specially to the closing of this Gospel Age—to the opening of the New Dispensation. Surely we find his words applicable to ourselves—yea, to all mankind!

Surely there never was a time when this counsel of moderation was so much needed as now! The very air seems charged with some exciting, nervous force. Good people, wise people, thoughtful people, seem easily excited and liable to lose their balance at the very suggestion of ridiculous and foolish things. If any of us find such to be our condition, prayer should be made for that Wisdom which cometh from Above, to strengthen, establish and settle our hearts and lives in the will of God.

Excitement over some vagary of interpretation of God's Word may be injurious to ourselves, injurious to those with whom we may have any influence, and injuriously encouraging to the one who propounds the foolish interpretation, whether such interpretation relates to this journal, to its Editor, to the general interests of the Harvest work, or to other matters and persons.

It is unavoidable that politicians, socialists, anarchists and others, attempting to forecast the future respecting themselves and the world, should be carried away with their own ideas, and lose their bearings and talk irrationally. God's people, on the contrary, are to be most moderate in all things. First, they are to recognize their own littleness and inability, and God's greatness and sufficiency. Secondly, they are to remember that God is ordering all the affairs and interests of His Church and also those of the world; and that all things are working together for good to those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose—to be members of His elect Church, the Bride of Christ.—Rom. 8:28-30.

Such consciousness of personal littleness and of Divine greatness should keep us very humble and restrain us from all boastfulness and headiness and "know-it-all-ness." We should be very thankful and very appreciative of what God has made known to us of His gracious purposes, but should strictly avoid every attempt to run before the Lord and to try to rudely break into any feature of His Plan which He has not yet unlocked. We should remember that any knowledge we might gain in advance of God's due time would be injurious to us. As, for instance, Mother Eve, already possessed of knowledge of good, by disobedience broke into and gained a knowledge of evil, in advance of the Divine regulation. The knowledge thus gained was expensive.

AVOID WHATEVER ENGENDERS STRIFE

We urge THE WATCH TOWER readers to exercise moderation in respect to their faith and conduct in all matters—including their chronological forecasts of the future. In our judgment, it is very unwise to spend valuable time and energy in guessing what will take place this year, next year, etc. On the contrary, we should be using the knowledge we possess—doing with our might what our hands find to do. The Adversary undoubtedly would like to attract us away from the things that we already know, and from our privileges of service, into speculation respecting those matters of which we have no knowledge. We urge that the Lord's people stifle curiosity, and desist from prying into things not clearly set forth in God's Word, as being injurious to them, hurtful to the Cause we are all desirous of serving, and tending to hinder the work of grace in our own hearts and in the hearts of those to whom we are the Lord's ambassadors and mouthpieces.

We take this occasion to remind our readers afresh that nowhere in our writings have they found anything positively stated respecting the closing years of this Age, except that we understand that the Gentile Times will close in October 1914, and that consequently we expect, speedily following that date, the transfer of the rulership of earth to the great King of Glory, in a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." We have pointed out that prior to that date a testing work will be in progress in the Church—a time in which the question will be, not so much, who will fall? as, who shall be able to stand in this evil day?—Eph. 6:11.

We did in discussing the Great Pyramid—STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES Series—suggest that possibly a certain measurement of the step at the upper end of the Grand Gallery might signify something important by the end of 1910. But we hope that we made it clear that we built nothing on that suggestion—that it was merely a suggestion, a guess only, but a pointer that the year 1911 might be looked to with interest. We may say, however, that every year now is bound to be full of interest and activity of thought, both to our readers and the entire civilized world. Surely,

"We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time;
In an Age on ages telling,
To be living is sublime!"

Indeed, as respects the date 1914, which we have emphasized, and respecting which we have repeatedly expressed our faith, our conviction—even respecting this date we have never knowingly spoken in infallible terms. We have always admitted that it is a matter of faith and conviction, rather than of absolute knowledge. We invite a careful re-examination of the chapter on chronology, as such a reading will prove helpful, sobering. Therein we point out that if our knowledge were wholly based upon chronology we would be far from certain of the date—that our faith in it is based largely upon the corroboration, interlacing and intermeshing of various prophecies which seem to prove the reliability of the Bible chronology and of our use of it in connection with this date.

"MEDITATE ON THESE THINGS"

We see no reason for disparaging the date and convictions associated with it. Although only one and a half years remain for the accomplishment of great things in the work, we should not forget that in our wonderful day as much can be accomplished in one year as previously would have been accomplished in five years. We urge, moreover, that a knowledge of the times and seasons connected with the Divine Plan of the Ages is helpful, encouraging and inspiring. Nevertheless, such knowledge is not of itself the Gospel. If every date of the chronology and every prophecy were blotted out, we should still be joyful in the Lord, and should still rejoice in His glorious Gospel, of which Jesus and His great Sacrifice constitutes the center, and our promised participation with Him as His members in the blessing of all the families of the earth constitutes the circumference.

This is the Good Tidings of God's grace in Christ—whether the completion of the Church shall be accomplished before 1914 or not. Let us preach the Message of God's grace, and let our hearts be stimulated with God's Message through the Prophets, to the effect that the blessing is nigh at hand. Let our moderation be manifest to all, and let the fact that we know only in part and understand only in part help to keep us humble and moderate in word and deed and thought. Thus we shall best serve the interests of our Master and His Cause, and be most in harmony with the teachings of His Word.

It is our conviction that the great time of trouble will come upon the world through the great Adversary, Satan, and his fallen host. It will not surprise us to find evidences accumulating that the work of breaking down the human will through hypnotism, etc., is all a part of the great scheme by which shortly, gradually, increasingly, power will be exercised upon the minds of mankind—to excite them to unwisdom and to passion. Such of God's children as shall have learned the lessons of His Word along the lines of moderation of thought, rest of heart in the Lord, patient waiting for His time and way, and assisted by the Vow to careful self inspection and government daily, will be greatly blessed and by this means kept from the snare of the Adversary—the hour of temptation is coming upon all that dwell upon the face of the whole earth.—Rev. 3:10.

FEBRUARY 28

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God—Phil. 4:6.

The question may arise, Why will not God give us the things which He sees us to need without our making petition to Him and claiming His promises? Undoubtedly because we need previously to come into the proper attitude of heart to receive His favors and to be advantaged by them. Even as it is, we may be sure that we do not sufficiently appreciate the Divine care bestowed upon us hitherto and now. Even in the attitude of prayer and thanksgiving we probably do not discern one-half of our causes for gratitude, as we shall see them by and by, when we shall know even as we are known—Z '03, 8 (R 3128).

Anxiety fits a Christian as little as distrust of mother-love becomes a child. In the heart where reliance on God reigns, and thankfulness for many favors received sits enthroned, worry can find no lodgment. The child of God knows that for his every need he has a responsive Father, who is ever accessible to His suppliant children; therefore, in telling his needs to his Father, he drives away anxious care—P '35, 15.

Parallel passages: Psa. 127:2; Matt. 6:25-34; 13:22; Luke 21:34; 1 Cor. 7:32, 33; 2 Tim. 2:4; Psa. 37:5; 55:22; Prov. 16:3; Jer. 17:7, 8; Heb. 13:5; 1 Pet. 5:6, 7; Gen. 32:24-29; 1 Sam. 12:23; Psa. 86:3, 6; 130:1, 2; Col. 4:2; Matt. 15:22-28; Luke 18:1-7; 22:44; Rom. 8:26; Eph. 6:18; Heb. 5:7, 8.

Hymns: 313, 56, 57, 35, 99, 106, 239.

Poems of Dawn, 234: *Our Burden Bearer*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 230 (R 5508).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

OUR BURDEN BEARER

THE little sharp vexations,
And the briars that catch and fret,
Why not take all to the Helper,
Who hath never failed us yet?
Tell Him about the heartache,
And tell Him the longings, too;
Tell Him the baffled purpose,
When we scarce know what to do.
Then, leaving all our weakness
With the One divinely strong,
Forget that we bore the burden,
And carry away the song.

R5508: OUR GREAT BURDEN-BEARER

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

THESE COMFORTING words of the Apostle Peter are addressed to the Church of Christ; and all who are of the Lord's people surely realize that there are cares and difficulties of life which are our portion and which are perplexing. These cares of life come also to those who are of the world—to some more and to some less. But they *surely* come to all who are the Lord's children.

The word *care* is used in two different ways. Thinking of the word in the sense of exercising proper thought and giving proper attention to that which is entrusted to us, or concerning which we are responsible, we might be in danger of misunderstanding our text. The word *care*, however, very often has in it the thought of *worry, trouble of mind*; and this is its use by the Apostle in this place. The Apostle Paul also says, "Be careful for nothing"—be worried about nothing, have anxiety about nothing. So we might render the words of St. Peter, "Casting all your *anxiety* upon Him; for He is taking thought for you."

IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS

The Apostle's advice is not that we shall throw off all sense of responsibility, and cease to exercise care in what we do and in respect to our duties and obligations. Surely we all agree that the man or the woman without care for anything, in this proper sense, would be totally unfit for any position in life. We often notice evidences of some one's not having been sufficiently careful. Perhaps the wall paper has been carelessly marred or the furniture scratched; doors are slammed or left swinging when they should be closed for warmth, etc. Some might say, Oh, these are very small matters! But one who is careless, thoughtless, and inattentive to these matters is very likely to be untrustworthy in larger matters.

Personally, it is painful to us to see these things; and undoubtedly it is so to all who exercise proper care. The children of God, His representatives before men, should not go blundering along through the world or needlessly annoying others, whether it be the brethren or people of the world. Our influence for good may be greatly marred by inattention to what might be called little things, but what in reality are not so. There is a trite saying which is full of meaning: "Trifles make perfection; and perfection is no trifle." The Lord's people should be the most careful people in the world.

Our Lord said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much"; and the reverse of the statement would be equally true—that he that is *unfaithful* in that which is least is *unfaithful* also in much. (Luke 16:10.) These little things of every-day life may prove to be more crucial tests of real character than will seemingly larger matters. Little courtesies, little acts of thoughtful consideration for others, how much they mean! How greatly they often affect the happiness of those around us and our own influence as

ambassadors of Christ! So we need to exercise much care and thoughtfulness in regard to our words, our actions and everything with which we have to do. This is not the care that we are to cast upon the Lord for Him to bear. This we are properly to bear ourselves.

OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED BY THE LORD

God is the most *careful* Being in the Universe, we may be sure. He is not *careful*, in the sense in which the word is used in our text—in the sense of worry and unrest of mind—but He is care-full in the right and proper sense. There are cares that come to the Lord's people because they are harassed by the Adversary. These experiences the Lord permits for the very purpose of leading His people to cast their care upon Him, of bringing them closer to Himself, of teaching them patient endurance, of showing them more fully their need of Him, their utter helplessness and wretchedness without Him.

But worries and frettings—anxieties that would hinder us in the Lord's service, that would rob us of our peace in the Lord—should be dropped, not carelessly, however, but intelligently, with the thought that Jesus, our great Burden-bearer, has invited us, yea, urged us, to cast all our care—all that would disturb our peace—upon Him. He will make our burden light and ease our tribulations. This is a rest of faith, and cannot be attained otherwise than through faith in His love, faith in His promises.

OUR FATHER'S CARE FOR HIS CHILDREN

Each day that a Christian lives he should be more reliant upon the Lord. He should realize more fully than before that our Heavenly Father, who has provided for the grass of the field and for the birds of the air, cares far more for His children than for the flowers or for many sparrows, and that He has a Plan also for the world—an arrangement for their blessing, in due time. But *we* have already entered into the blessing of the Lord; we have already become His children, and are His especial care. And "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him"—those that reverence Him.

We cannot be faithful children of God if we are full of worry. Worry is one thing, but proper carefulness is another. We should be more careful every day, and thus be able to fulfil our obligations to the world in general, to our families, to ourselves, to the brethren, and to the Lord—to render our God more effective service.

We are not to be troubled and anxious as to where we are to get our next suit of clothes. We have a suit of clothing for the present, such as the Lord has seen fit to give; and we are to do our best to provide the things needful. If the Lord should never give us apparel as good as many others have, or as rich or dainty food, we should not worry, but be content with whatever His providence arranges for us, and accept it thankfully. He will give what is best—what is for our good as New Creatures. We should not doubt, nor fear that He will not provide for our needs. He knows all about our affairs, and is not unmindful of our welfare. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."

How needful this humility before God, and how consoling and precious this loving assurance! As we go on in this blessed way marked out by our Lord, let us learn more and more fully that we are not to ask anything according to *our* wills, but only that His will may be done in us and for us. His Wisdom is unerring. Let us tell the Lord all about our burdens, great and small, and let us appropriate to ourselves His love and sympathy, applying to our hearts the balm of His Word, of the precious promises which are the heritage of His own, trusting Him that He is both able and willing to supply our every need—yea, that He delights thus to bless us, if we abide in His Love.

"How strong and sweet my Father's care!
The words like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—
'He cares for thee!'

"Then naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me or mine,
Since Thou with tenderness Divine
Dost care for me!"

FEBRUARY 29

God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him—1 John 4:16.

Justice fills the measure full, but love shakes it, presses it down, heaps it up and overflows justice. It is therefore something not to be demanded, nor its lack to be complained of, but to be gratefully appreciated as a favor and to be generously reciprocated. Everyone who craves it at all should crave it in its highest sense—the sense—of admiration and reverence. But this sort of love is the most costly, and the only way to secure it is to manifest that nobility of character which calls it forth from others who are truly noble—Z '02, 266 (R 3070).

The highest characteristic of Jehovah's attributes is love working in harmony with wisdom, justice and power. To dwell in love is to continue in its exercise, subjecting all the faculties of heart and mind to its sway in harmony with wisdom, justice and power. Such dwell in God, because only when self-will is surrendered and God's will is taken instead can such conduct result, and such conduct persisted in fills the heart with the Divine love and thus God by His Spirit dwells in such as so do—P '33, 163.

Parallel passages: Deut. 4:37; Psa. 63:3; 146:8; Jer. 31:3; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 3:1; Psa. 31:23; 73:25, 26; 91:14; Rom. 8:28; John 14:15, 21, 23; 16:27; 1 Cor. 16:22; 2 Cor. 5:14; John 3:34, 35; 15:12, 13; Rom. 12:9, 10; Matt. 5:41-47; 19:19.

Hymns: 39, 95, 114, 198, 165, 194, 166.
Poems of Dawn, 290: *God's Boundless Love*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 421 (R 4917).

Questions: What have been the week's experiences in line with this text? What helped or hindered therein? In what did they result?

GOD'S BOUNDLESS LOVE

COULD we with ink the ocean fill,
Were every blade of grass a quill,
Were all the world of parchment made
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.

R4917: A PRACTICAL SELF-EXAMINATION ON LOVE

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves."

IT SEEMS impossible to describe *Love*, this wonderful quality without which *nothing* is acceptable in the sight of God! The Apostle does not attempt to define Love, but contents himself with giving us some of its manifestations. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it. The fact is that Love, like life and light, is difficult to define; and our best endeavors to comprehend it are along the lines of *its effects*. It is *of God*; it is *god-likeness in the heart*, in the *tongue*, in the *hands*, in the *thoughts*—*supervising* all the human attributes and *seeking to control them*. Where Love is lacking, the results are more or less evil; where Love is present, the results differ according to the *degree* of Love, and are proportionately *good*.

In the Christian an outward manifestation of amiability, meekness, gentleness, patience, etc., is not sufficient, either in God's sight or in his own. These graces must be produced by the spirit of Love, filling and expanding within his own heart. Many of the graces of the Spirit are recognized by the unregenerate and are *imitated as marks of good breeding*, and in many cases are successfully worn as a cloak or mask, covering hearts and sentiments wholly antagonistic to the holy spirit of Love.

The measure of our appreciation of Divine Love will be the measure of our zeal in conforming our characters to the Divine pattern. A naturally rough, uncouth, depraved disposition may require a long time, after the grace of Divine Love enters the heart, before that grace is manifest in all the thoughts and words and acts of the outward man. Others, on the contrary, of more gentle birth and cultured training, may, without the grace of God within, have many of the outward refinements. None but Him who reads the heart is competent, therefore, to judge as to who have and who have not received this grace, and of the degree of its development in their hearts; but each one may judge for himself, and each one begotten of this Holy Spirit, Love, should seek to let its light so shine out, through all the avenues of communication with his fellow-creatures, as to glorify his Father in Heaven and "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light."—I Pet. 2:9.

Amongst the "gifts" of early Apostolic times, prophecy, or oratory, was one highly commended. Knowledge of the mysteries of God was also highly commended, and large faith was reckoned as being amongst the chief of Christian requirements; yet the Apostle declares that if he possessed all of these in their fullest measure, and Love were absent, he would be nothing—a mere cipher—not a member of the New Creation at all, since Love is the very spirit of the begetting to the new nature.

What a wonderful test this is! The Apostle Paul counsels, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Let us each apply the test to himself: Whether I am something or nothing in God's estimation is to be measured by my love for Him, for His brethren, for His cause, for the world in general, and even for my enemies, rather than by my knowledge, or fame, or oratory!

Yet we are not to understand that one could have a knowledge of the deep mysteries of God without having been begotten by the Holy Spirit of Love; for the deep things of God knoweth no man, but by the Spirit of God; but one might lose the spirit before losing the knowledge it brought him. In the measure of character, therefore, we are to put Love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness to and acceptance with the Lord.

LOVE IS THE SECRET OF TRUE POLITENESS

Having given us such a conception of the importance of Love, the Apostle proceeds to describe what it is and what it is not—how it operates and how it does not operate, or conduct itself. Let us each make a practical application of this matter to himself and inquire within:

Have I such a love, especially for the household of faith, as leads me to *suffer considerable and for a long time*, and yet to be *kind*? Am I patient with the weaknesses and imperfections of those who give any evidence of good intentions? Am I patient even with those who are out of the way, realizing that the great Adversary blinds the minds of the masses and remembering that this manifestation of Love was very prominent in our Lord Jesus, who was patient with His opponents?

Am I kind in my methods, seeking to guard my manner and my tones, knowing that they have much to do with every affair of life? Have I *this* mark of Love pervading my *actions and words and thoughts*? Do I *think of and am I considerate of others*? Do I feel and manifest kindness toward them in word, in look, in act? A Christian, above all others, should be kind, courteous, gentle *in the home, in his place of business, in the Church—everywhere*. In proportion as *perfect Love* is attained the constant effort of the heart will be to have every word and act, like the thought which prompts them, full of patience and kindness. With the child of God these qualities are *not to be mere outward adornments, they cannot be*; on the contrary, they are fruits of the Spirit—growths from or results of having come into *fellowship with God*, having learned of Him, *received of His Spirit* of holiness, of Love.

Have I the Love that *"envieth not,"* the Love that is generous, so that I can see others prosper and *rejoice in their prosperity*, even if, for a time, my own affairs be not so prosperous? This is true generosity, the very reverse of jealousy and envy, which spring from a perverted nature. The root of envy is selfishness; *envy will not grow upon the root of Love*. Love rejoices with them that rejoice, in the prosperity of every good word and work, and in the advancement in Christian grace and in the Divine service of all who are actuated by the Divine Spirit.

Have I the Love that is humble, *that "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up"*? the love that tends to modesty, that is not boastful, not lifted up? Have I the Love that would prompt to good deeds, not to be seen of men, but that would do the same if no one saw or knew but God only? that boasts neither of its knowledge nor of its graces, but in humility acknowledges that every good and perfect gift comes from the Father? And do I make return to Him in Love and service for every mercy? Boasting over self-esteem has led

many a man not only into folly, but sometimes into gross sins in his endeavor to make good his boasts. The Spirit of the Lord is the spirit of a sound mind, which not only seeks generously to esteem others, but also soberly to estimate one's self, and not to think too highly of his character and attainments.

Have I the Love which is courteous, "*doth not behave itself unseemly*"? *Pride* is the root out of which grows much of the unseemly conduct, impoliteness, so common to those who think themselves somebody, either intellectually or financially. Politeness has been defined as Love in trifles; courtesy as Love in little things. The secret of politeness is either surface polishing or love in the heart. As Christians we are to have the heart-love which will prompt us to acts of kindness and courtesy, not only in the household of faith, but in our homes and in our dealings with the world.

Have I the Love which is unselfish, which "*seeketh not her own*" interests exclusively, which might even be willing to let some of her own rights be sacrificed in the interests of others? or have I, on the contrary, the selfishness which not only demands my own rights on every occasion, but which demands those rights regardless of the conveniences, comfort and rights of others? To have Love in this particular means that we will be on guard against taking any unjust advantage of others, and will prefer rather to *suffer* a wrong than to *do* a wrong; to suffer an injustice than to do an injustice.

LOVE BEGINS AT HOME

Nothing in this signifies that one should neglect the caring for and providing in every way for those dependent upon him by the ties of nature, in order that he may do good to others. In every sense, "*Love begins at home.*" The proper thought, as we gather it, is that men and women, possessed of the spirit of perfect Love, would not think exclusively of their own interests in any of the affairs of life. Put into exercise, *this* element of Love would have a great influence upon all the affairs of life, *inside* as well as *outside* the *home and family*.

Have I the Love which is good tempered, "*not easily provoked*" to anger—Love that enables me to see both sides of a question, that gives me the spirit of a sound mind, which enables me to perceive that exasperation and violent anger are not only unbecoming but, worse than that, injurious to those toward whom they may be directed, and also injurious in their effect upon my own heart and body?

There may be times when Love will need to be firm, almost to sternness and inflexibility, where principles are involved, where valuable lessons are to be inculcated; and this might come under the head of anger, using that word in a *proper sense*, in regard to a *righteous indignation, exercised for a loving purpose*, for doing good; but it should be exercised *then* only for a time. If *justly angry* we should see to it that we sin not either with our *lips*, or *in our hearts*, in which, at no time, may we entertain any but loving and generous sentiments toward those who are our enemies, or toward those of our friends whom we would assist or instruct or correct.

To be *easily provoked* is to have a *bad temper*, fretfulness, bad humor, touchiness, quickness to take offense. This is wholly contrary to the spirit of Love; and whoever is on the Lord's side and seeking to be pleasing to Him and to attain to an overcomer's position should jealously guard himself against this general besetment of our day. To whatever extent this disposition is fostered, or willingly harbored, or not fought against, it becomes an evidence of a deficiency and imperfection of our development in the Holy Spirit of our Father, and of the *deficiency of our likeness to our Lord Jesus*, our Pattern.

Very few of the evidences of a wrong spirit receive from one's self as much kindness and as many excuses for their continuance as this one. But however much natural depravity and heredity and nervous disorders may tend toward this spirit of fretfulness, taciturnity and touchiness, every heart filled with the Lord's Spirit must oppose this disposition to evil in his flesh, and must wage a good warfare against it.

It will not do to say, "It is my way," for all the "ways" of the fallen nature are bad; and it is the business of the New Creature to overcome the old nature in this as well as other works of the flesh and the Devil. In few ways can we show to our friends and households more than in this the power of the grace of Love. This grace, as it grows, should make every child of God sweet-tempered. In no way can we better show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light than by the exhibition of the spirit of Love in the daily affairs of life.

LOVE THINKS NO EVIL

Have I the spirit of Love which "*thinketh no evil*," which is guileless, not suspicious of evil or looking for faults *in others*, not attributing to them evil motives? Have I the Love which seeks always to interpret the conduct of others charitably, to make all possible allowance for errors in judgment rather than to impugn the motives of the heart? Perfect Love is good intentioned itself; it prefers and, so far as possible, endeavors to view the words and conduct of others from the same standpoint. It does not *treasure up animosities* and *suspicions*, nor *manufacture a chain of circumstantial proofs* of evil intentions out of trivial affairs. "*Faults are thick where Love is thin*" is a very wise proverb.

But where Love passes over offenses and takes no account of them, holding no grudges, this does not mean that Love would treat evil-doers in precisely the same manner that it would treat its friends. It might be proper or even necessary to take some notice of the offenses to the extent of not manifesting the same cordiality as before, but no hatred, malice or strife should be manifested—nothing but kindness and gentleness, leaving the door of opportunity open for a full reconciliation as soon as possible, doing all that *could* be done to promote a reconciliation and evincing a willingness to forgive and forget the wrong.

"LOVE REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY"

Have I the Love that is sincere, that "*rejoiceth not in iniquity* [in-equity], *but rejoiceth in the Truth*"? Are the principles of right and wrong so firmly fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with right, and so out of harmony with the wrong, that I am grieved with evils wherever encountered and sympathize with all who fall into evil or who are beset with temptations? Am I so opposed to the wrong that I would not encourage it even if it brought advantage to me? Am I so in accord with right, with Truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the Truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests?

Every one who is seeking to develop in his heart the Holy Spirit, perfect Love, should guard carefully this point of sincerity of motive as well as uprightness of conduct. The least suggestion of rejoicing at the fall of any person or thing that in any degree represents righteousness or goodness is to be deplored and overcome. Perfect "Love rejoiceth not in iniquity" under any circumstances or conditions and would have no sympathy but only sorrow in the fall of another, even if it should mean his own advancement.

The Love of God, which the Apostle here describes as the spirit of the Lord's people, is a love which is far above all selfishness and is based upon fixed principles which should, *day by day, be more distinctly discerned* and always *firmly adhered to* at any cost. However profitable error might be, Love could take no part in it and could not desire the reward of evil. But it does take pleasure in the Truth—truth upon every subject, and especially in the Truth of Divine revelation, however unpopular the Truth may be; however much persecution its advocacy may involve; however much it may cost the loss of the friendship of this world and of those who are blinded by the god of this world. The spirit of Love has such an affinity for the Truth that it rejoices to share loss, persecution, distress or whatever may come against the Truth or its servants. In the Lord's estimate it is all the same whether we are ashamed of Him or ashamed of His Word; and of all such He declares that He will be ashamed when He comes to be glorified in His saints.

Have I the Love that "*beareth all things*"? that is impregnable against the assaults of evil? that resists evil, impurity, sin and everything that is contrary to Love? that is both able and willing to endure, for the cause of God, reproaches, reproofs, insults, losses, misrepresentations and even death? "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even *your faith*"—the very life and center of which faith is the Holy Spirit of Love for the Lord and for those that are His and, sympathetically, for the world. Perfect Love can bear up under all circumstances and, by God's grace, bring us off conquerors and "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."—I John 5:4; Rom. 8:37.

LOVE IS NOT SUSPICIOUS

Have I the Love that "*believeth all things*"? that is unwilling to impute evil to another unless forced so to do by indisputable evidences? that would rather believe good than evil about everybody? that would take no pleasure in hearing evil, but would be disposed to resent it? Perfect Love is not suspicious, but is, on the contrary, disposed to be trustful. It

acts on the principle that it is better, if necessary, to be deceived a hundred times than to go through life soured by a suspicious mind—far better than to accuse or suspicion even one person unjustly. This is the merciful disposition, as applied to *thoughts*; and of it the Master said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. 5:7.) The unmerciful, evil-thinking mind is father to unmerciful conduct toward others.

Have I the Love that "*hopeth all things*," that perseveres under unfavorable conditions, and continues to hope for and to labor for those who need my assistance? Have I the Love that "*endureth all things*," that continues to hope for the best in regard to all and to strive for the best, and that with perseverance? *Perfect Love is not easily discouraged*. This is the secret of Love's perseverance: having learned of God, and having become a partaker of His holiness, it *trusts in Him* and *hopes undismayed* for the *fulfilment of His gracious Covenant*, however dark the immediate surroundings.

This hopeful element of Love is one of the striking features in the perseverance of the saints, enabling them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Its hopeful quality hinders it from being easily offended, or easily stopped in the work of the Lord. Where others would be discouraged or put to flight, the spirit of Love gives endurance, that we may war a good warfare, and please the Captain of our salvation. *Love's hopefulness knows no despair, for its anchorage enters into that which is beyond the veil, and is firmly fastened to the Rock of Ages*.

Let us, Beloved, with all our getting, get Love—not merely in word but in deed and in truth—the Love whose roots are in the new heart, begotten in us by our Heavenly Father's Love, and exemplified in the words and deeds of our dear Redeemer. All else sought and gained will be but loss and dross unless, with all, we secure LOVE!

MARCH 1

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus—Phil. 4:7.

It is not our own peace that is here referred to. It is the peace of God—the peace which comes to us from a realization of God's power and goodness and willingness to hold us by His right hand as His children. The thought is that this peace stands guard continually, as a sentinel, to challenge every hostile or worrying thought or fear. It keeps the Christian's mind so that he at heart has peace with the Lord, fellowship, communion; and it guards his mind also, his reasoning faculties, instructing him and assuring him respecting the Divine power and wisdom and love—Z '03, 8 (R 3128).

The peace of God is that rest of heart and mind which results from consciousness of harmony with God and God's arrangements. Its being maintained and ruling in the heart amid conditions untoward to the natural man make it surpass all human understanding, and through Christ's office, it guards heart and mind, both from evil and amid and unto good—P '34, 31.

Parallel passages: John 14:1, 27; 16:33; Rom. 5:1; 8:6; Col. 1:20; 3:15; Job 34:29; Psa. 4:8; 25:12, 13; 29:11; 85:8; 119:165; 125:1, 5; Prov. 3:17, 24; Isa. 26:3; 28:12; 32:2, 17, 18; 53:5; 54:13; 57:1, 2, 19; Jer. 33:6; Luke 1:79; 2:14; Acts 10:36.

Hymns: 108, 54, 106, 107, 109, 179, 244.
Poems of Dawn, 303: *Daylight and Darkness*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 397 (R 4898).

Questions: Have I this week had this peace? What helped or hindered it? How did I use it? What resulted from it?

DAYLIGHT AND DARKNESS

I PRAYED to God in the morning,
"Thy yoke is easy, Lord,
And light indeed is Thy burden,
And crystal clear is Thy word,
And I am ready for service,
Whatever Thou wilt," I said,
As blithely I started forward,
The pathway bright ahead.

The night came down with its darkness,
And long indeed was the road,
And I was tired and weary,
And fainting beneath my load.

I lost the words of His promise,
And none of my work was done.
I cried aloud for the daylight,
For a smooth road, and the sun.

Then a voice came out of the shadows,
The voice of my unseen Friend:
"Lo, I am with you always,
Even unto the end."
It took the night and its darkness,
And a long road, rough and dim,
And the faithful care of my Shepherd,
To bring me close to Him.

R4898: THE PEACE OF GOD

"The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." "Great peace have they which love Thy Law: and nothing shall offend them."—Phil. 4:7; Psa. 119:165.

GOD'S LAW represents God's will. All who are right minded, rightly disposed, will rejoice in having God's will well done. Originally, God's will was written in man's nature. After sin had effaced it there, God wrote it upon tables of stone for Israel. It is the righteousness of this Law that Christians obey (the Divine regulations, the Divine requirements, whatever they may be) so far as possible. We delight to do God's will.

To love God's Law, then, would be to appreciate the fact that God has a great purpose; to take delight in finding out what God's will is; and to have full confidence in His Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power. Great peace have all those who so do. They do not understand every dealing of Divine Justice, but their faith holds to the fact that He is too wise to err. Thus they have peace in confiding their interests to Him.

In this text the Apostle differentiates between the mind and the heart. The heart represents the affections. The Apostle urges not only that we should have good feelings in the matter, but that our minds should be at rest. If after we have made a consecration of ourselves to the Lord we should do something to violate our conscience in some respect, we would feel estranged from Him. Then our hearts should know that we might draw near to the Lord again; and we should endeavor by prayer to get back into harmony with God and thus to effect a reconciliation. Our Lord has made provision on our behalf, that we should have an Advocate with the Father. (I John 2:1.) He who appeared in the presence of God for us at first is the same One who ever liveth to make intercession for us. So we come to the Lord through the arrangement which He has made; and we rejoice that we may obtain forgiveness and grace to help in time of need.

The text does not refer to our own peace, but to the peace of God, the peace which comes to us through a realization of God's power, of His goodness and willingness to hold us by His right hand as His children. This peace stands guard continually, as a sentinel, to challenge every hostile or worrying thought or fear. It so keeps the Christian's mind that he at heart has peace with the Lord, fellowship, communion; and it guards his mind also, his reasoning faculties, instructing him and assuring him respecting the Divine power, wisdom and love.

We should make request increasingly for grace and wisdom and the fruits of the Spirit, for opportunities for serving the Lord and the brethren, and for growing more and more into the likeness of God's dear Son. Under these conditions the promised "peace which passeth all understanding" will guard our hearts and our thoughts. Selfishness and ambition would find little room in hearts so filled. Even when in "deep waters" Divine peace can dwell in our hearts and keep them.

The Apostle's thought seems to be that those whom he addresses have come into harmony with God through acceptance of His terms. Turning from all opposition, they have become the children of God through faith, obedience, self-sacrifice and consecration to death. The Apostle urges that God's peace should be in these and should continue. They should be guarded by that peace. The expression, "through Christ Jesus," suggests that, as we entered into this peace through our great Advocate, so we can continue in this peace only by His continuing to be our Advocate; otherwise, through imperfections of the flesh, we would get out of harmony continually.

"Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:16.) Thus as we come daily and say, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," we abide in the peace; for we have this great Advocate. Therefore, this peace abides—a continuing supply of grace through the great Advocate.

MARCH 2

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest [worthy of reverence] ... think on these things—Phil. 4:8.

Whoever sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling himself. Whoever cleanses his thoughts, and avoids exaggeration, *etc.*, is in that degree purifying his mind and his entire character. Nor is it sufficient that we are sure of the truth of matters. We are to test them further, and discern to what extent they are honorable, noble; for, although the Lord has covered the ignoble features of our characters, and proposes to cover them to the end with His own merit, nevertheless we cannot be in sympathy with our fallen condition, but on the contrary must desire true nobility and the highest standards of honor in our hearts, in our thoughts, in all our dealings with our God and with our fellows—Z '03, 9 (R 3129).

The true things are the things of God's Plan. The things worthy of reverence are those which are venerable, sacred, holy and which must be considered in order to act reverentially. The Apostle exhorts the Lord's people to meditation on these things because such meditation will impart and develop true wisdom in the heart and mind—the wisdom which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and of good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy—P '33, 45.

Parallel passages: Ex. 34:6; Psa. 33:4; 91:4; Prov. 3:3; Isa. 65:16; Dan. 4:37; 10:21; Zech. 8:16; John 8:31, 32; 14:6; 17:17; Eph. 4:25; 2 Tim. 2:15; Lev. 19:35, 36; Deut. 25:13-16; Psa. 24:4; Isa. 33:15, 16; Acts 24:16; 2 Cor. 4:1, 2; 8:21; 1 Thes. 4:11, 12; Heb. 13:18; 1 Pet. 2:12.

Hymns: 22, 49, 296, 130, 136, 145, 315.

Poems of Dawn, 249: *Light and Truth*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 183 (R 4838).

Questions: Have I this week meditated on the true and honorable things? How? Why? With what results?

LIGHT AND TRUTH

THE light is ever silent;
It sparkles on morn's million gems of
dew,
It flings itself into the shower of noon,
It weaves its gold into the cloud of sunset,
Yet not a sound is heard; it dashes full
On yon broad rock, yet not an echo answers;
It lights in myriad drops upon the flower,
Yet not a blossom stirs; it doth not move

The slightest film of floating gossamer,
Which the faint touch of insect's wing would shiver.

The light is ever pure,
No art of man can ever rob it of its beauty,
Nor stain its unpolluted heaven lines.
It is the fairest, purest thing in nature;
Fit type of heavenly truth, which is all pure.

Truth, too, with noiseless grandeur
Upon its heavenly mission goeth forth.
It shines upon a sin-polluted earth
Until its vileness doth so vile appear,
That men despise, then banish it from sight.
It shineth on, till 'neath its rays benign
The buds of heav'nly virtue do appear,
And earth gives promise of a summer time.
And so 'twill ever shine, till fruit and flower
Of virtue, peace and praise bedeck the earth.

Truth, like the light, is pure;
And no device to rob it of its glory,
Or drag it down base purposes to serve,
Can e'er succeed. Ah, no! its heav'nly glory
Shall in due time the universe pervade.

R4838: "STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED"

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."—2 Tim. 2:15.

THIS TEXT does not say, "Study the Scriptures," but "Study to *show thyself approved*"—study to know what God would approve. And yet it means, first of all, to study *the Revelation He has made*. Then, after having come to some knowledge of the Scriptures, we must *meditate* upon them and consider how the Word is applicable to all of life's affairs. Thus we would study the nature of everything that we come in contact with, as to whether it is good or evil. The word "*study*" here is used with very much the same thought as when the Apostle says, "*Study to be quiet.*"

Evidently the central thought of this expression is the approving of ourselves to God, not to men. It is proper enough that we should have the approval of all good men and good women. But our *study*, primarily, should not be along this line. First, we should *study to please God*—to be approved of God. We notice that there is a contemplative study, such as David speaks of when he says, "I meditate upon thy Law day and night"—to see how that Law would work out its height and depth, its length and breadth of

influence upon himself. And so the Apostle's thought here is that it should be our chief aim to please God.

"*Rightly dividing* the Word of Truth" would signify the *proper application* of the Word of Truth; the understanding of how and when and where it should be applied and what was the purpose and thought and Plan of the Divine Mind in the giving of this Word of Truth, the Word of God's Message. Up to the advent of our Lord, God's Message had been given chiefly through the Old Testament Scriptures. Then God's Message was attested by Him who came from heaven. Additionally, our Lord left twelve chosen Apostles to be His special mouthpieces, to increase the Word of Truth, to increase the Word of knowledge, to increase the Word of explanation of the Divine Plan. Everything, therefore, that Timothy could recognize as being the Lord's Message he was to give heed to. For instance, one part of God's Message applies to the past, a part applies only to the Jews, still another part applies to Christians in the present life, and yet another part to their future hopes.

WE SHOULD HAVE CLEARER LIGHT THAN HAD OUR FOREFATHERS

And so, as we get the matter rightly divided before our minds, we get the true understanding, the special enlightenment needed in our day, and we are enabled to rightly divide the Word better than did our fathers, so that today we can see, as our fathers did not see, the teaching of God's Word respecting the "high calling" and "restitution"—the spiritual portion of blessing for the Church and the human portion of blessing for the world. We also see something about the times and seasons—*which* apply to the Church and *which* to the blessing of the world.

Thus, in our Day, to rightly divide the Word of Truth necessitates the taking cognizance of everything that seems to be of the Lord and that throws any light upon the Word, and thus we may be able to "rightly divide" it. We must always bear in mind that in the Scriptures of the *Old Testament* "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," and that the Lord also said of the *Apostles*: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

We are not to forget that the Lord promised that He would guide His people in the way of the Truth and show them things to come. We are to "*study*" to show ourselves approved—*study* the doctrine and endeavor to have our course of conduct harmonize with it—*study* to perform faithfully the duties of a loyal soldier of the cross of Christ.

The Christian soldier must *study* to perform even the smallest duty in a manner creditable to his calling; he must not permit himself to become entangled with other things which do not relate to his duties as a soldier and thus be side-tracked. The Christian soldier who turns aside to seek some personal, temporal advantage to the detriment of his duties as a soldier is to that extent an unfaithful soldier and likely to be drawn out of the ranks entirely.

"*Study* to show thyself approved." Study the *Word*; study *yourself*, that you may become well acquainted *with yourself*; that you may know your talents for service—in what direction they lie, and what are your weak points and how they may be guarded against—that you may know both your abilities and your shortcomings. Then *study* to avoid error and to shun all foolish questions and profane and vain babblings. Remember that only "the foundation of *God standeth sure* "; that all other foundations are worthless and that all other theories must come to naught. But "The foundation of *God standeth sure*, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are *His*." And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."—2 Tim. 2:19.

WE SHOULD STUDY TO MAKE OUR IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS MORE AND MORE ACTUAL

There is much significance in the word "*study*" and it is important to note that this Divine injunction is given to the *Church*, to those who are believers in Christ and who have consecrated their lives to His service. Having been reckonedly cleansed from sin, we are to give all diligence to the work of *studying* to make this reckoned cleansing, this *imputed* righteousness, an *actual* thing, to the extent of our ability. It is purely of Divine grace that we are *reckoned* righteous before we are *actually* so. Looking at our hearts and seeing in them, not only our good and honest intentions, but also our desire for righteousness and our efforts to become righteous in the way He would approve, God accepts the will for the deed. Accordingly, He *counts* us as righteous *now* and treats us as His children, since we have been redeemed from the curse and have accepted His gracious provision for reconciliation.

LET US STUDY TO SEE THAT OUR LIVES ARE AN HONOR TO THE CAUSE WE ESPOUSE

Let us, then, *study* our hearts to see that we are striving daily to *cast out* all the old leaven of sin; to be sure that we are not content to allow it to *remain* in us and *work* in us; otherwise we prove by our course that our love for righteousness is growing weaker. Happy are those who find that they are not merely working down the leavened mass occasionally and allowing it again and again to ferment, but are *casting it out*, by constantly resisting sin, by cleansing their thoughts, words and deeds with the Truth and cultivating the blessed "fruits of the Spirit"—love, joy, peace, etc.

Only the *studious* find the way to Divine approval and acceptance. Let us *study* to see that our lives are an honor to the cause we have espoused; that we abstain from even the appearance of evil; that we are circumspect in all our conversation, in our conduct—watching our thoughts, our lips, our lives. Let us *study* to be diligent in every duty, performing it with a ready mind and with joy and gladness of heart. Let us never lose sight of the fact that we are *soldiers*, and that as true soldiers we are to learn to "endure hardness."

A soldier has many trivial duties to perform and he is as really doing his duty as a soldier when he is polishing his armor, foraging, cooking his meals, cleaning camp or building bridges for the army to pass over, as when he is fighting the enemy. Such things are incidental work, but are necessary and entirely consistent with his commission as a soldier and should not be regarded as entanglements and hindrances. These duties cannot be disregarded nor carelessly done without a measure of unfaithfulness.

**WHATEVER OUR CAPTAIN HAS RECOGNIZED AND APPROVED
IS PROPER FOR US**

So with the Christian soldier. The routine of life—housework, shop work, daily toil, anything, everything, incidental to a proper and honest provision of "*things needful*" for ourselves and those dependent upon us for support, as well as for provision for the prosecution and care of the Lord's work—all this is a proper part of our engagement as soldiers of the Lord.

The Apostle Peter was as truly serving the Lord when catching the fish from whose mouth he got the coin with which to pay his Master's taxes and his own, as when proclaiming, on the day of Pentecost, the "raising up" and ascension of the Lord. The Apostle Paul was as truly a soldier of the cross and doing his proper work as such when making tents (rather than be chargeable to any) as when at Mars Hill he preached Jesus and the resurrection. *Whatever* is done with a view to the glory and honor of our Lord, the Captain of our salvation, or for the benefit of any of our fellow-soldiers, or for our own *preparation* for this warfare, or in the discharge of obligations which our Captain has recognized and approved, is proper work for us as soldiers and is not *entanglement* in the affairs of this life.

MARCH 3

Whatever things are just ... think on these things—Phil. 4:8.

We are not to allow our minds to run along lines that would be unjust; and we are to learn to apply this test of justice to every thought and word and act of ours, while learning at the same time to view the conduct of others from a different standpoint, so far as reason will permit, from the standpoint of mercy, forgiveness, pity, helpfulness. But we cannot be too careful how we criticize every thought we entertain, every plan we mature, that the lines of justice shall in no sense of the word be infringed by us with our heart's approval—Z '03, 9 (R 3129).

Justice is the good will that we owe out of thankfulness for the good done us; and in order to its development in our characters a consideration of our obligation to God and man in all the affairs of our lives must be kept in the heart; and such thoughtfulness on the things that are just will develop justice, the foundation of Christian character, as it is the foundation of God's character and God's Throne—P '32, 30.

Parallel passages: Ex. 23:1-3, 6-8; Lev. 19:13-15; Ezra 7:26; Psa. 82:2-4; 89:14; Prov. 17:15; Eccles. 3:16, 17; Isa. 1:17; 59:14; Zech. 8:16; Matt. 5:23, 24; John 7:24.

Hymns: 14, 130, 196, 145, 23, 267, 49.

Poems of Dawn, 117: *Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee.*

Tower Reading: Z '04, 21 (R 3304).

Questions: Have I this week thought on things just or not? How? Why? With what results?

THUS MAY HE BLESS AND KEEP THEE

NUMBERS 6:24.

THE Lord bless thee!
How shall He bless thee?
With the gladness that knoweth no decay;
With the riches that cannot pass away;
With the sunshine that makes an endless day—
Thus may He bless thee!

And keep thee!
How shall He keep thee?
With the all-covering shadow of His wings;
With the strong love that guards from evil things;
With the sure power that safe to glory brings—
Thus may He keep thee!

R3304: OUR YEAR TEXT FOR 1904.

[Reprint from Pittsburgh Gazette.]

PASTOR C. T. Russell of the Bible House chapel, Allegheny, yesterday afternoon spoke on "A Text for the New Year." He said:

I choose for my text the exhortation of the Apostle Paul to the Church at Philippi—appropriate to us also. I suggest that we each make it our year-text, and trust that our minds, continually recurring to it, may be profited, strengthened and assisted in the right ways of the Lord. The words are:

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are reputable, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. 4:8.

Few seem to realize the power of the mind, the power of thought, as an element in the formation of character. "As a man thinketh so is he." How important, then, it is that we should think properly—that our minds should be rightly directed. The Scriptures assure us, and the experiences of the noblest people of the world convince us, that we have all so inherited degeneracy from our father Adam, that "there is none righteous, no not one; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." This degeneracy affects us physically—we are a dying race under the Creator's sentence, "Dying thou shalt die." And this dying affects us not only physically but mentally and morally. "We are prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward." The taint is in us from our birth, for were we not "born in sin and shapen in iniquity"?

HUMAN REGULATIONS NECESSARY.

There are various methods of appealing to humanity, the success of each varying with the individual. Some need imprisonment and "stripes," others can be profited by moral suasion, by appeal to their reason, by appeal to the better elements of their natures, even though tainted or tarnished through original sin. Both of these methods of appeal are recognized in the world to-day. Pulpits and newspapers are appealing to the minds of men with more or less propriety and with more or less success; but nevertheless society protects itself by penal institutions—reformatories, jails, penitentiaries, etc. So it is with the divine government. Nature has some general laws by which the whole world of mankind is dominated—laws of retribution, by which every virtue brings a certain degree of reward, satisfaction and peace, and every crime brings a certain measure of chastisement, pain, trouble and unrest.

Nevertheless, the course of nature is so disordered in the present time by the prevalence of sin and its penalty and the operation of the laws of heredity that we cannot say that the laws of nature are at the present time absolutely just as respects each individual, whatever we may say of their general justice in respect to the race as a whole.

Hence, as the Scriptures declare, "some men's sins go before to judgment and some they follow after."

In the coming millennial age, when Christ's Kingdom shall administer justice amongst men, the rewards and punishments will be equitable. No longer will the child suffer for the sins of the parents. No longer will the righteous suffer; but only the evil-doers, for thus it is written. (Jer. 31:29; Psa. 72:7.) In that blessed time the Lord will use both methods of appealing to the world. (1) An appeal will be made to their hearts and consciences, with inducements and rewards for obedience to the principles of righteousness—the reward of physical, mental and moral restitution or uplift, which will bring the obedient gradually back to the full image and likeness of God enjoyed by father Adam before his fall. (2) This appeal to the hearts and consciences of mankind will be supplemented by stripes, judgments, chastisements "upon every soul of man that doeth evil." We can to some degree realize the great advantage that will accrue to mankind under such dealings—how great will be the assistance.

THE LORD'S METHOD AT THE PRESENT TIME.

In the present age the Lord does not use this double method of appeal, but merely the first. He appeals to our hearts, our reasons, saying, "Come, let us reason together." But those who will not reason with the Lord now are not chastised, even if they go into grievous sins. The worldly are permitted to take their course; they receive no particular stripes or corrections from the Lord, because the day of the world's trial or judgment has not yet come. As the Apostle says, "The wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand;" and so we have on every hand sin, wickedness abounding, and that without interference from the Lord. Only with one class is the Lord now dealing, namely, the Church. We recognize, of course, that there is a divine supervision over the nations; that the Lord has kept in his own power more or less of the times and bounds of the nations, as the Apostle expresses the matter. (Acts 17:26.) However, these dealings with the nations have little to do with the world as individuals, and nothing to do with the world's trial, which belongs to the next age. "God hath appointed a day [the millennial day—a day with the Lord is as a thousand years] in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath afore ordained"—the Christ, head and body.—Acts 17:31; I Cor. 6:2.

We repeat, then, that the Lord's special dealings at the present time are with those who believe and not with unbelievers. He sends his message, "speaking peace through Jesus Christ," to him that hath an ear to hear and a heart to receive the message—and these are very few, comparatively. The appeal of the evangelist who follows the scriptural pattern is an appeal to the heads and the hearts of the people who have the ears to hear. He is not privileged to mete out stripes or other judgments or corrections to those who disregard his message. Those who have the ears, and who receive the word with gladness, get a great blessing—and that in proportion as they receive it into good and honest and obedient hearts. Those who do not hear at all, whose hearts are not in the condition to respond to the Gospel message, suffer a loss—a loss of the joy and peace and blessing and "comfort of the Scriptures" which the believers enjoy.

"BY THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING."

Not only does the Lord begin the work of grace among his people with the above-described message, speaking forgiveness and peace through Jesus, but, to those who do receive the message and who are exercised by it he continues the same process of dealing—still appealing to their hearts, heads and consciences. This is what the Apostle means when he says, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."—I Cor. 1:21.

To the world this method of appealing merely to the heads and hearts seems like a weak and unsatisfactory method of dealing. The world finds it necessary to resort to force, and wonders that the Almighty does not resort to force to compel obedience to His laws rather than merely to exhort obedience to them. We have just seen that in the millennial age the Lord will use both methods, and the question properly arises, Why does he not use both methods of appealing to mankind in the present time—first, appeal through the intellect and heart, and second, appeal through force?

We answer, that the reason lies in the fact that God is now selecting a peculiar class—to use scriptural terms, he is now electing "a peculiar people." The class he is now seeking needs no stripes or punishments to constrain their obedience. They are constrained by love—love for God, love for the Redeemer, love for the principles of righteousness and a sympathetic love for the whole world of mankind, even their enemies.

If force were introduced in the present time it would be a hindrance to the development of this particular class which the Lord is now seeking, each of whom must be in heart, in intention (not in flesh) a copy of God's dear Son. Those who require stripes, punishments, etc., to enforce obedience to the divine requirements cannot be of the "very elect," whose disposition of heart is represented by the words of our Lord expressed through the prophet: "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart."—Psa. 40:8.

HOW GOD WORKS IN US TO WILL AND TO DO.

It is in harmony with this thought that God is now operating in the Church along the lines of appeal to our sentiments and not along the lines of force. As the Apostle says: "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." God works in this class through the intellect and heart. He makes known to them "the riches of his grace" little by little as they are able to appreciate and willing to respond.

The first effect of this upon the proper heart is to induce a responsive sentiment, expressed by the Apostle thus: "The love of Christ constraineth us: for we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that we who live should henceforth live not to ourselves, but to him who died for us." (2 Cor. 5:14.) The class represented in this text have experienced the Truth working in them as the power of God up to the point of

willing—willing to do the Lord's will; willing to renounce self; willing to follow in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus; willing to be copies of God's dear Son. The power of God continues to operate in such and unfolds to them more and more of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth all understanding, and which is expressed to these in the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the divine Word.

These promises operate upon the heart and mind and lead to works—obedience, self-denial, self-sacrifice—even unto death. It is such as are thus rightly exercised by divine grace and truth who may now hope to attain to all the great and wonderful things which God hath in reservation for them that love him.

Not only does God thus appeal to our minds, our thoughts, our reasoning faculties, with his explanation of right and wrong, truth and untruth, righteousness and sin, and promises of his continued favor unto life eternal, or for the disobedient his disfavor unto cutting off from life in the second death; but he urges upon us co-operation with him along the same lines—that we take hold of our minds, of our thoughts, and shape them into conformity with the divine mind, with the divine will.

This is the signification of our text: On the principle that every thought has its influence upon our words and conduct, the Apostle urges that our thoughts be the special objects of our solicitude, care, watchfulness. Our Redeemer expresses the same sentiment in different language saying, "Out of the abundance of the heart [mind] the mouth speaketh." And out of the heart (mind) proceedeth envies, malice, strife, etc.,—or contrariwise kindness, gentleness, goodness, love.

IMPORTANCE OF A RIGHT HEART.

It is all important, then, that we have right hearts; for as a bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet waters, neither can a heart that is in the bitterness of sin send forth blessing to those in contact with it. We admit that a certain amount of refinement and grace belonging to the children of God may be copied by the unregenerate, but it has no depth, it fails easily, it quickly discloses the real bitterness, selfishness and acrimony of the natural heart which underlies.

In the present time, therefore, the Lord does not appeal to these bitter hearts to send forth sweet waters. The appeals of the Scriptures are to the regenerated hearts of consecrated believers, addressed in all the epistles as "saints," "children of God," "the sanctified in Christ Jesus," "the Lord's brethren," etc. These having new hearts, new wills, sanctified or set apart to the Lord, to righteousness, to truth, to goodness, need nevertheless to keep watch over their every deed, word and thought.

Our text is the apostle's appeal to this class along this line. It is well that we should scan our outward conduct, to take note that our good intentions may not be so exhibited to others that they will misapprehend our real sentiments—"Let not your good be evil spoken of." It is right, too, that we should "set a guard upon our mouth lest we should sin

with our lips," lest our words be such as would not be honoring to the Lord or edifying to the brethren or to the world. But the number of watchmen or pickets doing duty and standing guard over our actions and words will be fewer in proportion as the picket line guarding our minds, our thoughts, is a strong one. It is here that we need to be especially on the alert.

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." This general truth is particularly exemplified in the regenerate, who are more open in their conduct and language, proportionately, than others. Having the right sentiments at heart they are less on their guard in respect to their manner of expression perhaps than previously; but all the more, they need to remember the words of the Apostle. "If any man sin not with his lips, the same is a perfect man."—Jas. 3:2.

LIKELIHOOD OF ERROR.

The inference is that even the most advanced of the Lord's people are liable at times to err with their lips. Hence the appropriateness, to all of the Lord's people, of the prayer, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."—Psa. 19:14.

Before coming more particularly to the items of our text let us briefly glance at the preceding context; for we notice that the Apostle introduces the text with the word "Finally." What comes before Finally? Let us see. His words are, "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand: be not worried about anything; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and minds [thoughts] in Christ Jesus."

What a wonderful exhortation this is! Those of us who are able to do so will do well to take the entire four verses for our Scripture text for the new year. The Christian is not to be sorrowful and moping. If he is a true Christian and understands the Father's message he must rejoice. True, as the Apostle elsewhere remarks, through manifold trials, discouragements, weaknesses, etc., there may be moments of dejection and sorrow; but these are only like the sun-showers of the summer-time. To the true followers of the Lord, instructed through his Word, the light of the Lord's kindness shines through all earth-born clouds and troubles, to bring him joy and peace and blessing.

FORGETTING THE THINGS BEHIND.

At the present time, at the close of the old year and the dawning of a new one, it is especially appropriate that the Lord's people should clearly apprehend the great lesson which the Apostle is here inculcating and which he also taught in another place, saying, "Forget the things which are behind, and press forward to things which are before." In the year that is past every enlightened and proper-minded child of God will be able to discern both weakness and success, defeats and victories. We know this because "There is none righteous, no not one"—none that come fully up to the mark of perfection.

Hence all may look back and find in the year that is closing sources of regret as well as sources of joy and comfort. Are we to mourn over the failures of the past? Is this the will of the Lord concerning us—that we should stop, because we find that we have not been able to walk perfectly in every particular—not even up to our own imperfect standards? Nay, verily! With the Apostle we exclaim, "Let us go on to perfection."

Perfection is not a thing of the past, but of the future. We cannot be satisfied with the past but we "shall be satisfied when we awake in his likeness," sharers in the glorious first resurrection. For this we are pressing along, forgetting the things that are behind.

We forget the things that are behind, because it is right that we should do so. Because God forgets them, and declares that he has cast all of our imperfections behind his back; that our imperfections are all covered from his sight, by the merit of him who loved us and who died for us, and whom we love, and in whom we are trusting, and in whose steps we are seeking to walk with more or less of imperfection according to the defects we have inherited in the flesh. We are not meaning to suggest that slips or failures should be lightly esteemed or quickly forgotten; they should be rectified to the extent of our ability, and Divine forgiveness should be sought for these defects daily.

It is for this very purpose that the Lord has provided access to the "throne of heavenly grace, where we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need." We merely mean that it is the Lord's will respecting us that, having corrected errors to the best of our ability, and having appealed for Divine forgiveness, we should believe the word of the Lord and accept his forgiveness and start afresh with rejoicing with each new day—and now, as we near it, start afresh for the new year, 1904.

CULTIVATION OF GENTLENESS.

"Gentleness," the forbearance or moderation mentioned in the context, is to be cultivated by each of us to such an extent that it will not only be manifested to ourselves and to the brethren, but to others. This may not mean the same amount of gentleness in each of the Lord's people, because the treasure of the new mind is in earthen vessels in every instance; and the possibilities for one may exceed the abilities of another. But, in any event, this quality of gentleness (moderation or forbearance) should be increasingly an outward manifestation of the grace of the Lord, dwelling in us richly and abounding, so that those who have known us in the past will at least be able year by year to see in us progress, development along this line.

We have already referred to the necessity for prayer, supplication, mentioned by the Apostle. We now observe that those who are dwelling in close fellowship with the Lord will be so appreciative of the favors and blessings already enjoyed that they will not feel like asking for greater blessings, but rather like giving thanks with a realization that they have already received not only more than they deserved at the Lord's hands, but more than they could have asked or thought. And what has already been received is only a foretaste of the promised coming blessings.

Our requests should be, increasingly, for grace and wisdom and the fruits of the spirit and opportunities for serving the Lord and the brethren, and for growing more and more into the likeness of God's dear Son.

Under these conditions who can doubt that the promised "peace of God beyond all understanding" would "guard" such "hearts" and their "thoughts"? This peace would of itself dispel one of the great evils that afflict the hearts of many. Selfishness and ambition would find little room in a heart so filled with gratitude. God's peace, and not merely the peace of the world, would reign in such a heart, controlling ambitions and energies. Divine peace can dwell in our hearts and rule in them, so as to keep out the worry and turmoil of the world, even when we are surrounded by these disadvantageous conditions—even when the adversary himself is besetting us through deceived agents.

EMPTIED OF THE OLD; FILLED WITH THE NEW.

Then comes our text, suggesting that, with this peace ruling in our hearts, and keeping guard over our thoughts, so that they are spared from many of the intrusions of the world, the flesh and the devil, we should see to it that our hearts are not merely barren and empty of evil, but should give our thoughts food even as we provide sustenance for our bodies. We should see that their exercise is in a proper direction to produce proper and helpful conditions.

We all know how easy it is to allow the old natural mind to assert itself, to allow envy, gossip, backbiting, malice, strife, pride, vain-glory, to enter our minds and to absorb time and attention. We all know that these need to be continually repelled; but all do not know how necessary it is that, while repelling these, we invite into our minds proper thoughts that will fill them and thus effectually bar the way and hinder the coming again of evil thoughts.

It is along this line that the Apostle exhorts, that we believe it will be profitable for us all to specially exercise our attention during the year just at hand. While thanking God for the forgiveness of sins and for the new hearts, new wills, which we have attained by his grace, let us keep guard over our thoughts—let us exercise them upon the lines the Apostle lays down in this text.

"Whatsoever things are true." The Lord's people are to be so in accord with righteousness that everything that is false or unjust or untrue in word, thought or act will be offensive to them—cause them pain. Truthfulness, then, must be the first test to apply to any matter that will be accepted by our minds. It is not for us to waste our time and attention chasing imaginary matters, errors, fictions, etc. First of all, we want to know, Is it true? While this truth will apply in a general way to everything in life, and to everybody, and promote a love for the right and the true, and a heart-opposition to all that is adulterated, yet the principle is specially applicable to the affairs of the new creation and to their spiritual food.

In respect to the latter, our first inquiry should be, Is this the truth or is it to any extent contaminated with traditions of men, calculated to "make void the Word of God"? as our dear Redeemer expressed it. The prophet declares, speaking of God, "Thou desirest truth in the inward parts"—sincerity of heart. It is remarkable how many people would shun to tell an open falsehood, who nevertheless appear not to have a heart-love for the truth. Let us during the year beginning cultivate a love for the truth wherever we may find it, and at any cost. Let us take time to "prove" everything we receive as truth.

THE THOUGHTS WE SHOULD ENTERTAIN.

"Whatsoever things are honorable." This is a second test of what our thoughts should be permitted to rest upon. We cannot avoid the intrusion of thoughts which our judgments would disprove, but we must scrutinize and test our thoughts, as they present themselves, and must refuse to entertain or harbor those which are ignoble, dishonorable, unworthy of us as human beings, and especially as members of the new creation, "the body of Christ." Many things may be true which are not honorable, and their truthfulness must not give them a resting-place in our minds if they will not stand this second test.

"Whatsoever things are just," or equitable. This is the third test which the Apostle would have us apply as we scrutinize suggestions made to our minds from any quarter. Things might be true and might be honorable so far as the principles were concerned, and yet not be just or equitable to others. A story might reach us of an honorable exploit of some friend; we might know it to be true, and yet it might reflect against some one else unfavorably, unjustly, inequitably. If so, the thought must not be entertained, but must be repelled.

"Whatsoever things are pure." This is the fourth test which the Apostle urges us to apply to our thoughts as they present themselves from any quarter. Many things are true, just and perhaps not dishonorable that are not pure—calculated to awaken impure desires. Such things are strictly barred according to this inspired rule.

"Whatsoever things are lovely." This is the fifth test. Amongst true, honorable, just, pure things which we may properly consider, there is a variety, some more and some less lovely, some more and some less admirable; and our thoughts, the Apostle suggests, should give preference to the lovely and loveable as being more ennobling, more calculated to lift us and profit us, and hence more inclined to help others through us; because our influence with others is on a parity with our mental status.

"Out of the abundance of the heart [the mind] the mouth speaketh;" and hence those who follow this counsel of the Apostle will be found more and more speaking nothing but the truth, and avoiding truths that are not honorable, or not just and equitable, or not pure; and preferring especially those topics for meditation that are lovely. What a lovely character would be assured in one who could strictly and completely follow the Apostle's advice herein given. He would be a copy of Jesus—just what we all wish to be. None of us can attain this.

"Whatsoever things are reputable, possessing any virtue or any praise." By this expression the Apostle seems to throw out general lines of test and examination. His words imply that we should have a scrutiny of our thoughts to the intent that only things that could be profitable to us and to others should be entertained, considered, discussed. Frivolous things would be excluded also by this test. Who will not admit that a mind thus freed from rubbish and evil and allowed only to entertain true, good, clean, profitable thoughts would be a mind which the Lord would be pleased with and which would conduce to the development of the character-likeness of our Lord Jesus, which is demanded of us if we would be his joint-heirs in the kingdom.—Rom. 7:29.

"PERFECT AS YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN."

The standard which the Apostle has here raised resembles the standard which our Lord raised before us when he said, "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." We cannot be perfect as the Father is perfect, but we can and do aim at that perfection; and whatever we come short in while thus endeavoring is made up to us of the Lord's grace through the merit of the precious blood. Likewise we cannot hope to attain so complete a control of our thoughts as the Apostle's words in this beautiful text suggest, but we can make that our standard; and in proportion as we view this standard and daily strive to measure up to it, in that sense and proportion no doubt we will have a blessing every day throughout the year, and at its close find ourselves considerably strengthened in mind, and advanced along these lines, which the Apostle elsewhere speaks of as "bringing every thought into captivity to the will of God in Christ."—2 Cor. 10:5.

The scriptural proposition is that even the most saintly of the Lord's people, the most developed in character, will need the merit of Christ's righteousness imputed to them until they are made perfect in the first resurrection. Only in our minds, in our wills, have the old things passed away and all things become new. Actually, this great change will be accomplished when this mortal shall have put on immortality, when this corruptible shall be raised in incorruption—raised in glory, in power, spirit beings. But meantime, in order to be counted worthy of a share in the first resurrection, it is required of us that we shall demonstrate our willingness of mind, our earnest desire to be all that the Lord would have us be; and in no way can this be better demonstrated to the Lord and to ourselves, or prove more helpful, than by keeping a strict surveillance of our hearts and of our thoughts. The Lord's blessing will surely be upon all who shall seek to follow this word of his grace during the new year.

MARCH 4

Whatever things are pure, lovely, and of good report ... think on these things—Phil. 4:8.

We are to love and cultivate that which is pure to such an extent that that which is impure will become painful to us, distressing, and we will desire to drop it from memory, and this will only be accomplished by continually thinking upon those things that are pure, and avoiding the giving of thought to the things that are impure. We are to recognize true loveliness, and to esteem it. When we would think on the purest of things we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible, and, as nearly as we may be able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and proportionately the loveliness manifested in one or another of the followers of Jesus, who walk closely in His footsteps—Z '03, 9 (R 3129).

By the pure, sinlessness of purpose in glorifying God is meant; by the lovely, appreciation of good character and principles is meant; and by the reputable, that which is in harmony with correct standards is meant. To think on such things cannot but purify our purposes, develop disinterested love, and elevate character—P '26, 28.

Parallel passages: Psa. 12:6; 19:8; 24:3-5; 119:40; Prov. 15:26; 20:9; Matt. 5:3-12; John 15:9-17; 1 Tim. 1:5; 3:9; 2 Tim. 2:22; Rom. 12:9-21; 1 Cor. 13; 2 Cor. 6:8; Col. 3:12-17; Heb. 11:2, 39; 1 John 4:7-21; Prov. 22:1; Eccles. 7:1.

Hymns: 1, 4, 95, 196, 198, 201, 267.

Poems of Dawn, 290: *God's Boundless Love*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 165 (R 4826).

Questions: Have I thought this week on the pure, lovely and reputable, or on their opposites? What were the circumstances and effects?

GOD'S BOUNDLESS LOVE

COULD we with ink the ocean fill,
Were every blade of grass a quill,
Were all the world of parchment made
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.

R4826: RIGHT HABITS OF THOUGHT

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report—if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. 4:8.

AS THE mouthpiece of the Lord, the Apostle Paul is here giving instruction to the Church respecting how she should build herself up. Referring to the great influence of the mind over the body, he lays down certain rules for thinking; for as a man thinketh, so he will become. The more he thinks on good things, the better he will be. The more he thinks on evil things, the more evil he will be. The things we think about, the Apostle says, should be honorable, just, praiseworthy, beautiful. If a thing has none of these qualities the Lord's people should not think on it at all. A wonderful transformation of character is effected by thinking on those things which have wisdom and depth of instruction—those things which come from no one else but God.

**"WHEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH IS COME IT WILL GUIDE
YOU INTO ALL TRUTH"**

St. Paul was the one privileged to see the Lord after his ascension. We perceive that he, as well as all the other Apostles, had fulfilled in him the Master's words, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18:18.) That is to say, the Apostles would be so guided by Divine wisdom that whatever they should declare necessary in life, would be upheld in heaven, and whatsoever they should declare unnecessary, would be so considered in heaven. Hence, the whole duty and responsibility of the Church is outlined by this Apostle. Whatever we see in the Old Testament Scriptures that is valuable to us, we perceive that our Lord through the Apostles has marked out.

Much that our Lord said was spoken in dark sayings. The exposition of some of these sayings and some of these particular instructions he left to the Apostles, under the direction of the Holy Spirit. The reason why Jesus did not give the explanation of the deeper and more spiritual things was that the disciples were not then spirit-begotten and could not understand these things; whereas, after their begetting of the Holy Spirit, they were able to understand the deeper things of the Word of God.

Our Lord said, "When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; ... and he will show you things to come." (John 16:13.) This he has done through the writings of the Apostles and by believers all through the Gospel Age. Thus the Lord is making ready for the glorious consummation of our hope; and thus the Bride is making herself ready for the marriage of the Lamb, which will shortly take place.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. 4:23.) These are inspired words of the wise king, Solomon, and it was evidently with the same thought in mind that the Apostle penned the words of our text. How beautiful this, the Apostle's final admonition to the Philippian Church, whom he addressed with affection as

his "joy and crown"; and how much in keeping with the thought that *out of the heart are the issues of life!*

The heart represents the *will*, the intentions; the will must be kept true and centered in God, for it is the governing power of the whole man. Yet, though the will is the controlling power of man, it is also subject to influences. If the thoughts be impure, unjust, or unholy, the power of the will becomes more and more impaired. Hence the wisdom of the admonition of the Apostle as to what should be the character of our thoughts. In those who are striving to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord—to adorn themselves with the beauty of holiness—the thoughts must not be neglected and permitted to browse in every pasture, but must be disciplined to feed upon pure and healthful food, as the Apostle directs.

THE TRUTH OF A THING IS BUT ONE OF THE TESTS

Is this *true*, or is it *false*? is the first question to be asked in the consideration of any matter. Love for the Truth lies at the very foundation of a righteous life, and whoever sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling himself; but whoever cleanses his thoughts is to that extent purifying his entire character. With our poor and imperfect brains there is great danger of our being misled; and hence the Word of God exhorts us earnestly that we should not touch that which we realize is untrue.

The truth of a thing, however, is but one of the tests to which we should subject every matter. Who does not know that there are many things that are true, and yet dishonorable, not worthy of our thoughts. The true, but dishonorable and unworthy things presenting themselves for our consideration are, perhaps, oftenest in connection with the weaknesses, the errors, the follies, or what not of our neighbors, our brethren. The dismissal of these thoughts, so unworthy, will leave us the opportunity and the energy, if we will, to spend upon things that are *honorable* as well as *true*, worthy of our attention as New Creatures in Christ Jesus.

"Things that are *just*." Here we have another limitation. That which is *just* is that which is *right*. Justice and righteousness are synonymous terms. Very often that which is just is supposed to be the same as that which is lovely; as, for instance, The Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." This is not the rule of *love*, but of *justice*. We have no right to do unto others anything that we would not that they should do to us. In keeping the Golden Rule, therefore, we are not keeping the great Law of Love, but we are taking a step in the right direction. No one should begin to think about *love* until he is *just*. Love would be something more than that which is right. Love is more than justice. We have no right to expect more than justice. Whatever we receive more than justice is love, favor.

JUSTICE SHOULD BE THE RULE OF OUR LIVES

In thinking on those things suggested by the Apostle, we should think, first of all, on our own course. We should critically consider whether we are always thinking on these

things which are right, just. We should never be prejudiced in the matter. Justice should be the rule of our lives, of our conduct. Again, in thinking on these things, we might naturally think in respect to the conduct of others. We could think about the influence, for instance, of various things. We could allow our minds to dwell much on the injustices practiced about us and elsewhere; on how much injustice is done in Africa against those who could rule themselves better; on how much injustice is done in business, etc. Thus there could be a great deal of muckraking. But this should not be the subject of our general thoughts. We should think of the good things, the higher things, the happier things; not only the good things of this life, but the blessed things of the life to come; and thus have our minds running along the lines of justice at all times.

WE SHOULD NOT WAIT FOR THE LORD'S CHASTENING HAND

No one can cultivate justice until he gets some appreciation of what it *is*. This necessary knowledge is obtained through the Scriptures. Some are born with a larger sense of justice than are others and some are born who seem to have no appreciation of right or wrong. But whether we have, naturally, a keen sense of justice or not, the Bible is the standard. As we know, the Scriptures say that we should do unto others as we would that they should do unto us; that we should forgive others as we would they should forgive us. When we have considered well these first lessons, then we are ready to cultivate justice and to put it into practice in our daily lives. This we do by asking in respect to our words and acts, Did I tell the *truth*? And was it *just* to tell it? Was it *right* to tell it? Was it in harmony with what I should wish others to tell in respect to *my affairs*? Did I do the right thing?

Whoever is in the school of Christ is there to study and practice along the lines of justice and of love. It is the work of a *life time*. We find that we can improve from day to day. We should not wait for the Lord to chasten us, but should be so desirous of having the Lord's will done in us that we would *scrutinize* our thoughts. We should walk circumspectly. We should think about what we are doing, about what we are thinking. We should not allow our thoughts to ramble. People who do so do not keep themselves under proper grip. The *will* dominates the life. First of all, we should make a full surrender to the Lord by giving him our wills, the control over our thoughts, our words, our actions. Those who have accepted the control of Christ over their affairs are not at liberty to act as they will. They are to be controlled by his Word, and to walk according to his rules. Our Master said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." (John 13:34.) This is more than justice. The Lord so loved the world that he laid down his life for them. So should we be ready and willing to lay down our lives for the brethren.

We are not to allow our minds to run along lines that would be unjust. We are to learn to apply this test of justice to every thought and word and act of ours, while learning at the same time to view the conduct of others, so far as reason will permit, from the standpoint of mercy, pity, forgiveness, helpfulness. But we cannot be too careful how we

criticize every thought we entertain, every plan we may mature, that the lines of justice shall in no way be infringed by us with our heart's approval.

OUR MINDS SHOULD BE FILLED WITH THAT WHICH IS PURE AND LOVELY

In scrutinizing our thoughts from the viewpoint of *purity*, we should consider, first, the *nature* of the thoughts; and, second, their influence upon *others*. Not only should our thoughts be true and honorable and just and right, but they should be *pure*, and such as will not excite others to impurity. We should avoid anything that, while not impure in itself, might have the effect of arousing impurity in another. The Apostle's thought seems to be that we should guard our thoughts at all times.

"Whatsoever things are lovely" calls to our attention the fact that we should not allow our minds to *dwell* upon things that are not lovely, that are not praiseworthy. We might permit our *business* to so fill our thoughts that we would think continually about that particular thing; for instance, one interested in the iron business might always think about structural iron; another, about the coal business; another, about potatoes and codfish, etc. These things might be just enough, true enough, honorable enough, but constant thought on these lines is not profitable to the New Creature. When we are employed in digging, we should give attention to that business; when we are in the iron-work business, we should give proper attention to it. But when we are in the *thinking* business, we should not allow our minds to dwell on the things which the Apostle stipulates to be injurious. We must endeavor to bring our thoughts into subjection and train them along the lines that will transform us more and more into our Lord's glorious character likeness.

Our thoughts must not only be true, honorable and just, but they must be pure, they must be beautiful. By the word beautiful we understand, not only the thoughts relating to the beauties of nature, the flowers, the animal creation, the fruits, etc., but also and chiefly the things of *character*—the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. With these things our minds can become filled and enamored. If, on the contrary, we allow ourselves to neglect these things that are pure, just, lovely, we shall not grow in the fruits of the Spirit; but by thinking on these things and cultivating them in our hearts we become more and more God-like. If we do not cultivate these desirable qualities, then will be developed envy, hatred, strife, works of the flesh and of the Devil—the fruits contrary to righteousness.

In a word, then, we can hardly overestimate the importance of right thinking. There are on record instances of persons who were naturally depraved in mind, but who, by giving their attention to the things of the Truth, have become very noble characters, indeed. We can scarcely overestimate the power of the mind over the body. If we take pleasure in the cultivation of the fruits of the Spirit, they will prove a rich blessing to ourselves and to others. Thus we shall follow in the Master's footsteps and eventually become overcomers and associates with him in the Kingdom.

PURITY OF THOUGHT AN ESSENTIAL

We are to love and cultivate that which is *pure* to such an extent that that which is impure will become painful to us, distressing, and we shall desire to drop it from memory. This will be accomplished only by continually thinking upon those things that are pure, and avoiding the giving of thought to the things that are impure. We are to recognize true loveliness and to esteem it. When we would think on the purest of things, we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible and, as nearly as we may be able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ and, proportionately, the loveliness manifested in one and another of the followers of Jesus who walk closely in his footsteps.

"If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." While we should not think to praise ourselves nor to strive to obtain praise, yet we should strive to be praiseworthy. We should think about the praise of God. If there is anything that has any value, any merit, that has anything worthy of praise, we should recognize it. We should note in those about us, and particularly in the Church, the elements of character which are worthy of praise. We should not underestimate gentleness, faithfulness, patience. We should take note of constancy, of energy, of devotion to duty. We should not think of the trifling failures of others or of even their greater failures. If we continue to fill our minds with unhappy thoughts, we shall do injury to ourselves. As we continue to recognize the commendable things in our own lives and in the lives of those about us, we shall become the more God-like.

Things of any virtue, or value, things in any degree praiseworthy—the noble words, or noble deeds, or noble sentiments of anyone—we may safely meditate upon and, as a consequence, find ourselves growing toward those ideals upon which our minds, our new natures, thus feed.

Thus shall we become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds, and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life; and our thoughts being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained, we shall have part in the First Resurrection, which will perfect us forever in the Lord's image and likeness.

MARCH 5

If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things—Phil. 4:8.

Things of any virtue or value, things in any degree praiseworthy—the noble words or noble deeds or noble sentiments of anybody—we may safely meditate upon, and as a consequence find ourselves growing toward those ideals on which our new hearts, minds and wills thus feed. We shall become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds, and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Lord and Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life; and our thoughts being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained, we shall have part in the resurrection of the just, which will perfect us in the Lord's image and likeness—Z '03, 9 (R 3129).

The virtues refer more to the graces of justice, and the praises to the graces of charity. Since the mind is bound to think, how much more noble it is to contemplate good thoughts and qualities, the virtues and the praises! A low plane of contemplation is that of things; a higher is that of persons; but the highest is the contemplation of noble thoughts and qualities, especially as they exist in God, in Christ and in the saints; and this is also the best way of becoming like them—P '36, 31.

Parallel passages: 2 Pet. 1:3, 5; Josh. 1:8; Psa. 1:2; 4:4; 19:14; 39:3; 49:3; 63:5, 6; 77:10-12; 104:34; 119:11, 15, 16, 23, 48, 59, 97, 99; 139:17, 18; 143:5; 1 Tim. 4:13.

Hymns: 198, 95, 141, 1, 125, 150, 196.

Poems of Dawn, 290: *My Life Is But a Weaving*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 168 (R 5908).

Questions: Have I this week meditated on the virtues and praises? How? What helped or hindered therein? In what circumstances? With what results?

MY LIFE IS BUT A WEAVING

MY life is but a weaving
Between my Lord and me;
He chooses all the colors
And works on steadily.

Oftimes He weaveth sorrow,
And I, in blinded pride,
Forget He sees the upper,
And I the underside.

The dark threads are as needful
In the Weaver's skilful hand,

As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.

Not till the loom is silent,
And the shuttles cease to fly,
Will God unroll the fabric,
And show the reason why.

R5908: FINALLY, BRETHREN, THINK!

THE POWER OF THE MIND, THE WILL—AS A MAN THINKETH, SO IS HE—
THE POWER OF EVIL THOUGHTS—THE POWER OF GOOD THOUGHTS—
THINK OF PURE THINGS—NOT EARTHLY THINGS—OF THINGS OF GOOD
REPORT—OF THINGS OF VALUE—OF PRAISEWORTHY THINGS—EACH
RESPONSIBLE FOR CARE OF HIS OWN MIND.

**Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest,
whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are
lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be
any praise, think on these things.**"—Philippians 4:8.

COMPARATIVELY few, even of educated and scientific people, seem to appreciate the great power of the mind and its potent influence upon all the affairs of our lives. Few mothers realize that their very thoughts have to do with the molding of their unborn children—giving them either helpful or injurious dispositions. Few fathers realize this, or seek to cooperate with their wives in the bringing forth of noble children—by stirring up the minds of their wives during pregnancy with noble thoughts, elevating ambitions, high ideals, with things of beauty, grace, art, purity, reverence, spirituality. When people come to know the power of the mother's mind for good or for evil toward the children, it will undoubtedly work a radical change in many homes; for it is our conviction that the majority of people would rather do right than do wrong, and that one of their chief difficulties and stumbling blocks is ignorance.

But while interested in mankind in general, we are never to forget that the Bible is addressed to the children of God, who have entered into a special covenant with Him through the Lord Jesus Christ, and who have become New Creatures through the begetting power of the Holy Spirit. The world will be taught and developed during the Millennium. But now, in the present life, the only opportunity for development is on the part of those who have received the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and whose great and only hope is a perfecting on the spirit plane in the Resurrection of the Just. As much, therefore, as we feel interested in the world, it is the Christian's duty to follow the example of the Lord and to be interested especially in his fellows, his brethren in Christ.

THE POWER OF THOUGHT

The Apostle's exhortation may be taken as a personal one by every Christian, and also as a general exhortation to the whole Church—that they seek to build one another up in the most holy faith and along the lines indicated in our Golden Text.

Each individual is responsible for the care of his own mind. In becoming Christians we gave our wills to the Lord, agreeing that henceforth we would not follow the dictates of our wills; but that, ignoring these, we would follow the guidance of the Lord's will. It was on this condition that the Lord received us into His family; and any failure to follow these terms is contrary to our covenant. The Lord through His Word gives us the necessary instructions as to what His will is; and these messages, received into good and honest hearts, bring forth fruitage of obedience, and this leads on to the development of the fruits of the spirit.

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Many Christians have learned to govern their actions, to refrain from carnal strife. Many have learned to control their tongues in a measure, remembering that the same tongue with which we praise God could be used in doing injury to fellow creatures, as the Apostle points out. (James 3:1-10.) But restraint of conduct and of word is difficult unless the mind, the will, be brought into the line with the will of God. Hence God shows us the reason for what He requires, and sets before us exceeding great and precious promises. These are intended to work in us—to work in our minds and to work out in our words and actions the Lord's good pleasure, the Lord's will.

QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION

The Apostle, in our Golden Text, points out the proper course for us to take in getting control of ourselves, our thoughts, our words and our conduct. Every thought should be challenged; for if an evil thought or a selfish thought or a mean thought, a depraved thought, be admitted, it will germinate and bring forth a great defilement, which will affect our words and our conduct, and will extend to others. We may learn to do the challenging readily, even along the comprehensive lines which the Apostle lays down in this lesson. What at first may require considerable time for decision will by and by be decided almost instantly:

(1) Is the thought which is seeking consideration in our mind an honorable one? If so, it may pass in and be entertained. If not, it should be immediately resented and driven out from the mind as an evil influence.

(2) Is the thought suggested a pure one—not sensual, not selfish? If so, if it pass these examinations, it may pass on for further consideration. If by these it fails to prove its purity, it should be immediately resented as a thought likely to do great harm—as would the entrance into our home of things infected with a plague.

(3) Is the thought lovely? Does it appertain to things that are lovable? Does it excite lovable influences, or is it identified more or less with hate, resentment, anger, malice? If lovely, it may pass on. If not, it must be immediately expelled, not permitted to go further, to do harm to ourselves and to others.

(4) Is it reputable? This cannot mean: Is the thing well spoken of by the world? For the Apostle himself and our Lord Jesus were reviled by the world, who said all manner of evil against them falsely. The word reputable here must be taken to mean that which would be thought well of by all reputable people, if they knew and understood everything connected with the thought.

(5) Has the thought any virtue, or is it in any sense of the word praiseworthy? If so, it may be admitted. If not, it should be repelled; for even if it be blameless otherwise, the fact that it is not of any value is a reason for its rejection. We have no time and no place for things that are merely not bad. We desire to have in our hearts and our minds things that are positively good, helpful, beneficial in some way. Otherwise, the thought should be repelled as a mere cumberer of the ground of our hearts, of our minds, needed for profitable things. Much novel reading is of this character—not evil, but not advantageous, not upbuilding.

Whatever we may be naturally, the people of God who follow the instructions of the Divine Word surely become noble people, helpful people, possessed of the spirit of a sound mind; and these things will be only a part of their preparation for the Kingdom and for the great work then to be entrusted to them as the servants of God under their Redeemer and Head.

MARCH 6

I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound—Phil. 4:11, 12.

If we find our experiences in life very checkered, we may conclude that the Lord sees that we need both the heights and depths of prosperity and adversity to properly instruct us and qualify us for the position He designs for us in the future. Let us, then, as the Apostle did, *learn how to abound*, not allowing the abundance of earthly good things to swerve us from our consecration vows; and let us *learn also how to be in want (need) and yet not to want anything beyond what the Lord's wisdom and providence see best to give—to be content—Z '03, 10 (R 3129).*

To be contented under all circumstances is a glorious achievement, and is an ideal toward which the Lord's people should constantly strive. Few indeed are they, who can suffer abasement contentedly, still fewer are they who can receive success contentedly. It is only through many experiences of abasement and exaltation that we learn to receive all things contentedly—P '30, 30.

Parallel passages: Psa. 37:7; Prov. 16:8; 17:1, 22; 30:8; Eccles. 4:6; 5:12; Luke 3:14; 1 Cor. 7:20, 24; 2 Cor. 6:9, 10; 1 Tim. 6:6-12; Heb. 13:5, 6; Psa. 16:6; 37:7, 16; Prov. 14:14; 15:13, 15, 30.

Hymns: 50, 94, 15, 170, 176, 179, 244.

Poems of Dawn, 297: *Our Father's at the Helm.*

Tower Reading: Z '98, 243 (R 2351).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences as to this text? In what did they result?

OUR FATHER'S AT THE HELM

THE boisterous waves with awful roar
A little boat assailed,
And pallid fear's distracting power
O'er all on board prevailed.

Save one, the captain's darling child,
Who steadfast viewed the storm;
And, cheerful, with composure smiled
At danger's threatening form.

"Do you feel safe," a seaman cried,
"While terrors overwhelm?"
"Why should I fear?" the boy replied—
"My father's at the helm."

So when our worldly all is reft,
Our earthly helpers gone,
We still have one true anchor left—
God helps, and He alone.

He to our prayers will bend an ear,
He gives our pains relief;
He turns to smiles each trembling tear,
To joy each torturing grief.

Then turn to Him 'mid sorrows wild,
When want and woes o'erwhelm,
Remembering, like the fearless child,
Our Father's at the helm!

R2351: "BE CONTENT WITH SUCH THINGS AS YE HAVE."

"Be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."—Heb. 13:5, 6.

BAD ADVICE, very bad advice, says Mr. Worldlywiseman; it is because this advice has *not* been followed that we of America have made such progress within the past century. It is because the workmen of the United States are ambitious, energetic, and *not content* with such things as they have, but constantly trying to make two blades of grass grow, where one grew before, and to put ten dollars in the bank to one that was there before, that our nation has stepped rapidly to the front, and become noted for the genius, thrift and progressiveness of its people.

We will not dispute Mr. Worldlywiseman's statement, except to say that all of the remarkable progress of the present century is not due alone to discontent: much of it is due to freedom, which has come chiefly as the result of greater enlightenment,—an enlightenment which has come largely as a result of having the Bible in the living languages of the people and in their possession. Another element contributing to the marvelous developments of this century is one of which few take note; namely, that since 1799 we have been in the period known in the Scripture, as "the day of his preparation:" the period in which the Lord has been lifting the vail, and letting in upon the world, through natural channels, a stream of inventive genius designed to bring forward to perfection, through chemistry and mechanics and art, the devices and contrivances which will ere long most marvelously, under the guiding control of Immanuel, during the Millennium, make of this earth a Paradise. Nevertheless, we are willing to concede that ambition and discontent are present, and that they are helping in their way to bring forward the various devices which shall ultimately prove so great a blessing to mankind;

but on the other hand, we contend that just in proportion as discontent is spread, in that proportion unhappiness is present, and an anarchistic spirit begotten.

We see more clearly than those looking in other directions, that discontent is permeating the entire fabric of society and making it restless, and rapidly leading to the great catastrophe of trouble and anarchy which the Scriptures point out will be the end of this present age, "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." We notice also that discontent and selfish ambition are at work in the home, in the mill, in the factory and in the Church; and that wherever these touch and grind, somebody is bruised or crushed, or at least made sore and sensitive. Wherever they abound, they blight peace, joy and a holy spirit. They are in antagonism to the spirit of Christ—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love. They tend toward the spirit of the Adversary,—anger, malice, envy, hatred, strife, bitterness. What wonder, then, that the statistics show that despite the great increase of medical skill, especially in the treatment of nervous and mental ailments, and despite also the more favorable conditions of birth and living, mental and nervous diseases are greatly on the increase, and asylums are being enlarged and new ones built. Nor are these conditions confined to this country; reports from Europe are to the same effect,—even worse as respects insanity and suicide.

It would be useless to point the world to the fact that *happiness*, the desirable quality, is on the decrease as wealth and business are on the increase—that the grandfathers of the present generation, altho less favorably situated every way, enjoyed life better because more contented than their grandchildren of to-day: the world would be unwilling to go back to the conditions which were happifying in the past, and have a craving for still more of luxury for the future, and will have it or at least strive to get it, whatever the cost. Indeed, knowing this, and knowing also of the divine provision for the future, and how present discontent is shortly to teach mankind a great lesson through the wreck of the present social structure, built upon selfishness, covetousness, ambition, and discontent, we think it wisest to let the world alone, to let it take its course and reap the reward of that course, and ultimately learn the lesson which Providence will teach. We therefore say little to the world on the subject of discontent, except as their cases may come close to us and properly under our criticism and advice. Even then our advice would not be that the world should attempt the impossible thing of being *content* while under a spirit of selfishness and *discontent*; rather we will advise such to seek and find the Lord and his spirit of love and peace and gentleness and goodness, and finding it, prove that "Godliness with contentment is great gain,"—"having the promise of the life which now is and also of that which is to come."—1 Tim. 6:6; 4:8.

THE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE—WITH WHICH WE ARE CONTENT.

Nor should it be overlooked that this is the standpoint of all Scriptural address—the inspired injunctions and admonitions are not to the world, but to those who have become the Lord's covenanted people. The poor world, and especially the poor world who are without God, and who have no hope, have surely very little cause for contentment;—they have neither the luxuries desired for this life, nor the exceeding great and precious

promises for the future life. Indeed, under the false teaching inculcated by the great adversary of God and truth and man, many not only have a comfortless treadmill existence in the present time, but are led to look forward to awful tortures in the future—a hell of unending suffering, or a purgatorial period of suffering, to last for hundreds or thousands of years. Poor world! What wonder if it is downcast, discontented, morbid, anarchistic.

But with the Christian—the true Christian, begotten of the truth (by the Word of truth, not by the word of error), how different are all these things! He sees what the world does not see, namely, the reason why God has permitted the reign of sin and death in the world for the past six thousand years. He sees more, namely that God, who has been just to inflict the penalty of sin—death, and its concomitants of disease and pain and trouble,—is also loving and gracious, and has prepared a redemption from the sentence and an ultimate deliverance from the blight of sin and death. He rejoices to know that this ransom price has already been paid and that its payment was formally acknowledged by Jehovah at Pentecost. He is instructed by the Word of grace that as a result of this redemption the whole world which was first tried and sentenced in Father Adam is to be tried again *individually*; and that the provision for this fresh trial was made in the "ransom for all" given at Calvary. He learns also that the divine time for this trial of the whole world, under the offer of eternal life through Christ, and the conditions of the New Covenant, is yet future—during the Millennial age—according as it is written, "God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge [grant trial to] the world, by that man whom he hath ordained—Jesus Christ."—Acts 17:31.

Having learned this much, he rejoices in the *hope* of eternal life, and longs for release from the present conditions of weakness and the fall, and for a full delivery into the liberty (freedom from sin) of the sons of God. While thus rejoicing in his new-found *hope*, and looking forward expectantly for its realization, at the second coming of the Redeemer, to inaugurate the times of restitution of all things (Acts 3:19-23), he receives a further message to the effect that since he appreciates the divine goodness already made known to him, he is privileged to know of and to share in a still further blessing. The steps of grace are explained to him as follows, by the divine Word:

(1) The step of faith and acceptance of the great redemptive sacrifice which you have already taken is reckoned to you for and as *justification* in God's sight; and now being thus reckoned as justified, you are to be treated as not only freed from the sentence of death in Adam, but also as tho freed from your imperfections, inherited through the fall, which are reckoned as being "covered."

(2) All this is in order that you may take the second step, which is now due; namely, you may present your body to the Lord by full consecration, and without reservation: to be or to do or to suffer, to have or not to have, to enjoy or not to enjoy further, the things of this present lifetime; and to spend yourself and be spent, with all that you have and all that you are, in the Lord's service, in the service of the truth, and in the service of all those who are in harmony with the truth.

(3) It is pointed out to you that in many respects this is the pathway which the great Redeemer trod, and that by walking in this difficult "narrow way" you will be following in his footsteps and along the same path of sacrifice which he trod.

(4) Furthermore, the assurance is given that, if you follow in this pathway faithfully, to the end of life's journey, all of your unwilling and unintentional blemishes will continue to be covered by the merit of your Redeemer's sacrifice: so that, at the end of the journey, all these who are now "called" and who *thus* gladly obey the "call," will be granted also the privilege of sharing with the Redeemer in the honors and glories of his Millennial Kingdom: and of being instruments of God, with the Redeemer, for conferring upon the world of mankind all the gracious benefits and blessings purchased by the Redeemer's death, finished at Calvary;—sharing in the judging of the world, in the ruling of the world, and, as members of the royal priesthood, in the blessing and helping of the world back, by restitution paths,—to all that was lost in Adam and his transgression.

Whoever has heard this glorious message, in the true sense of hearing it—with the hearing of faith and acceptance—has received indeed what is called by some a "Second Blessing." If the forgiveness of his sins and reconciliation to the Lord, through the blood of the cross, the Christian's first experience in grace, was a great blessing that could scarcely be comprehended or measured, still more is this second blessing a cause for fulness of joy, in that it has brought to us begetting of the holy spirit, whereby we know that we are the sons of God, "and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." It is enough to know that, "Now we are the sons of God, and [that] it doth not yet appear what [the full completeness of the glory and blessing that shall come to us at his second advent] shall be, for we know that when he shall appear, *we shall be like him.*"—1 John 3:2.

It is this class that the Apostle addresses in the words of our text. We that have such blessings would surely be unappreciative, unthankful, if we are not content with such blessed things as *we have*. We have such things as should make us happy under the most adverse circumstances, so far as the present life is concerned. We, by the grace of God, have found the pearl of great price, and are not only content with the terms upon which it is offered to us, but most gladly, willingly, joyfully, we count all else but loss and dross that we may retain our ownership in it,—win Christ, and be found in him,—members of the body of the great Prophet, Priest and King, who shortly, as the antitype of Moses, shall stand forth as the deliverer of all who love righteousness, from the bondage of Sin and Satan.—Acts 3:22, 23.

All who have intelligently taken the position of followers of Christ, knew from their start in the narrow way to expect trials and difficulties and adversities, and have said to the Master:—

"Not for ease or worldly pleasure,
Nor for fame my prayer shall be;
Gladly will I toil and suffer,

Only let me walk with thee, close to thee."

We should view every affair and incident of this present life that is not painful as a cause for thankfulness to the Lord; because it is that much less than our covenant might legitimately require; for our Master distinctly informed us that the way was rugged, saying, "Whosoever will live godly in this present time shall suffer persecution." And furthermore, our Lord's own example of suffering and enduring patiently the mockings, slanders, evil speaking, and general contradiction of sinners against himself, and the examples of the Apostles, who followed closely in his footsteps in the same path, all indicate that, all things considered, we of the present time who "have not yet resisted unto *blood* [death], striving against sin" and the machinations of sinners and the wiles of the Adversary, have much to be thankful for, that our lines have fallen unto us in comparatively pleasant places. We have every reason for thankfulness, no reason for murmuring.

And not only are we to be appreciative of the smooth places along the "narrow way," in which the Lord gives rest to our weary feet, but we are to be thankful also for all the trials and tribulations. If by faith we have laid hold, first, upon justification; and secondly, upon the high calling, and its exceeding great and precious promises, we must thirdly lay hold also by faith on *the assurances* of the Lord's Word that all things are working together for good to those who have made this covenant with him, and who are seeking to perform it;—to those who love God, and who were called according to his purpose, to this high calling. Viewed from the proper standpoint, all the trials and difficulties which come to us will be seen to be mercies and blessings, designed to shape us in conformity with the lines of character manifested in our Lord and Head, and to polish us and to make us fit for the inheritance of the saints in light. While, therefore, we are not to rush into temptation, nor to bring upon ourselves persecution by injudicious conduct, yet when these things come to us as rewards for fidelity to principles of truth and righteousness, exercised in the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience and love, we are to rejoice in them, as so many ministries of evil toward us, which under divine guidance are fitting and preparing us to further reflect the Lord's likeness, and to further be his representatives and ministers of righteousness, now and hereafter. And to shrink back from and to avoid the trials and difficulties and persecutions incident to faithfulness to the Lord and to his service, would be, in a measure at least, to draw back from our consecration, which is to suffer with him, that we may also reign with him—to be dead with him, that we may also live with him.

**FEW ARE APPRECIATIVE—FEW VALUE THE THINGS
THAT THEY HAVE.**

But evidently only the smaller number of those who have named the name of Christ, and who have made consecration of life and time and influence and all things to him, have ever appreciated these matters in their true light; and hence, not only are the so-called Christian nations the most discontented peoples of the world, but professed Christians are often among the most discontented and unhappy of individuals. Nay more, even some of those who have made the full consecration to the Lord, and some who have

come to a considerable knowledge of present truth and respecting the wonderful time in which we are living, and the high calling and its object, and the glories to follow the sufferings of this present time,—many of these also, we fear, are among the discontented of the world,—unhappy, restless, not enjoying the *rest* which God provides for his people, not having "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" to rule in their hearts and keep all the other affairs of life in subjection and in order.

Brethren, these things ought not so to be. See to it that they do not so continue. Remember that according to our covenant we sacrificed all of our earthly interests and rights, that we might become sharers with our Master in the divine nature and all the heavenly promises. Remember that the only things of an earthly kind promised us by the Lord are that we shall have the things *needful*. If we learn aright the lessons of necessity, we will find that the things needful for our sustenance might mean a bill of fare of very limited variety and of very inexpensive food; and it might mean a wardrobe of great simplicity and of very little cost; and it might mean a home of very humble appearance and very small and very scantily furnished. Whatever we have more than *necessity* is that much more than the Lord has promised to us in this present time; and is a cause for thankfulness of lip, and gratitude of heart.

With these things rightly viewed, where is the occasion or the desire to murmur or complain about such things as we have? Where would be the desire to wish for, hope for, or ask for more than the Lord has promised to give us, and more than his unerring wisdom has seen would be best for us? If these lessons from the Lord's Word are received into the good soil of honest hearts, they will speedily bring forth, under the sunshine of the divine favor and the droppings of divine grace, a hundredfold more of joy and peace and trust and contentment and happiness and love, in the lives of all who put them into exercise: and the influence upon our families, neighbors and associates will be a good influence, for their happiness as well as our own.

Instead of complaining about the weather, that it is too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry, too bright or too dark, or that it is too foggy or cloudy or murky, or something, let us be content with such weather as we have. We did not make it and we cannot change it. And since our wise and loving heavenly Father sees best to permit it so now, we see it best to have it so now. In his own good time his favor shall reach not only the world of mankind, to lift up and bless and heal it, but will reach also the home of mankind, the earth, to bring it into the Paradisaic condition which he has promised it shall have in the "times of restitution of all things."

If your health is not the best, do not go mourning and complaining all your days; be thankful—thankful that it is not worse, remembering that as a member of the fallen race the full penalty of sin against you is pain and suffering unto death. Whatever therefore you have, that is moderate or endurable or in some measure enjoyable, be very thankful, very grateful, and make the most of it.

Our text, then, is not only a good medicine to bring us spiritual health and joy in the Lord, but also very profitable to our physical health; for it is unquestionably a fact that

the majority of people aggravate their physical complaints and diseases by their fretfulness and unhappiness of mind. If you are one of the Lord's children, remember the words of our Redeemer, Master and Forerunner in the narrow way, to the effect that the Gentiles (those who know not God, who are not his covenant people) seek continually after what they shall eat, what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed, and that we should not be like unto them, because our Heavenly Father knoweth what things we have need of, before we ask him; and he has already promised, that we shall have *what is best for us*.

If your position in life is a lowly one, and requires continual labor to secure the things needful, do not complain, but, on the contrary, render thanks—thanks for the health and strength to perform the needed labor; thanks for the realization that the present brief life is only the schooling time, and that the lessons of the present, rightly learned, will bring riches of grace and glory which the world could neither give nor take away. Think then, on the other hand, of the fact that your condition is in some respects more favorable than that of some others who seem to be more prosperous or better situated: how many who have had wealth and leisure have found in them a curse! How many who have not been cursed by wealth have found that the deceitfulness of riches and the pride they are apt to induce are hindrances instead of helps in the "narrow way;" how many have found the meaning of the Lord's words, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God."

Remember also the words of the Apostle, that not many rich, not many great, not many learned, are amongst God's chosen; that chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, shall be heirs of the Kingdom. Realizing that riches of faith, riches of trust, riches of contentment, and riches of godliness, with the fruits of the spirit which accompany these constitute the true riches, give thanks to the Lord that in his wisdom and grace he has so favorably situated you.

"HAVE FAITH IN GOD"—"LORD, INCREASE OUR FAITH."

The same principle holds good with reference to all of our affairs, no matter what. The lesson of *faith*, to those who have become the Lord's consecrated people, is not merely faith in doctrines and theories, nor, indeed, chiefly this faith. The chief feature of faith is confidence in God; that what he has promised he is able and willing to fulfil. This faith grasps not only the things to come, but also the things present; this faith rejoices not only in the glory that shall be revealed, but rejoices also in the sufferings and trials and difficulties and all the rich experiences which an all-wise Father sees best to permit. Let us therefore, as the Apostle exhorts, rejoice evermore, "in everything giving thanks."—1 Thess. 5:18; Eph. 5:20.

The best illustrations of this true faith, this *continuous confidence in God*, is found, as we should expect, in our dear Redeemer's experiences and their narrative. Realizing that he was in the world for the purpose of serving the divine plan, he realized also continually the supervision of divine wisdom in respect to all his affairs: consequently he

not only went to the Father frequently in prayer, and went to the Word of the Lord for guidance, but every experience through which he passed, and all the opposition with which he met, he recognized as being under the divine *supervision*. He knew that he was fully consecrated to the Father, and seeking not his own will but the will of him that sent him; he knew consequently that the Father's providential care was superintending all the affairs of his life.

This is forcibly illustrated in his answer to Pilate; when the latter said to him, "Knowest thou not that I have power either to deliver thee or to put thee to death?" Jesus answered, "Thou couldest have no power, except it were given thee of my Father." Again he said, with respect to the cup of suffering and ignominy, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Indeed, it was sufficient for him in any and every matter to realize that the Father was controlling: this thought gave him courage to do, to suffer and to bear.

And similar confidence in divine Providence is necessary to all who would come off conquerors through him who loved us and died for us. If we can feel sure that we have fully surrendered ourselves to God according to his call, we may also feel sure that all things are working for our *good*: we may realize in every emergency of life that the Father has prepared the cup, and will sustain and bless us while we drink it: our Lord Jesus, the Father's representative, oversees our trials and ignominy and suffering; he permits the cup to be prepared for us by blinded servants of Satan. This knowledge should not only enable us to take joyfully the spoiling of our goods (anything that we deemed precious, trade, influence, good name, etc.), but should enable us also to entreat with kindness and gentleness, and with a spirit of forgiveness those who prepare and administer the cup of our sufferings. But none can have this confidence of faith—none should have it—except one certain, particular class; and it is not a large class as compared to the world, but a "little flock"—those who have believed in the precious blood unto justification, and who have, as members of the body of Christ, consecrated themselves unreservedly to walk in their Redeemer's footsteps, to suffer with him, and to be finally glorified together with him.

"WHAT IS FAITH'S FOUNDATION STRONG?"

In our text, after the Apostle has urged us to be "content with such things as ye have," he adds the reason or ground upon which this advice is given, saying, "For he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Yes; this is the true ground of contentment, the realization of the Lord's care, and that the Lord's wisdom and grace are being exercised towards us,—and that such things as he grants are the things which are best for us, and which we would choose for ourselves, if we had sufficient wisdom and insight into all the circumstances of the case.

The Apostle adds, "So then we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me." The whole world has wondered at the intelligent courage of the humble ones of the Lord's people. The secret of their courage and of their strength is

in their confidence that the Lord is their helper, that he, with wisdom and love which are infinite, is both able and willing to make all things work together for their good.

Possibly some may be inclined to wonder why so much attention has been given in these columns of late to themes similar to the one here discussed, and kindred topics calculated to develop more and more the spirit of love and the various fruits of that spirit, and to counteract the spirit of selfishness, and the evil fruits of that spirit. We answer, it is because we believe these lessons to be specially opportune at the present time. The Lord, by his grace, has removed many blinding errors from our minds, and given us clearer insight of his glorious plans, and revealed to us his glorious character in connection with his plan; and there has perhaps been more or less danger, that in such a study of theology the real object of all this knowledge, the object of the Gospel, may be lost sight of. It is not God's object to merely find an intellectual people, nor to instruct a people with reference to his plans, but to sanctify a people with the truth, and thus to make them "meet [fit] for the inheritance of the saints in light." We are of the opinion that the testings which the Lord designs for his people are *not merely doctrinal tests*, and consequently we expect, more and more, that the harvest siftings and separations amongst those who come to a knowledge of the truth, will be considerably along the lines of character, and of the fruits of the spirit.

The Lord's final decision is not, If you be ignorant of certain things you are none of mine; nor, If you have certain knowledge you are mine; but, "If any man have not the spirit [disposition, mind] of Christ, he is none of his." And if we are right in this, dear readers, it is of paramount importance that we, as soldiers of the cross, put on not only the intellectual covering, the helmet of salvation, but also the heart covering, love of righteousness and truth and goodness and purity, with the shield of faith. The breastplate of righteousness will be found to be one of the most important pieces of armor in the battle which is upon us, and respecting which we are told that thousands shall fall at our side.—Psa. 91:7; Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:11.

Not only so, but we believe that the lesson foregoing is of great importance, because the time is short; and those of the Lord's people who do not soon start to cultivate a spirit of contentment and thankfulness will not only not be fit for the Kingdom, but will as sharers of the world's spirit of discontent be in sore distress with the world very shortly, in the great time of trouble. Contentment and the faith which it implies, are necessary to godliness: and whoever is attempting godliness without striving for cultivation of contentment will surely make a failure of it. Godliness and the fruits of the spirit, meekness, patience, gentleness, longsuffering, brotherly-kindness, love, will not grow in the garden of the soul, where the weeds of discontent are permitted to sap the strength and vitiate the air with their noxious presence and influence.

The sentiment of one of our precious hymns is quite to the point, and we desire, for ourselves and for all of the Lord's people, that condition of faith and consecration and contentment which will permit us to sing from the heart, with the spirit and with the understanding also, the words:—

"Content with beholding his face,
My all to his pleasure resigned,
No changes of season or place
Can make any change in my mind.

"While blest with the sense of his love
A palace a toy would appear,
And prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus still dwelt with me there."

Who can tell that the Lord may not ultimately put some such tests to us, as these mentioned by the poet which were applied to himself and to others of the faithful in the past? Let us remember that we will not be faithful in large things unless we have learned to be faithful in little things. Let each, therefore, begin, and faithfully continue, a transformation of his life along these lines of godliness with contentment in the most trifling affairs of life. He will thus not only be making himself and others the happier in the present time, but he will be preparing himself for greater trials and tests that the Lord may be pleased to impose later, to prove to what extent we are overcomers of the world and of its spirit.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your *faith*;" because faith lies at the foundation of all loyalty to God and his cause. Faith in the divine supervision of all our affairs not only gives peace and content, but it saps the root of all selfish ambitions and vain gloryings and boastings; because of our faith in the Lord's Word, that "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted and he that exalteth himself shall be abased." Faith in the Lord's supervision *prefers* the Lord's arrangement to any other as respects the sufferings of this present time and the glory that is to follow; and hence it doth not puff up but builds up in the character-likeness of our Redeemer.

MARCH 7

If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us—1 John 4:12.

Whether I am something or nothing in God's estimation is to be measured by *my love* for Him, for His brethren, for His cause, for the world in general, and even for my enemies, rather than by my knowledge or fame or oratory. In the measurement of character, therefore, we are to put love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness and acceptance to the Lord. Those who have received the holy Spirit should all be good tempered. In no way can we better show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light than by the exhibition of the spirit of love in the daily affairs of life—Z '03, 56, 57 (R 3150).

The Scriptures declare that God is love, and that He dwells in His people, not personally, but by His Spirit, His qualities. Consequently, whoever exhibits this quality of love is indwelt by God, and he who continues to manifest this quality amid the various experiences of life will have the joy of seeing the Divine love perfected in him—P '35, 31.

Parallel passages: John 3:16; 6:54-56; 13:34; 14:21-23; 15:7-12; 17:21; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 John 3:16-18, 22-24; 4:7, 13, 15-19; Rom. 8:8-17; Gal. 4:5, 6.

Hymns: 165, 166, 23, 47, 74, 114, 105.

Poems of Dawn, 97: *In My Name*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 205 (R 4849).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What assisted or hindered therein? In what did they result?

IN MY NAME

THERE were only two or three of us
Who came to the place of prayer—
Came in the teeth of the driving storm;
But for that we did not care,
Since after our hymns of praise had risen,
And our earnest prayers were said,
The Master Himself was present there,
And He gave us the living bread.

We noted the look in each other's face,
So loving, and glad, and free;
We felt His touch when our heads were bowed,
We heard His "Come to Me!"
Nobody saw Him lift the latch,

And none unbarred the door;
But "Peace" was His token in every heart,
And how could we ask for more?

Each of us felt the relief from sin,
Christ's purchase for one and all;
Each of us dropped his load of care,
And heard the Heavenly call;
And over our spirits a blessed calm
Swept in from the Jasper Sea,
And strength was ours for the toil of life
In the days that were yet to be.

It was only a handful gathered in
To the little place of prayer,
Outside were struggle and strife and sin,
But the Lord Himself was there.
He came to redeem the pledge He gave—
Wherever his loved ones be,
To give His comfort and joy to them,
Though they count but two or three.

R4849: THE LOVE REQUIRED OF THE NEW CREATION

**"If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us."
—1 John 4:12.**

THERE IS a great difference between human or animal love, such as the members of a family have for one another, and that love to which this text refers. The love required of members of the Body of Christ is a love resulting from mutual relationship to the Lord, and comes from the Spirit of God dwelling in them—a God-like love, which marks them as of His Spirit, having been begotten to His disposition. There should be something about the character of the Lord's people which would demonstrate on all occasions that they possess true love for one another. If this is not the case the lack of love would be a reflection upon them all.

As we learn to love one another the love of God is being perfected in us, the true, benevolent love which the Lord commands. The Lord said that we should love one another as He has loved us—to the extent of being willing to lay down our lives for one another. We are not to love *some* of the brethren *some of the time*, and *some* of the brethren *all of the time*; but we should *love all of the brethren all of the time*; and overlook their frailties and imperfections, taking that high standpoint from which God views them, forgiving one another, as God, for Christ's sake, overlooks *our* blemishes. We ought to forgive those who trespass against us as we hope and trust that God will forgive our trespasses. No one can be of the "elect" class unless this love be perfected in

him. He may not gain so full a control of the flesh that he will never speak sharply, hastily, etc., but he must reach the place where he will be perfect in intention before he can be accepted as a member of the Kingdom.

The Apostle Paul says that "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the Law." (Rom. 13:10) The Divine Law which the Apostle had specially before his mind was the Law given to Israel—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might"; and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18.) This Law of God fulfilled—filled full, completely met—requires that the heart shall be full of love. All the mind and soul and strength are required to fulfil this Law. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." Yet one might work ill through ignorance and superstition and misunderstanding, through imperfection of the flesh, while his heart intentions were good. Saul of Tarsus worked much ill to his neighbors. With good intention, doubtless, some of our Catholic friends and some of our Protestant friends have worked ill to their neighbors. We cannot say that because they worked ill to their neighbors they had no love, but that they did not have it to the degree required by the Law; for *perfect love* would work *no ill* to his neighbor. Whoever would work ill to his neighbor, with full knowledge, would not have love.

GOES BEYOND THE JEWISH LAW

There is a force in the word *therefore* in the text, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, *therefore*, love is the fulfilling of the Law." The Law was given to restrain wrong deeds, wrong words, wrong sentiments toward another. That Law was evidently not intended to enumerate all the things that should not be done, for it *works no ill*. One might, therefore, fulfil the Law of the Ten Commandments if he works no ill to his neighbor, but loves him as himself. The word *therefore* gives us the thought that the Apostle had in mind the Jewish Law and not the Law of the New Creation. Merely abstaining from evil and loving our neighbor as ourselves would not fulfil the Law as given to the New Creature by the Lord; but it would fill the Law of Justice given to the Jews.

But our Lord magnified that Law and also gave us a *new* command. The Love that would be in His followers, His disciples, was shown in His words, "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12.) To do this would be far more than to do no injury to another. It would be *laying down our lives* for one another. This is far beyond any requirement of the Law. Justice could not say, "You must go over and clean the snow from your neighbor's pavement"; but Justice would say, "You must not throw any snow upon your neighbor's pavement." But Love says more than this. The new Law that is given to us is the Law of Sacrifice. We who are in the Body of Christ must love one another as Jesus loved us, to the extent of sacrificing our interests, our comforts, our privileges, in the interest of others.

He who does not find his heart in harmony with this Law of the New Creation—love, mercy, kindness, gentleness, goodness—lacks the evidence, or proof, that he is in any sense accepted of God as a joint-heir with Christ. If we have not love in our heart for the brethren, and the love of gentleness and benevolence toward all men, and even toward the

brute creation, we have not the spirit which will carry us through in making the sacrifices necessary under present conditions. It will be only a question of time with such when the power of pride or vainglory holding them in the way of self-sacrifice will snap asunder and selfishness take full control. We are to keep the Law in our *minds*. But while our *minds* are *perfect*, we find imperfections of the flesh which hinder us from doing all that we wish to do. Hence, we need the sufficiency that is in Christ. We are trusting that God will accept the good intentions of the heart, of the mind, instead of counting against us the imperfections of our flesh.

AN AGGRESSIVE AS WELL AS DEFENSIVE WARFARE NECESSARY

God would have us watch for evidences of His will and profit by all the experiences which He permits to come to us in our every-day life, humbly accepting any discipline; and having this spirit we shall be led on from grace to grace and from victory unto victory. Merely to stand and battle on the *defensive* is very wearisome and gains no victory. To gain the victory we must not only put on the whole armor of God, but we must be heroes in the strife and wage an *aggressive* warfare upon the lusts of the eye and flesh and pride of life and all the foes of righteousness and purity.

Love—love for the Lord, for the Truth and for righteousness—must inspire us or we shall never be victors. Love will keep us faithful even unto death and make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Where fervent love rules in the heart it implies that the heart is *fully submitted* to the Lord, and that means that nine-tenths of the battle is already won. But even then, as the Apostle Jude says (Jude 21), we must *keep ourselves* in the love of God, in watchfulness and prayer and zeal; and grace will abound where love abounds.

We keep ourselves in the love of God by striving to do always those things that are pleasing to Him. He can love *only perfection*; and it is impossible for us to be perfect. He perceives, however, that our weaknesses are not of the will but of the flesh, and He has provided an Advocate for us to whom we may come if we commit trespasses. Thus we keep ourselves in the love of God and walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Where our footsteps may deviate from the way we have the precious blood of Jesus to cleanse us. When we have our new bodies we shall be continually in His love and always pleasing to Him, because we shall have no bodily imperfection to mar the perfection of our will.

LET US BEWARE OF SELFISHNESS

Selfishness is the surest cause of separation from the love of God. When we made our consecration to the Lord and He accepted us as New Creatures in Christ and begat us with the Holy Spirit, it was because we surrendered *self*. If at any time we turn back to walk after the flesh, we are departing from our consecration. This might be manifest in many ways: in slackness instead of zeal; in carelessness instead of carefulness; in a selfish feeling of jealousy of spirit; or in anger, hatred, strife. All these are so much of the Old Creature—wrong conditions from which we thought we had escaped. In proportion

as the Old Creature triumphs the New Creature will fall; and thus we will gradually cease to be in the love of God. These wrong conditions will hinder the keeping of ourselves in the love of God, which signifies the keeping of ourselves in the proper attitude toward God and Jesus. We are to press on and make our sacrifice, if possible, larger every way to the Lord and the brethren.

Daily and hourly we may keep ourselves in the Lord's love by obedience to the principles of righteousness and faithfulness to our covenant and a growing love for these. We are to rejoice in every experience of life—its trials, difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, no less than in its pleasures, if by any or all of these means the Lord shall instruct us and give us clearer insight into our own deficiencies and a still clearer insight into that perfect law of liberty and love which He has established and to which He requires our full and loyal heart-submission.

In such faithful obedience to the truth and earnest endeavor to conform to its principles, the way and the truth grow more and more precious and our willing feet with joy are led in the paths of righteousness and peace—into life everlasting.

MARCH 8

God hath set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him—1 Cor. 12:18.

No member of the Body of Christ can say that he has no need for another member, and no member may say that there is nothing whatever that he can do in the service of the Body. Under the guidance of our glorious Head each member who is filled with His Spirit, and desirous of serving Him, may do so. When the time for rewards shall have come, who knows how much of the usefulness of Paul and Apollos may be accredited to some of the humble ones, such as Aquila and Priscilla, who in various ways ministered to and encouraged and supported their abler brethren in the Lord's work—Z '03, 59 (R 3152).

If we could but learn the lesson that God sets the members in the Body as it pleases Him, not only would we not envy the fellow-members their places, but we would cheerfully co-operate with them in fulfilling the privileges of their places. God is pleased to place each member in the Body, where he can best help the others, and where he can best be helped by the others—P '34, 31.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 12:5-31; 3:5; 4:1-16; Rom. 12:3-8; 8:29; Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:15; 4:3-6, 11-15; 5:23, 30; Col. 1:24; 2:10; Acts 2:36; Heb. 3:3, 6; Rev. 1:13; 2:1.

Hymns: 21, 23, 94, 96, 170, 6, 322.

Poems of Dawn, 232: *In the Garden of the Lord.*

Tower Reading: Z '13, 295 (R 5321).

Questions: How have I acted this week toward the brethren? Why did I so act? What were the results?

IN THE GARDEN OF THE LORD

LAST night I dreamed the Master came to me and
gently said,
"Beloved, lay thy cross aside, and come with me
awhile,
For I would have thee rest within the garden of the
Lord."
And then He took my trembling hand and led me
through the gloom
Until we came to where a massive gateway barred
our path,—
The gates were closed, but opened at the Master's
sweet command.
We entered, and the shadows fled before His radiant
smile,—

Oh, vision rapturous, can words be found to tell how
fair!

Ten thousand roses beckoned with Love's crimson
hue, and round

About our feet the violets nestled in their purple grief;
While velvet pansies, clothed in royalty, together grew
With lovely, clinging, pink and white sweet peas, and
close beside,

The lilies of the valley bent in sweet humility,—
And everywhere, the tender grass, a carpet soft and
cool.

And often as we passed, the Master's hand with
loving touch
Did rest upon some drooping flower, and lo! at once
it seemed

Refreshed. At last we came to where a stately lily
stood,

Its snowy crown uplifted like a chime of silvery bells,
Whose swaying filled the garden with a fragrance
sweet and rare.

We closer drew, and then I saw, alas! how here and
there

A petal fair was torn and brown, as though by some
rude wind

Or scorching heat. I wondered greatly at the sight,
then turned,

The question on my lips,—when suddenly there rose
a storm

So fierce that every flower in the garden bent its head;
And then a shower of flaming arrows, hurled by
shadowy forms

Outside the garden's ivy-covered walls, rained down
upon

The lilies, while I clung in terror to my Heavenly
Guide.

A moment only did the storm prevail, and then I
heard

The Master's "Peace, be still!" The tempest ceased,
and there was calm,

The wonderous light grew dim, the garden vanished,—
and I woke.

The Master had not spoken thus, and yet I seemed
to know

The fair dream-garden was a picture of his "little

ones,"
 (He neither sleeps nor slumbers in His watch-care
 over these),
 And then the thought,—if in this garden I might
 choose *my* place,
 Would I be like the *rose*? Ah! no, lest in my
 passionate zeal
 To show by works my heart of love, I should forget
 the thorns,
 Dear Lord, and wound Thy loving hand! Ah! then,
 perhaps I would
 The *lily* be, and sound Thy blessed Truth o'er land
 and sea
 In clear-toned eloquence. Ah! no, I might not bear
 the storms
 That beat upon the one whose head Thou hast
 uplifted far
 Above his fellows,—and a shining mark for Satan's
 darts!
 And thus I thought on each and all that garden's
 lovely ones,
 Then cried, "My blessed Lord, if I might choose,
 Oh, let me be
 The *tender grass*, that I may rest and soothe Thy
 weariness,—
 A lowly place, safe-sheltered from the wind and fiery
 dart,—
 What rapture this,—to lay down life itself beneath
 Thy feet!"

R5321: THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE THE SPIRIT OF DISCIPLESHIP

"Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."—Matt. 20:27.

PROPER aspirations are very beneficial, both to the person himself and to those with whom he comes in contact. Our Lord had an aspiration. We read of Him that He "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame." (Heb. 12:2.) There are worthy incentives; otherwise the Father would not have set one before His Son. The thought which should inspire us is that if we are faithful in the things of this present time, the Lord will make us ruler over many things. So the ardent desire to obtain these things which God has reserved for those who love Him, is laudable; for these blessings are of God.

Every New Creature has high aspirations. In fact, every one should have an ideal toward which he is striving; and having this wish to attain it indicates that there is a

motive behind the desire. It is altogether proper to have incentives before the mind, and it is proper to know what kind are worthy of our efforts; otherwise wrong ones might lead us astray. In our text a most laudable aspiration is placed before us.

The Church, which is the representative of Christ, is the Body of our Lord in the flesh. And the Apostle Paul, speaking of ambitions, advised the Church that they should have the more profitable aspirations, that they might be teachers, instructors of the flock; for this is the most useful office in the Church. It is known that one gift of St. Paul's time was speaking in an unknown tongue. It was a very remarkable gift. But the Apostle pointed out that to speak in an unknown tongue was not so much to be sought after as some gift that would be useful in the Church.

We do not have these miraculous gifts in the present time, but we have the Word of God, and the desire to be able to make known the Truth of the Lord. Therefore the gift of oratory is still a desirable one. The Apostle proceeded to point out that we should desire to have the fruits of the Spirit—that they may have a controlling influence upon us.

RESPONSIBILITY UPON EACH ECCLESIA

As respects positions in the Church, the Lord indicated that *He* would do the setting. "Now God hath set the various members in the Body as it hath pleased Him." God ordained that there should be in the Body this setting; for instance, the service of the eye. As the eye member assists the human body, so the eye member in the Church may be very assistful to the Body of Christ. Also there are ear members, foot members, hand members and tongue members. These different members have unlike services to perform for the welfare of the whole body. The hand is not to say to the foot, "I have no need of thee," or vice versa.—I Corinthians 12:14-31.

If the body tries to walk on the *hands*, it is not the Divine order. The body should walk on the *feet*. So it is in a congregation. But if the congregation lays too much on the feet members, it is depriving the hand members of their use. The various members should be in the positions where they can render the most efficient service. In other words, the congregation should seek to know the service God has evidently prepared each individual to perform. They are to seek to use their best judgment, to place the right person in the right position.

We see congregations occasionally where they try to make *all* walk on the hands and not on the feet. That congregation loses in not putting every member into the place for which Divine Providence has especially qualified him. To do so is the responsibility of the congregation. However, if it tries to make the Body walk on the hands instead of the feet, it will learn in time, probably, to get the hands to exercise themselves in their own position, and likewise the feet in theirs; and each member will finally do the service for which he is fitted.

HUMILITY INDISPENSABLE TO GOD'S SERVICE

Not only is it to the disadvantage of the congregation for the members to be in the wrong positions, but it is also wrong for the members to try to do other services than those which they *should be* doing. It is not in our power to change ourselves from what we are by nature. Only Divine Power could prepare us for service in another part of the Body. Our proper attitude should be to really *serve* the Body of Christ, to *serve* the Lord. We should notice wherever there is a service to be rendered which we *can* do. "Do with thy might what thy hands find to do."

The difficulty with many in the Church is that they desire to do what somebody else is doing—something that they admire. They are not looking around to see what they *can always* do—do good unto all men, as they have opportunity, but especially unto those who are of the household of faith. They have not the proper spirit of discipleship. Therefore the injunction of our text should lead them to say to themselves, My highest ambition should be to *serve* the Lord *acceptably*, and let Him take care of the *place* where I may serve. Here is a little place; there is a little corner. I will try to do the thing which is needful in my position. If the Lord shall open the way, and show me something else which seems to be more important, I will take that. But I will do with my might what it is my duty to do—whether it is sweeping, or engaging a hall for a meeting. Whatever comes as an opportunity to me, that I will do.

This does not mean that we have no aspirations. The controlling impulse is to serve the Church. Here we have a laudable motive, a proper desire. But it seems that some are *ambitious*—seek to be *chief*. Our own ambition (and we believe it would also be the Spirit of the Lord) is not to *help* one who aspires to the chief place, into the position which he seeks. To assist him in such a course would do injury both to him and the cause. But if we find any one seeking to do with his might what his hands find to do, we may be sure that this will be approved of the Lord; and perhaps the Lord will later give him some more important work in recognition of his faithful service to Him.

SELF-SEEKING TO BE DEPRECATED

Each is to be content with what the Lord's Providence opens up to him. He is not to be self-seeking. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 18:14.) He that exalteth *himself* is not to be exalted by the *Church*; for he will not be exalted by the Lord. He that humbleth himself will be exalted, either by the vote of the congregation, or by the Lord's will.

As the matter is stated in our text, we think the Lord meant this: There will be some of you who necessarily will be recognized as chief. There are various kinds of service, and it is necessary to have a chief in connection with the services of each congregation. God has recognized this Himself. He made Jesus a Chief. He passed by Satan, who was self-seeking. He chose Jesus, and made the road very narrow to Him! But after Jesus had proved His humility, then the Father gave Him the high exaltation, gave Him the great reward promised.

The Father is seeking now those who will have the same spirit of *humility*, the same spirit of *service*, that the Lord Jesus manifested. We look at Him, and we see that, while the Father held out the condition of being *chief*, He also held out the condition of being *servant*. Jesus, we see, was the Servant of all. Therefore God exalted Him and gave Him a name above every name.

So it should be with each little congregation of the Church. It is the Lord's will that not every one who would be its chief servant should be recognized as the chief. But the Lord will recognize the one who will show himself humble-minded, as He has shown Himself to be, in doing *anything* for the brethren. Let such be your servant. Each should consider that the chief honor amongst you, amongst the Lord's brethren, is to be servant. And the one who is most faithful should be given the opportunity to serve. In that sense he would be your chief.

MARCH 9

God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister—
Heb. 6:10.

No child of the Lord should be content to let the days of the present harvest time go by with their golden opportunities for service and co-operation without seeking each day to lift the royal banner himself, and publicly to show forth the praises of Him who has called him out of darkness into light, or without assisting and co-operating with others whom the Lord in His providence has placed in more advantageous positions for public service—Z '03, 59 (R 3152).

The work and labor flowing out of love, which the saints perform for the development and perfection of one another in Christlikeness, should primarily be shown for His name, for the glory of God; and such work and labor of love—*marvelous thought!*—God owns with appreciation, and thus His justice forbids His forgetting the same—P '33, 46.

Parallel passages: Prov. 14:31; 22:9; 28:27; 31:20; Matt. 10:40-42; 18:5, 6; Acts 11:29; 24:17; Rom. 12:13; 15:25, 26; 2 Cor. 8, 9; 1 Thes. 1:3, 6, 7; 2 Tim. 1:18.

Hymns: 46, 11, 19, 45, 235, 286, 333.

Poems of Dawn, 220: *She Hath Done What She Could*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 380 (R 5818).

Questions: What were this week's experiences as to the text? How were they undergone? What were their results?

"SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD"

THE Feast was spread at Simon's house, and as
they sat at meat,
A woman came and silent stood within the open
door—
Close pressed against her throbbing heart an alabaster
box
Of purest spikenard, costly, rare, she held. With modest fear,
She dreaded to attract the curious gaze of those
within,
And yet her well-beloved Friend was there, her
Master, Lord.
With wondrous intuition she divined that this might
be
Her last, her only opportunity to show her love;
She thought of all that He had done for her, the
holy hours

She spent enraptured at His feet, unmindful of all
else,
If only she might hear those words of Truth, those
words of *Life*.
She thought of that dark hour when Lazarus lay
within the tomb
And how He turned her night to day, her weeping
into joy.
Her fair face flushed, with deepening gratitude her
pure eyes shone;
With swift, light step she crossed the crowded room.
She bravely met
Those questioning eyes (for Love will find its way
through paths where lions
Fear to tread); with trembling hands she broke the
seal and poured
The precious contents of the box upon her Savior's
feet,
And all the house was filled with fragrance wonderful
and sweet.
She could not speak, her heart's devotion was too
deep, her tears
Fell softly, while she took her chiefest ornament, her
long
And silken hair and wiped His sacred feet,—when
suddenly
A rude voice broke the golden silence with, "What
waste! this might
Have sold for much, *to feed the poor!*" She lower
bent her head—
*To her it seemed so mean a gift for love so great to
make!*
Again a voice re-echoed through the room, her
blessed Lord's,
(He half arose and gently laid His hand upon her
hair)—
And how it thrilled her fainting heart to hear Him
sweetly say,
"Rebuke her not, for she hath wrought a good work,
what she could;
Aforehand, to anoint Me for my burying, she hath
come,
and this her deed of love throughout the ages shall
be told!"

discouragement. He intimates that while they had begun well, their zeal had cooled to some extent. In this chapter and on to the tenth inclusive, he points out the danger of falling back and away after we have become Christians. And to those who are likely to become discouraged he gives the exhortation of our text, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love." We might inquire, What great work, or labor of love, could they do that would constitute it unrighteous for God to forget to reward it? Are not good works the proper course for all mankind? How would it be unrighteous for God to forget these good works?

The answer of Scripture would seem to be that the world cannot do any good works that God could acknowledge—"There is none righteous, no, not one." But "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love," writes the Apostle. What does he mean? We reply, He is addressing Christians, those who have become God's children by entering into a covenant with Him. They were children of wrath, even as others; and still, according to the flesh, they are imperfect. But God is not dealing with these according to the flesh. He has received them into His family under a special arrangement, a Covenant of Sacrifice. In that Covenant He agreed that through Christ He would make allowance for their weaknesses, and deal with them according to the intentions of their hearts and minds, according as they would seek to please Him as His children. God has thus bound Himself of His own free will by entering into a Covenant with His people. He is bound to them, on the one side, and they are bound to Him, on the other side. Neither can escape the conditions of that Covenant.

DANGER OF LOSING THE REWARD

These Covenanters were members of Adam's fallen race, condemned to death. Ah, yes! but this is the race for whom Christ died, and who will be recovered from death and from the condemnation of sin that came through Adam's disobedience. And this merit of Christ's death was applied first for a choice class who during the Gospel Age should long after God and gladly accept His arrangement through Christ. This being so, when these heard of Christ as the Redeemer, they believed on Him, they sacrificed their earthly hopes, aims, ambitions—all—in order that they might enter into this Covenant with the Lord. The thought which inspired them to take this step was the hope that they might attain to the spiritual inheritance, to be joint-inheritors with Christ in the Kingdom to be set up on the earth. This was something to which God had opened up the way, through His provision in Christ. They gave up the earthly things for the grander, the Heavenly. They voluntarily sacrificed all earthly rights and interests. They bound themselves irrevocably to the Lord.

Now if they should make a failure in this matter, they would lose absolutely everything. The Apostle is pointing out this fact. They have acknowledged God's arrangement, and there is a great reward coming to them under their Covenant with Him. Do not, he urges, forfeit this reward by turning away from the Lord and becoming cold or lukewarm, which condition might lead on to entire rejection of God. Rather go on, and be of good courage; and the Lord, Jehovah Himself, shall strengthen your hearts; wait expectantly on Him.

In the 10th Chapter, the Apostle tells them of how some of them had in the past endured a great fight of afflictions, and of how others had suffered with those in affliction in that they had been sympathizers and companions of those who had been so persecuted. All this was endured for the Lord's sake, for love of the brethren, and in harmony with God's arrangement. Therefore they should have confidence in God, that He loved them and appreciated all they had borne for Him. The Apostle exhorts them again not to turn back, not to be discouraged, but to be encouraged; and again he assures them of his confidence that they would persevere to the end.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF MINISTERING TO THE SAINTS

St. Paul declares that their labors of love were shown toward God's name. This honor toward God's name consisted in their ministering to the saints. This was a proof of their love for the Lord. This ministry, too, had been kept up. The saints represent God in the world. Whatever is done for the saints is, therefore, done for God. There is a distinction to be noted in the Bible as respects those who are in covenant relationship with God and those who are not in covenant relationship with Him. We have certain duties toward the world. We have responsibilities toward them. The Golden Rule is to operate always and toward all men. But we have not the same obligation toward the world that we have toward the saints. Whoever honors the saints and serves them, honors and serves God. This seems to be the Apostle's thought in the matter.

We are not to understand that the Lord would be displeased that we should do good to all men. Rather the Apostle urges, "Let us do good unto all men as we have opportunity." Be generous, be kind to everybody, but especially to the saints. (Galatians 6:10.) This is what is particularly pleasing to God. Every service lovingly and gladly rendered to the saints is rendered unto His glory. This is true in a very special sense; for there are people in the world who might be naturally more admirable in character, and it might be more pleasing to serve them than to serve many of the saints, who might be ruder, cruder, in some respects. But in the service to the saints there is a special blessing from the Lord. We are to have this in mind when meeting and fellowshiping with those who have become children of God, and when we have opportunities to assist or comfort them. They must have our love, our cooperation, our sympathy, our aid. There may be more or less option in respect to others, but not in respect to our brethren in Christ.

This same principle, to some extent, holds good amongst worldly people. For instance, an Odd Fellow would show favors toward an Odd Fellow, whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, that he would not show to others. And the same with Masons. A Mason would show favor to a Mason the world over, whether he be rich or poor, black or white. If these are the human standards, much more so should it be thus with those who have become children of the Lord. The fact that they are disciples of Christ makes it incumbent on whoever is a follower of the same Master to do a brother's or a sister's part. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me." This does not apply now to the world, but it does apply to the Church, the Lord's faithful followers.

PERSEVERANCE IN THIS MINISTRY

The Apostle says, "In that ye have ministered unto the saints, and do minister." This signifies that they were still in this proper attitude. Although somewhat discouraged in the good way, they were still helpful to one another. Another thought—it was not merely the amount of good works that they did that counted; for many good works are done by many people which would not in any sense be recognized by God or be bound to be rewarded. The works of the world are works of sinners. The world are not in covenant relationship with God. If any one does a good work, he by an unwritten law gets more or less blessing out of it. Whoever does a good work with a worthy motive will receive some reward, some blessing. It will ennoble his character and help to fit him for the blessings of the next Age, when all the world will be on trial for life before the Judgment Seat of God. The nobler the character in that Day, the fewer corrective stripes will be necessary. But in order to get the present blessing of the Lord, His special blessing, he must be in covenant relationship with Him.

The work now being done by those in such relationship with God will be worthy of His notice and reward. In the 13th Chapter of 1st Corinthians, the Apostle points out that, with the Body of Christ good works alone are not sufficient to indicate God's favor. He declared that if he should give his body to be burned, and should give all his goods to feed the poor, there would be no real merit in it unless it was done from the motive of love. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal," was his further declaration. One might do these good works to have the honor of men. If they were done for any such reason, God would not consider them good works to be rewarded. The works that God recognizes as good works and worthy of His approval and reward are those done by His faithful people, who are justified and sanctified, and who serve from love to Him, to His people and to His cause.

And so St. Paul says here to these, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love." This is important to have in mind. It is important for us to see to it that our motives are those of love toward the Lord and His Cause and His brethren. Such good works, if persevered in according to our ability and opportunity, will not fail of a blessed reward.

MARCH 10

Exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin—Heb. 3:13.

If we realize that a spiritual lethargy has to any extent been creeping over us, imperceptibly benumbing our spiritual senses, so that the Truth is losing its inspiring power upon us, our first duty is to betake ourselves to prayer and to communion with God and His Word, that its sanctifying power may be realized. For we are made partakers of the Kingdom with Christ, if we *hold* the beginning of our confidence *steadfast unto the end* (Heb. 3:14)—Z '03, 54 (R 3149).

Sin through its various avenues of access is exceedingly deceitful, and its specious entreaties certainly have a hardening effect upon the yielding heart. Therefore the disciples of Christ have the privilege throughout the Gospel Age to exhort one another daily as need may be, that thus they may be preserved blameless. How much more this duty and this privilege are incumbent upon us as the day is rapidly nearing!—P '32, 30.

Parallel passages: Acts 13:15; 20:2; Rom. 12:8; 2 Cor. 9:5; 1 Tim. 6:2; Titus 2:15; Heb. 12:3, 4; 13:22; Deut. 29:18; Psa. 9:15, 16; Prov. 5:22; Isa. 57:20, 21; Mark 7:21-23; Gal. 6:7, 8; 1 Pet. 4:3.

Hymns: 145, 198, 34, 114, 196, 4, 130.
Poems of Dawn, 107: *O, Use Me, Lord!*
Tower Reading: Z '03, 53 (R 3149).

Questions: Have I this week sought to encourage the brethren to fight the good fight of faith? Why? How? What were the effects?

O, USE ME, LORD!

LORD, *speaking to me*, that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thine erring children, lost and lone.

O, *lead me*, Lord, that I may lead
The wandering and the wavering feet;
O, *feed me*, Lord, that I may feed
Thy hungering ones with manna sweet.

O, *strengthen me*, that while I stand
Firm on the Rock, and strong in Thee,
I may stretch out a helping hand
To wrestlers in the troubled sea.

O, *teach me*, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart;
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.

O, *give* Thine own sweet *rest* to me,
That I may speak with soothing power
A word in season, as from Thee,
To weary ones in needful hour.

O, *fill* me with Thy *fulness*, Lord,
Until my very heart o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word,
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show,

O, *use me*, Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where;
Until Thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share!

R3149: THE APOSTLE PETER'S EXHORTATION.

"Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy."—1 Pet. 1:13-16.

TO APPRECIATE the exhortations of the apostles, we need to become acquainted with their several characters; to note their circumstances; to mark their zeal and faithfulness; and to remember that every word of exhortation addressed to the Church has the substantial backing of their worthy examples. They endured hardness as good soldiers, and suffered much for the privilege of declaring the truth. In their writings are blended a high degree of the power of logic, eloquence and pathos, combined with an inspiring enthusiasm which must awaken in every student of their teachings a measure, at least, of the same sacred flame.

Though written so long ago, the above words of exhortation lose none of their force to us. They were penned for the instruction of the whole Church, down to the end of the age. The introductory, "Wherefore," refers us to the glorious hope of our high calling, and of the necessarily severe measures required to fit us for our exalted inheritance, as mentioned in the preceding verses. Peter would have us appreciate what it is to be called with such a high calling—to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith. (Verse 4.) He would have us know that, if faithful, we are to be made even "partakers of

the divine nature," and that we are to be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, of all things.—2 Pet. 1:4.

As the spirit of God draws our hearts into closer fellowship and sympathy with the divine mind, the value of these "exceeding great and precious promises" is more and more fully realized, until there glows in our hearts the same holy enthusiasm that so filled the hearts of the apostles. And only when our hearts are thus warmed and our minds thus awakened, are we prepared to understand the Apostle's "Wherefore," upon the inspiring comprehension of which depends our ability to heed the earnest exhortation which follows.

If our hearts are not duly inspired with this hope—if we have begun to esteem it lightly, or to forget it, or to think of it as an idle tale—to heed the counsel of Peter, here given, will be impossible. If, therefore, we realize that a spiritual lethargy has to any extent been creeping over us, imperceptibly benumbing our spiritual senses, so that the truth is losing its inspiring power upon us, our first duty is to betake ourselves to prayer and to communion with God and his Word, that its sanctifying power may be realized.

"Wherefore," then, you that discern the prize of your high calling, and who are endeavoring to press along the line toward the mark, "gird up the loins of your mind"—as in the illustration; strengthen and fortify your purposes and efforts; renew your determination; redouble your diligence; cast aside the weights of unnecessary worldly cares; increase your zeal; and, as the Apostle Paul also urges, run with patience the race set before you. Run, not like one who is merely beating the air, but like one who has a purpose in view, and who, in desperate earnest, is *determined* to make his calling and election sure.—Heb. 12:1; 1 Cor. 9:26.

Having thus "girded up the loins of your mind" for a long, steady and determined effort, he further counsels,—*"Be sober:"* do not allow yourself to become excited and, under the spur of excitement, to exhaust all your spiritual vitality in a very short time, and then to suffer a relapse into coldness or discouragement; but thoughtfully to consider and prepare for a long and patient endurance of all the discipline and trial of faith and patience necessary to prove an overcomer and worthy of the blessed reward promised "to him that overcometh." The race before us is not one to be run by fits and starts, but by *"patient continuance* in well doing." Soberly, thoughtfully, we are to weigh and endeavor to realize the import of the exceeding great and precious promises and to gather from them their invigorating inspiration; earnestly we must apply our minds and hearts to the instruction of the inspired Word of God, availing ourselves also of such helps—of "pastors and teachers" and their literary productions—which prove harmonious with, and helpful to, the study of the Scriptures; diligently and patiently we must submit ourselves to all the transforming influences of divine grace and truth; and then, loyally and faithfully, we must devote our consecrated talents, however few or many, to the great work of preaching this gospel of the Kingdom to all who will hear.

Such a sober view of the situation fortifies the mind against discouragement, and enables us, as the Apostle suggests, to "hope to the end for the grace to be brought unto

us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Such a sober view keeps Reason on the throne of our minds. And Reason says, The divine call to joint-heirship with Christ clearly implies eligibility to the exalted office; the divine promise clearly insures divine grace to enable us to fulfil the conditions; the divine provision for my justification, by faith in the precious blood of Christ, releases me from the condemnation to death; and the righteousness of Christ, imputed to me by faith, fully supplements all my weaknesses, so that before God I stand approved in him. Sober Reason also says, The directions given in the Scriptures to those who would run the race are clear and explicit, and make plain every step of the way to those who are truly and fully consecrated to the Lord. The examples of the Lord and the Apostles shine on the pathway with a moral luster and glory that cannot lead us astray. If we walk in their footprints we will assuredly reach the same goal.

Therefore in this sober view of our high calling and its privileges, and the abundant resources of divine grace, let us not be discouraged or overcome in any way, but let us hope to the end for the grace (favor) that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ—at his second advent. The Church has enjoyed much of the divine favor all through the age of her probation and trial; but the grace to be revealed at the revelation of Jesus Christ—when he comes to reign in power and great glory—is her exaltation with him to sit with him in his throne. This glorious consummation, the Church all through the age must steadily keep in view: but how glorious is the privilege of those of its members living in this end of the age, when already, even before our change into his glorious likeness—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—we begin to enter the joys of our Lord.

Those who are still sober and faithful, and who have not cast away their confidence, have been led into the secret of the Master's presence; and they have been made to sit down to meat, and the Master himself has come forth and served them. Yes, our hearts have been made to burn within us while he has opened up the Scriptures and made us understand, from the testimony of the law and the prophets and the apostles, that the time is fulfilled—that the end of the age is now here, and that the Lord of the harvest is present to direct and supervise the great work of reaping the fruit of precious seed long ago sown in tears, and now to be gathered with joy and singing; while he has opened up to us the treasures of divine wisdom and grace displayed in the plan of the ages, which God purposed before the foundation of the world, which he has been gradually working out in the ages past, and which is now nearing its glorious consummation.

Oh, what feasting, what rejoicing there has been around the table of the Lord, as one after another the treasures of divine grace have been opened to us, revealing the glories of the new heavens and the new earth, and the blessedness of all the obedient subjects of him who sitteth on the throne to reign in righteousness; how all tears shall be wiped from off all faces, and how the reproach of God's people is to be taken away! Well indeed did Daniel prophesy, saying, "Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, thirty and five days!"—the days of the Lord's second presence, when all that is written to be accomplished by his glorious reign shall begin to come to pass.

Seeing, then, that such are our privileges and hopes, "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and god-likeness?" (2 Pet. 3:11.) Being purified by this hope, ought we not, as the Apostle exhorts, to fashion ourselves, not according to the former lusts (desires and ambitions, which we had) in our ignorance, but as he who has called us is holy, should not we also be holy in all manner of conversation—in all our words and ways? Since it is written, "Be ye holy; for I [the Lord] am holy (1 Pet. 1:15, 16), should not we who are called to be partakers of his own nature and glory be holy also?

Some Christians have the erroneous idea that God does all the fashioning, and that his children are to be merely passive in his hand; but Peter does not so express it. He exhorts us to fashion ourselves according to the divine instructions. There is a work to be done in us and about us, and those who are not up and doing, but who passively sit and wait for the Lord to work miracles in their behalf, are greatly deceived and are giving the enemy great advantage over them which he will certainly use to bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness, unless they bestir themselves to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, while God, cooperating with their earnest efforts, works in them, to will and to do his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12, 13.) "Watch and pray," beloved, lest any of these snares of the enemy entrap you and beguile you of your reward.

MARCH 11

Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us—Heb. 12:1.

You that discern the prize of Jehovah's calling, and who are endeavoring to press along the line toward the mark, "gird up the loins of your mind"; strengthen and fortify your purposes and efforts; renew your determination; redouble your diligence; cast aside the weights of unnecessary worldly cares; increase your zeal; and, as the Apostle urges, run with patience the race set before you. Run, not like one who is merely beating the air, but like one who has a purpose in view, and who, in desperate earnest, is *determined* to make his calling and election sure—Z '03, 54 (R 3149).

The noble example of the Ancient Worthies, as they, enclosing us as a type circumscribes its antitype, testifies of God's faithfulness to the loyal, and admonishes us to cast aside our besetting sins and errors and our weights of selfishness and worldliness which encumber us in the race for the prize. So stripped, we may the more readily persevere in the race of attaining and retaining Christlikeness—P '26, 28.

Parallel passages: Heb. 11:2-40; Jas. 5:10, 11; Psa. 19:12, 13; 2 Cor. 7:1; Col. 3:8; 1 Pet. 2:1; Phil. 3:13, 14; 1 Cor. 9:24, 26; Heb. 6:1; Luke 21:19; Heb. 10:36; Jas. 1:4; 5:7.

Hymns: 20, 200, 136, 95, 221, 78, 145.

Poems of Dawn, 41: *The Call Divine*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 291 (R 5318).

Questions: What have I been doing with my "weights," besetting sin and the race for the prize this week? What were my motives, helps or hindrances and results?

THE CALL DIVINE

TO-DAY, to-morrow, evermore,
Through cheerless nights without a star,
Not asking whither or how far,
Rejoicing though the way be sore,
Take up thy cross
And follow Me.

I cannot promise wealth or ease,
Fame, pleasure, length of days, esteem—
These things are vainer than they seem—
If thou canst turn from all of these,
Take up thy cross
And follow Me!

I promise only perfect peace,
Sweet peace that lives through years of strife;
Eternal love, immortal life,
And rest when all these wanderings cease.
Take up thy cross
And follow Me!

My yoke is easy—put it on;
My burden very light to bear.
Who shareth this, My crown shall share—
The present cross insures the crown.
Take up thy cross
And follow Me!

R5318: THE RACE-COURSE OF THE AGE—ITS "CLOUD OF WITNESSES"

Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.—Hebrews 12:1.

THE opening words of this text direct our minds back to the preceding context, as though St. Paul were saying, In view of the great things, accomplished by these faithful characters of the past, who manifested such faith and confidence in God that they were willing to deny themselves all earthly rights and privileges—seeing that we are thus encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses—martyrs—let the inspiration of their example spur us to the greatest faithfulness in running *our race*.

The Apostle speaks of the Ancient Worthies as a "cloud of witnesses." He does not use the word *witnesses* in the sense in which it is used often today—in the sense of *on-lookers*. Originally, the word *witness* was used in the sense of a *witness to the truth*, or a *martyr*. Therefore, the text would seem to mean: Seeing that you have many surrounding you of those whose lives testified to the truth—*martyrs*, who were cut off from home privileges and from life itself—it should have a strong influence upon you. These Ancient Worthies, through the achievements of their lives, are looking down upon you.

The fact that the Ancient Worthies were even then dead need not detract from the Apostle's figure of speech. This style of expression is commonly used by us all. As an illustration, we recall that on one occasion Napoleon addressed his army saying, "My men, thirty centuries look down upon you!" While, strictly speaking, centuries cannot *look down*, yet in one sense of the word they can; for we can look back into the past and realize matters that are thirty centuries old and more.

The Apostle wishes us to remember that this "*cloud of witnesses*" is surrounding us, and that therefore we should run this race faithfully. While those noble characters will not

obtain the prize for which we are running, they are, nevertheless, to have a prize. As we recall how faithfully they endured and achieved what was set before them, how careful we should be in running the race set before us—a race for glory, honor and immortality!

This "cloud of witnesses" continually surrounds us. The experiences of the Ancient Worthies are our experiences. At every step of our journey we find encouragement, strength, from the contemplation of their course. The Apostle, in giving us the picture of our text, indicates that we are to consider ourselves as running a race. We are to view the affairs of the present life as from a race-course.

No doubt St. Paul had before his mind the popular Grecian games of his day, especially the races. So his suggestions to those in the race for glory, honor and immortality are based upon that mental picture. As the runners in those races would strip themselves of all that was not absolutely necessary, so the Christian should lay aside all possible weights and hindrances in his course, and run with patience the race set before *him*.

WHAT CONSTITUTES WEIGHTS?

The weights to be cast aside might differ in different persons. One person might have inherited titles, honor, position. St. Paul himself was one of these. He was born a Roman citizen—an honor of great distinction in his day. This prerogative he laid aside when he entered the Christian race-course. He did, however, refer to his Roman citizenship when the interests of the Truth made it advantageous for him to do so. But he never tried to follow a middle course—to benefit himself and please worldly acquaintances a part of the time and then fellowship with the Lord's people at other times. One thing alone he did, as he tells us in these words: "Brethren, I count not myself to have *apprehended*; but this *one thing* I do, *forgetting* those things which are *behind*, and *reaching forth unto those things* which are *before*, I press toward the MARK for the Prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:13, 14.

Another weight might be *wealth*. One possessing much money might be hindered in the race by fostering the thought that he must occupy a large house, keep many servants, and live as do others of his class, but that nevertheless he would attend the meetings of the Lord's people. Still another weight might be talent along some line. Another might be love of the approval of men, etc.

He who desires to win in the race for glory and honor eternal should lay aside all those weights and any others which he may recognize as such; otherwise he will be so handicapped that he will not run well. Some runners will be more than overcomers and will receive the prize. Others will barely be saved, because of handicaps, and will receive inferior positions.

St. Paul tells us how much he valued these earthly possessions—ambitions, honors, etc. He weighted them and compared them with the Prize of the High Calling of God in

Christ. His judgment in regard to these earthly honors was that they are but *loss and dross*. Therefore he threw them all away.

Of those who retain their hold on earthly things the Lord declares, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God?" These riches are not merely of gold, but may be of honor, position, power, approbation of men, etc. All these are likely to prove a hindrance in the race upon which we have been invited to enter for the Prize.

As we look back to the faithful witnesses of the past, we find that they carried very few weights along with them. They cast their weights aside, and ran with patience the course before them.

Not all weights and hindrances are to be cast aside, however. A man who enters the race with a wife and children must not throw these aside. If he has a child on each shoulder, then he must *run with them*. But if one who is *unmarried* is thinking of engaging in this race, he will do well to consider carefully *how many children he should have on each shoulder, or whether he should have a wife on his shoulders*. Some would be hindered with a wife, while others might be hindered without a wife. Each must decide for himself what is best. We are not trying to lay down rules.

INHERITED WEAKNESSES AND BESETTING SINS

Let us now consider that part of our text which deals with besetting sins. Another translation says *the close-girding sin*—the sin which wraps itself closely around us. Some sins are like a loose-flying garment, and others wrap themselves tightly about us. With these hindrances the runner is obliged to stop now and then to disengage himself, and so loses time.

We are to avoid sin in every sense of the word. *No one* has the right to sin. If we cannot rid ourselves entirely of our close-girding sin, we must put it off to such an extent that it will not interfere with our running. If this sin be an inherited weakness, a part of one's very nature, what then? Then he shall *run* in the race—not walk, not sit, but RUN, bending all his energy to win, straining every muscle, every power of his being. This is what the Apostle sets before us in our text.

The Lord has set this subject clearly before us in the Bible. The race is not an *imaginary* race, but a *real* one. It is a race that the Lord has arranged, and He has *definitely stated the terms*, the assistance to be expected, and the Prize at the end of the course. We thank God for the explicit information given in the Scriptures and for all the helps and encouragements of the way, as well as for this great cloud of witnesses surrounding us. And by the Lord's grace we will run with patience; for without this grace of the Holy Spirit one would soon fall out by the way, would soon lose all.

CONSTANT VIGILANCE NECESSARY

Any one might run a few steps; but when some of these find all the affairs of human life hindering them, and realize that they must drop all unnecessary weights, they begin to think that there is no use to try—*the sacrifice is too great*. So the Apostle encourages us to have *patience*; for all these trials, difficulties, etc., *rightly borne*, are developing *character*. The Lord wants true, loyal characters, *established in righteousness*, and these cannot be developed and demonstrated except by just such experiences as He gives His people.

The Apostle well knew the terms and conditions of the race in which he had engaged, and that it would be impossible for him to win unless he lived up to those conditions. He knew that the closest attention and most untiring vigilance would be necessary to reach the goal on time, and during the race there would be more or less uncertainty as to who would get the victory—the crown of life. In the Olympic and other Greek games it was always uncertain as to who would receive the much-coveted laurel crown.

The Christian is running a much greater race than any earthly course could ever exhibit. We know the goal toward which we run, and we have a sense of security—that if we run faithfully we shall gain the Prize of our High Calling. Ours is not a race merely to the strong, and a victory to the swift. It is a race in which each one, according to the earnestness of his effort, will be rewarded. If one runs *with all his soul and strength* he will surely gain the Prize. And never before was there such a race! never one so remarkable! never one so glorious as this race set before *us!*

MARCH 12

The end of the commandment is love from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an undissembled faith—1 Tim. 1:5.

We are to have clearly before our minds the fact that the *ultimate object* of all the Divine dealings for us and with us, and the ultimate significance of all the Divine promises made to us, is the development of love, which is Godlikeness, for God is love. And to have this love developed in us, in the sense and to the degree intended by the Lord, it is necessary that it shall come from a *pure heart*, in full accord with the Lord and His law of love, and wholly antagonistic to the Adversary and his law of selfishness—Z '00, 360 (R 2733).

The beautiful attributes of the ripe Christian character, like those of God's character, consist of wisdom, justice, love and power. While these characteristics support one another, the one that shines out the brightest among them is love; the object of the other three is its development; and the ultimate goal of character development is the supremacy of Divine love, in harmony with, supported by, and flowing out of wisdom, justice and power—P '36, 31.

Parallel passages: Matt. 7:12; Rom. 13:8-10; John 13:35; Eph. 1:4; Gal. 5:14; Col. 3:14; 1 Cor. 13; Jas. 2:8; 1 John 3:18, 19; 1 Pet. 1:22; 3:8; 4:8; Heb. 9:14; Acts 15:8, 9; 1 Cor. 6:11; Titus 3:5; Phil. 2:13.

Hymns: 201, 165, 105, 125, 154, 130, 1.
Poems of Dawn, 79: *Love's Alchemy*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 261 (R 5755).

Questions: What has this text done to me? How? What helped or hindered? What were the circumstances? What were the results?

LOVE'S ALCHEMY

LOVE is the filling from one's own
Another's cup.
Love is a daily laying down
And taking up;
A choosing of the stony path
Through each new day
That other feet may tread with ease
A smoother way.
Love is not blind, but looks abroad
Through other eyes;
And asks not "Must I give?" but "May
I sacrifice?"
Love hides its grief, that other hearts

And lips may sing;
And burdened, walks, that other lives
May, buoyant, wing.
Brother, hast thou a love like this
Within thy soul?
'Twill change thy name to saint when thou
Dost reach thy goal.

R5755: THE ULTIMATE DESIGN OF THE LAW OF GOD

"The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience and an undissembled faith."—1 Timothy 1:5.

WE HAVE in the above text the summing up of the Divine Law in the word "commandment." As a matter of fact, there are various commandments, all of which were in a general way represented in the Decalogue. Our Lord divided these commandments into two parts, declaring that these two parts were a synoptical statement of the entire Law of God. A law is a commandment, imposed by rightful authority—a rule of conduct which we are bound to obey. The children of Israel did not appreciate the commandments given in the Law. To them it consisted of merely so many statements of what they should do and what they should not do—no more. They did not get the proper scope of the matter. Even the Christian Church has largely failed to get a comprehensive view of the Divine Law.

We are not to think of the Law as imperfect, for God, being perfect, could not give an imperfect law. God's Law, or commandment, then, is perfect. Speaking of the Law the Apostle Paul writes, "The Law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good." (Romans 7:12.) The reason why the Israelites could not keep the Law was not that the Law was imperfect, but that they were sold under sin, as the Apostle declares. (V. 14.) We recognize the Law as being the standard of perfection. Our Lord, when He came, "magnified the Law and made it honorable." He showed how grand and far-reaching the Law is when fully comprehended.

It is impossible for any of the fallen race to live up to the requirements of God's perfect Law, because of the imperfections and weaknesses of the flesh. In the case of the Church, this impossibility is removed by Christ. "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us," because God has made this arrangement for us, that the merit of Christ shall cover our imperfections and shortcomings. This enables us to live in full harmony with this Law; for we can keep it in spirit, though not fully in letter, and the blood of Jesus makes up for all the rest—our unwilling imperfections.

PURE, UNSELFISH LOVE

The Apostle speaks here of "the end of the commandment." The expression seems somewhat obscure. The thought seems to be this: the ultimate purpose of the Law, that

which it is designed to produce, is love—to bring us to the place where we shall be in full harmony with the One who made the Law, and who is Himself the embodiment of Love. This will be the final result of God's Law to all who receive it. He wishes that those who are perfect shall remain perfect, and that those who are imperfect shall see the proper standard for all Jehovah's creatures to be a just standard, a loving standard; that God is to be obeyed, not from compulsion, but from love for Him and for the principles of righteousness. It is His ultimate purpose that all His intelligent creatures who will be granted eternal life must be perfect, in full harmony with their Creator.

The Apostle proceeds to point out that this love required by God's Law must be of a certain quality. We can understand the love of a parent for a child, the love of a person for an animal—quite proper if not carried to an extreme. There might be more or less selfishness in such love. A person might love a dog because it was *his* dog, or love his child because it was *his* child. This love, therefore, would have a selfish feature and would not be the disinterested kind, the benevolent kind, not the highest form of love. The love that would fulfil all the requirements of God's Law would be "love out of a pure heart."

Love can be entertained in a heart not altogether pure. There can be a mixture of love and selfishness, and this is very generally the case with fallen humanity. Even as Christians our love may be only partly pure at first, but gradually the spirit of the commandment, received into our heart, should purge out the selfishness. Godlike love would mean love for God's Truth, love for His holy Law, love for His creatures. It is an unselfish love, as is the love of God. God has nothing to gain by all He is doing for the Church or purposes to do for the world. He does it out of a pure heart, out of a good, benevolent, loving heart—not to see what He can get out of it.

A pure heart is one which has no selfishness in its motives; it has a desire to do good to all, to do evil to none, to see others blessed as well as itself; to love and serve God perfectly, with all its powers. Our Lord commended this condition of heart, saying, "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." It is very evident, then, that such a pure-hearted person is not merely one who starts out in the Christian life with a good intention. *All* who start in the Christian life do so with a good intention; but they must be instructed and educated. They must develop to perfection this purity of heart. Hence the experiences of the Christian are for the very purpose of bringing his heart into this condition of pure, unselfish love.

At the beginning of the Christian way our hearts are pure in the sense of being sincere, truthful. We mean what we say, what we profess. We are not merely drawing near to God with our lips and not with our hearts. But love out of a pure heart, this purity of love referred to in our text, is attained by the putting off more and more of the things of selfishness and the putting on more fully of the Lord's Spirit. The Apostle is addressing these words to Christians, implying that they have some of these things to put off after they have become Christians. "Put off all these—anger, malice, envy, hatred, strife," works of the flesh and of the Devil. These things more or less attach to you. And put on all these—meekness, self-control, patience, faith, long-suffering, gentleness, brotherly-

kindness, love. As we do these things, our hearts will be in the attitude the Apostle mentions. We shall have attained that which God purposes, designs; namely, "love out of a pure heart."

DEFINITION OF "GOOD CONSCIENCE"

The Apostle proceeds to say, "and a good conscience." Conscience seems to be that moral quality of the mind which admonishes in regard to right and wrong. Some persons have a keen conscience and can quickly discern as to what is right and what is wrong. Others have a very dull conscience and find it difficult to determine between right and wrong, or else are measurably indifferent as to the moral quality of their course. While God created man with a good conscience, ability to determine accurately what is right and what is wrong, sin has depraved this conscience. Hence it is the duty of every Christian to get his conscience made right, to educate his conscience to discern correctly. God lays down the principles of righteousness in His Word. It is through the Law of God that the Christian is able to discern these principles, to see what is right or wrong in principle.

The Golden Rule admonishes us, Do unto your neighbor as you would have him do unto you under similar circumstances. Consider what you would like to have your neighbor do unto you under certain circumstances and conditions, and thus help conscience to see what is the right thing to do. There are many things which are morally wrong, which are forbidden in the Law of God. These would be more readily discerned by the conscience, as there could be but one course of action possible in harmony with the expressed will of God on the matter. But there are other things which require a conscience trained to fine discernment. The Golden Rule is especially helpful here. As the principles of righteousness become firmly established in our characters, there is little difficulty in discerning the course of duty and of love.

One whose conscience has not been properly trained by the Word of God might be entirely honest and yet be pursuing a wrong course. A man might follow a certain course for years; he might have been doing so with all good conscience, that is, in all sincerity. Perhaps long after he has become a Christian he would come to see that something he had been practising was not wise or proper. He would say, "I see now that I have been taking a wrong view of this matter. Hereafter I shall be better able to see my proper course under such circumstances. I realize that the principle of justice needs to be thoroughly ingrained in my being in order that I may be more pleasing to God. Christian love goes beyond justice, but justice must come *first*." A properly developed Christian has a properly educated conscience.

A "good conscience," as used in our text, is a rightly educated conscience. It is not one which is always accusing its owner, making him feel that he is always doing wrong. There are morbid consciences which are constantly accusing, not able to get a proper balance. A truly good conscience is one which is well balanced. One may have a scale, for instance, that is perverted either one way or the other. A scale which is rightly

adjusted will stand level. It is reliable. And so with a good conscience—it is one which can determine the slightest deviation from God's Law.

HONESTY RESPECTING FAITH ESSENTIAL

Lastly, St. Paul adds, "and an undissembled faith." An undissembled faith is a faith that is properly represented to others. It is not deceitful. To dissemble is to misrepresent. We are to have a faith which is not misrepresented, which is undissembled, as the Apostle says. We as Christians have a certain standard set before us in the Lord's Word. We are to go beyond the Law. We are under a still higher Law—the Law of sacrificial Love. Our faith takes hold of things not seen as yet, that portion of the Lord's arrangement for us which goes beyond what is now visible to us with the natural eye. Whatever the Lord has revealed to us that our faith has been able to accept as His will, must be held honestly and loyally. We must be honest with respect to our faith and in respect to our life.

There are many who may have a good conception of justice and who may be fine people in many ways, and yet they might dissemble as regards their faith. They might think more or less that the end justifies the means, and that they might profess something in regard to their faith which would be for the good of someone else, even though it would not be true. There are people all over the world who thus dissemble in respect to their faith. They misrepresent their faith. They do not believe what they are teaching or what they profess to believe.

Many are teaching eternal torment. If you ask them as to their belief on this subject, they will say, "I do not believe that doctrine, but it seems necessary to preach it." Others are teaching Higher Criticism, Evolution, New Thought, etc.,—deceiving and being deceived—yet still claiming to be Christians. All such people are in a wrong condition. Unless they speedily correct this they will not be fit for the Kingdom; for the purpose of the Law, Love, is to be fulfilled in those who will be accepted for that high and honorable station. This love requires, first of all, supreme loyalty to God, which means loyalty to His Word. What is the use of having an end of the Law, an ultimate object of the Law, if that end, that object, is never to be attained? Christ met this end, or object, of the Law. The righteousness of the Law was fulfilled in Him actually. The true Church now reach this in spirit. That is to say, their hearts, their minds, are in harmony with this Law; and they are striving day by day to more and more bring their lives—their words, thoughts and actions—into full accord with this perfect Law of Love.

THE LAW OF THE NEW CREATION

The Scriptures everywhere represent that in God's estimation *love* is the principal thing. Neither justice nor other qualities, other virtues, are ignored; but this quality is placed at the very top of the list of Christian graces. From the list which the Apostle Paul gives of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, we see that at the head he places love, then come joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-restraint. (Galatians 5:22, 23.) The Apostle Peter gives the list of fruits of the Spirit as

cumulative—as a process of addition, leading up to the sum of all the graces. He begins with faith, the foundation. Then are to be diligently added, fortitude, knowledge, self-restraint, patience, brotherly love, then the broad love which includes all the world, even our enemies.

We are to remember, however, that love is not something which is instantly developed. It grows. Therefore those who have some love today, something of this Holy Spirit, may have more of it tomorrow, still more of it in a year; for it is a matter of development. Since God Himself is love, the implanting of the Divine likeness in humanity six thousand years ago when Father Adam was created signifies that God gave man the quality of love. Even in man's fallen condition we see this manifested more or less on every hand—natural love. This in many cases has become considerably perverted into self-love. But there are some very noble people who have a considerable degree of love naturally, who have much of original Godlikeness still remaining. They have much less to overcome in this direction than those who are more selfish. All the elements of sin seem to be more or less connected with selfishness—thus warring against the best interests of the individual.

The love which the Bible commends to us as New Creatures is the love which had its start in our spirit-beggetting. Whoever has been begotten of the Spirit of God has some of this pure, unselfish love of which St. Paul speaks. In proportion as one grows as a New Creature, he grows in love—so that he may gradually be filled, his capacity for love increasing in proportion to his growth. At the beginning of our Christian experience, we merely have a beginning of love, as it were. This is to spread and fill our whole system. This love of God will make us more loving, kind, gentle, toward our friends, toward everybody, even toward animals.

But the Scriptures draw attention to the fact that as the love of God develops in us it will have a special interest in the brethren—those who have received the same Spirit. Therefore, wherever the Spirit of God is it will have a sympathetic flow toward others of the same spirit. Whoever has the Spirit of God at all will be sure to love his brethren, because he will see the mind of God in them; and this love will increase as he develops and as he sees development in the brethren.

All the brethren in Christ, however, have imperfect bodies, and therefore can give but imperfect expression to the spirit of love. And since the brethren are brought closer together through their common hopes and ambitions, they are likely to become more of a trial to each other than are the world. They are tempted sometimes to say to a brother or a sister, "Well, you do not show much of the spirit of love!" Thus the spirit of criticism is aroused, and love is put to the test. In proportion as we grow in love, this spirit of love will be ours and we shall take a kindlier view of the frailties of the brethren. Our daily experiences should teach us more and more of our own shortcomings. The discovery of our own faults and the battling with them should humble us. Whoever realizes his own shortcomings should extend the feeling of sympathy toward his fellow pilgrims in the Heavenly way, who are fighting similar battles. Unless we do so we shall not be pleasing to our God.

The fact that the brethren have this Spirit of God and are seeking to develop love, however much they may come short of their own ideals and of our ideals for them, demands that we love them. Our sympathy for them must broaden and deepen so that if we see them overtaken in a fault we shall seek to restore them in love, remembering ourselves, lest we also be tempted. As to the depth of love we should manifest, it is clearly laid down in the Scriptures. We should love the brethren as Christ loved us. This is very broad. Christ loved us to the extent that He was willing to lay down His life for us. We should be full of love, sympathy, for our brethren in Christ, desiring to be helpful to them. Whatever we do for them is a manifestation of our love for the Lord.

The Lord has arranged that our love for the brethren and our laying down our lives for them and in their defense is all done to Him; and He so esteems it. If the time should come when it would be necessary, there should be a readiness to lay down our lives for them. But more particularly, we are to lay these down inch by inch in their service, whether it be by cleaning off the snow from the pavement, or caring for them when they are ill, or cooking the dinner or the breakfast, or mailing papers to them to encourage them in the good way—no matter what the service. All these ways and many others are ministries to those who are the Lord's—laying down our lives for them. We rejoice to have such privileges, such opportunities—using our time and strength as the Lord in His providence shall indicate, realizing that the only use we have for our present life is to lay it down in the service of the Lord's brethren and ours, and to do good to any as we have opportunity, giving the brethren the preference.

We may never attain to the place, while we are in the flesh, where we shall say no word, do no act, to hurt a brother. We all have imperfections that we are striving against. But "The Lord looketh upon the heart," and not at the imperfect execution. If He sees the earnest endeavor to do His will, He will cover the deficiencies and imperfections with the merit of our Savior. If we make a mistake, we are to be glad to rectify it and to make proper apologies and reparation—assuring the brother that we did not mean to hurt his feelings. Or, if under temptation we felt less concern than we should about wounding him, we should ask pardon, confessing our sorrow, and then confess our fault at the Throne of Grace, asking forgiveness in Jesus' name.

If, then, we hope to be of those who will be granted a place with Christ in His Throne, let us see to it that by His grace we attain the end of the commandment, the end of the Law, as given to the New Creation. Let it be "love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an undissembled faith"—a love which inspires to the willing, joyful sacrifice of every earthly hope and ambition, and which gladly lays down even life itself for the brethren, that we may be accounted worthy of the heavenly inheritance awaiting the "more than conquerors."—Romans 8:37.

LOVE'S ALCHEMY

"Love is the filling from one's own
Another's cup.

Love is a daily laying down
And taking up;
A choosing of the stony path
Through each new day
That other feet may tread with ease
A smoother way.
Love is not blind, but looks abroad
Through other eyes;

And asks not, "Must I give?" but, "May
I sacrifice?"
Love hides its grief, that other hearts
And lips may sing;
And burdened, walks, that other lives
May, buoyant, wing.
Brother, hast thou a love like this
Within thy soul?
'Twill change thy name to saint when thou
Dost reach this goal."

MARCH 13

As many, therefore, as are perfect, should be of this mind; and if in anything you think differently, God will also reveal this to you. But to what we have attained, let us walk by the same line—Phil. 3:15, 16, Diaglott.

It is indispensable to those who have reached the mark of perfect love that they shall keep actively engaged in the service of the Lord, laying down their lives for the brethren. Such must stand, not only as representatives of God and of the principles of righteousness, but as representatives of those strong in the Lord and the power of His might, and in the faith of His Word—ready and willing and efficient in the encouragement of other runners in the race-course—that they likewise may attain to the "mark"—Z '01, 10 (R 2753).

The character attainments of the past are the basis for the development of the present, and the promise for the future. The faithful use of what we have already attained will result in further growth. This is the heart's sentiment of those whose hearts are thoroughly fixed in God, and whatever they lack, whether it be of service, knowledge or grace, such a disposition on their part will be recognized by God as meet for further blessing of growth in service, knowledge and grace, which in due time He will bestow—P '30, 30.

Parallel passages: Job 1:1; Psa. 37:37; Matt. 5:48; 19:21; 1 Cor. 2:6; 14:20; 2 Cor. 13:11; Eph. 4:11-13; Col. 4:12; Heb. 5:14; 1 Pet. 5:10; Gal. 5:10; Rom. 12:16; 15:5; Phil. 2:2; 4:2; Gal. 6:16.

Hymns: 267, 1, 20, 23, 95, 170, 315.

Poems of Dawn, 306: *The Early Impress*.

Tower Reading: Z '08, 182 (R 4188).

Questions: Have I this week striven to practice the suggestions of this text? With what results?

THE EARLY IMPRESS

PROV. 22:6

I TOOK a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day;
And as my fingers pressed it still
It bent and yielded to my will.
I came again when days were past,
The bit of clay was hard at last;
My early impress still it bore
And I could change its form no more.

I took a piece of living clay

And gently formed it day by day;
Molding with parental art
A young boy's soft and yielding heart.
In time his tender years were gone,
It was a *man* I looked upon;
My early impress still he bore
And I could change him nevermore!

R4188: "WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT"

Golden Text:—"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be ye filled with the Spirit."—Eph. 5:18.

AS implied by the selection of the Golden Text, the International Sunday-School Study styles this a Temperance Lesson. We shall not, however, treat it particularly from that standpoint, as we do not consider that such was the apostolic thought, except in the sense that temperance and abstinence from evil in any form are the inculcations of holy Scripture for all who have named the name of Christ. Thus the Golden Text properly sets before us that there is one spirit of the world and another spirit of the Lord; one a spirit of error, the other the spirit of truth. We are no longer to walk in darkness as others—in sin, in rioting, in drunkenness, in debauchery of various kinds; the Christian course is the very reverse of this, for he has turned his back on all these experiences and is walking in the light of the lamp, toward the things that are perfect, toward the things set before him in the divine Word and plan. Instead of needing alcoholic spirits for his refreshment he has the Spirit of the Lord, the holy Spirit, which exhilarates; it overcomes the spirit of gloom and fear, it does for him much more than alcoholic spirits could do for the natural man in the way of blotting out unpleasant memories and bringing in happiness.

THE SEVEN WAYS OF THIS EPISTLE

The Epistle to the Ephesians is one of the grandest books of the Bible. Deeply spiritual it appeals thoroughly only to the consecrated. Its central thought is the New Creation; that the justified by a consecration of their justified humanity, when accepted of the Lord, are begotten of the holy Spirit to be New Creatures in Christ. For such, old things have passed away—earthly hopes, earthly aims and ambitions; their earthly rights have been surrendered, and instead of them, heavenly prospects have been received by faith and are waited for, with the expectation that they will be received in the First Resurrection. The first part of the book of Ephesians relates to the theory, the philosophy of the change from human to spiritual, from humanity to membership in the New Creation; the last chapters of the book point out to us the effect of this change, not only upon the sentiments of the New Creature, the new will, but also the effect of the change upon the mortal body, which the new mind is supposed thereafter to hold in check, to govern, to control with more and more decision and ability as it grows stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might. The New Creature is to keep the old creature, the body, under; to keep it dead, buried. Our lesson relates particularly to this phase of the subject—the New

Creature's battle and victory and its preservation, which is dependent upon the maintenance of its rule over the flesh.

The opening words of our lesson (v. 6), "Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience," should not be understood to signify that God's wrath comes because of vain words. The things which bring the wrath are mentioned in the preceding verses (3-5), fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking, ribaldry; for, as the Apostle explains, those in whom these characteristics are dominant, or those in whom the characteristics are sympathized with, can have no inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words on this subject, telling you that such things are natural, proper, excusable. They have indeed become second nature to many of the fallen race, but if any who have become New Creatures in Christ love the unclean things, sympathize with them, desire them, or jest about them, they are far from the condition which is becoming to saints. Such a mental attitude on their part would imply that they had either never been begotten of the Spirit of holiness or else they were returning again like a sow that was washed to wallow in the mire. These things are characteristic of the children of disobedience, but not characteristic of the children of obedience. The Apostle says elsewhere, Such were ye; but now ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified through the Lord Jesus Christ. (I Cor. 6:11.) In our lesson he exhorts, "Be ye not, therefore, partakers with them," with the children of disobedience; for ye were once in darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.

"WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT"

He proceeds to show how the children of light should walk, saying, The fruit of the Spirit, wherever it is found, is goodness and righteousness and truth—therefore, the holy Spirit never prompts to badness, unrighteousness, untruthfulness. And whoever has received the holy Spirit, whoever has been begotten of the Lord as his child, will want to prove, to demonstrate, to ascertain thoroughly what is acceptable unto the Lord; what the Lord will be pleased with, not merely what would not merit severe punishment from the Lord, not merely what the Lord would wink at and not take serious offence from, but far beyond all this! Whoever properly has the spirit of a son must desire to know the Father's will and delight to do it, and that will is in all purity, goodness, righteousness, truth, honesty. The influence of this determination of the New Creature to please God, to do his will, will signify that his life, that his heart and so far as possible every act and word of his will be in accord with goodness, in accord with the principles of righteousness which God represents—in accord with truth.

"HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP WITH THE UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS, BUT RATHER REPROVE THEM"

We are responsible not only for what we ourselves may do and think as New Creatures, but our responsibility goes out beyond ourselves to the brethren, to all who in any sense of the word come under our influence. Obscene jesting certainly is to receive no encouragement, to provoke no laughter, but rather to call forth a gentle, loving rebuke.

Brother, Sister, let us set our affections on things above—let us walk in the light, let us think of and discuss whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good repute. Let us put away from our conversation and from our thoughts everything that would be defiling and ensnaring to ourselves or to others. Failure to reprove is a measurable endorsement of the wrong. A word in season—how good it is, how helpful! But it is equally important that the word of reproof be wisely and lovingly given, otherwise it may do harm where we intended good; as the Scriptures say, "Speak the truth in love."

"THINGS WHICH ARE DONE IN SECRET"

"It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret"—that are done in the dark. The Apostle's intimation is that the whole world lieth in darkness, and in the wicked one and in sin, and that the Lord's people of the New Creation have accepted his leadership in the opposite direction; that they are children of the light and should walk accordingly in the light, and that they should lift up the light of truth; that they should allow the holy Spirit to shine forth for the reproofing of the world, for the reproofing of darkness, and for the setting up of a standard of righteousness in harmony with the Lord's example.

The Apostle here reminds us of the prophetic statement, "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." This should be our attitude toward all who are still unregenerated. The world lieth in the wicked one, in sin, in darkness. Instead of having fellowship with them in the works of darkness, instead of sharing in their foul jesting, we are rather to reprove them and to direct them according to the above Scripture, to awake from their stupor, from their sleep, to recognize conditions from their true standpoint, and that, getting awake, they should realize that they are sinners; that the wage of sin is death, and that the tendency of sin is downward—and that they should rise from the dead, should separate themselves from the world, not only so far as their conduct is concerned, but so far as their conversation and their sympathies are concerned, that all these should be turned toward the Lord, toward the truth, toward the light. It is to those who thus separate themselves from the world and its spirit that the Lord has promised to give light, a little and a little more and a little more, for the path of the justified, the path of those following in the footsteps of Jesus, will shine more and more until the perfect day.

THE SEVEN WALKS

The Christian's walk of course means his course of conduct, including thoughts and words and acts. The Apostle indicates very clearly what this work or course of the Christian should be, outlining it in seven different ways.

(1) The New Creature *should walk* not according to the course of this world, not according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience. (Eph. 2:3.) This is the walk of the world, the walk of evil-doers,

the walk of the children of wrath; it is the very opposite of the walk of the children of the light.

(2) The New Creation should walk in good works—"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. 2:10.

(3) The New Creation should "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called." (Eph. 4:1.) Their vocation is the very highest of all; they are the representatives of the Lord and Master; they bear his name, and should seek in everything to glorify it and never to dishonor it. What we do, what we say, what we think—in fact, even general appearance and deportment, and where we are seen, all reflect more or less upon the great King, whose ambassadors we are. Our vocation is that of servants of God, and no earthly avocation should be permitted in any degree to hinder or abridge the influence or the service which we have undertaken as children of God, as joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, prospective members of his Bride class, his Kingdom class.

(4) The New Creation are to "walk not as other Gentiles walk." (Eph. 4:17.) We are not merely to refrain from the sins and gross immoralities of the natural man, but we are to allow this principle or spirit to pervade all of life's interests. We are to refrain from following foolish, worldly fashions, from being influenced by a worldly spirit; we are to have the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of a sound mind to direct us in our joys, in our sorrows, in our wedding celebrations, in our funeral services—in fact, whatsoever we do we are to do to the glory of God and are not to be influenced by the spirit of the world, but contrariwise are to set a proper example for the world in all matters—in gentleness, kindness, patience, faithfulness to the Lord and to duty. The walk of the world is on the broad road; the walk of the Church is on the narrow path. As we progress in Christian experience, we find this path getting farther and farther away from the broad road which the world is traveling, and whoever tries to keep pace with the world will in many respects be apt to find himself leaving the narrow path or otherwise disadvantaging himself as a New Creature.

(5) The New Creation is to "walk in love." (Eph. 5:2.) Their words, their deeds, everything with which they are connected, is to be governed by this law of the New Creation—love. "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." In compliance with this law of love and our Lord's glorious example, the Apostle says we ought to so love one another as to be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren. We should be ready to lay down a few months, a few years; we should be ready at any time we can find an opportunity of service for a brother, especially along the lines of his spiritual or higher interests as a New Creature. This spirit of love is to control our conduct with all; we are to love our neighbors and seek to do them good, to serve their interests. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor," would not take advantage of his neighbor to cheat him, to injure him in any manner. Love would not prompt its possessor to speak evil of his neighbor, but would lead to a remembrance of the Scriptural injunction, "Speak evil of no man." Love would do this from principle, because it is right; but more than this, Love ultimately takes such

an interest that the brother exercising it does not wish to do anything that would be harmful to another's interests, to his welfare, but rather to do something to his honor and blessing. Love, progressing as we walk in it, ultimately brings us to that blessed condition where we can love our enemies and be glad of the privilege of doing good to those who despitefully use us and persecute us.

(6) The New Creation are also instructed to walk as children of light; their course in life is always to be with respect to the things that are just, pure, loving, noble, kind, the things that are in harmony with the divine character and Word, the things that prove to be of greatest blessing to neighbors and to friends. As children of the light every day and year will see progress; their light will be shining more and more clearly and accomplishing the greatest good; they will not be ashamed of it, but will set it on a candlestick, where it may give light to all in the house, to every member of the household of faith. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. 5:16.

(7) The New Creation should "walk circumspectly." (Eph. 5:15.) This word circumspectly signifies to look carefully all around at every step. The Christian cannot be a careless liver, and as he looks around him and realizes the various pitfalls and snares, not only will he seek to make straight paths for his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but additionally he will seek divine aid and counsel and guidance that he make no mistakes, that every step in life's pathway will be such as will have divine approval and glorify God in his body and spirit which are God's. This circumspection of our walk as New Creatures is the more necessary because our Adversary, the devil, is specially on the alert to ensnare us; and our tests are permitted to be the severer as we come nearer the goal of character. We should walk circumspectly also because we profess to be of the New Creation, begotten of the holy Spirit and not of the world, but separate from it; and because our lights so shining more or less reprove the world. Therefore the world, instead of sympathizing with us, hate us, and watch either to see what fault can be found with our walk, or to stumble and trip us, sometimes from malicious impulse and sometimes from sympathetic reasons; as the Apostle Peter, when speaking to our Lord, said, Far be it from thee, Lord, to thus sacrifice thyself and die. To walk circumspectly is to take note of these various hindrances and stumbling stones and pitfalls; to hearken to the instructions of the Lord's Word and to the leadings of the holy Spirit; and thus to walk carefully; and in so doing to develop the characters which are most pleasing to our Lord and Head. The Apostle says this circumspection is necessary in order to our walking "not as unwise but as wise." There is a wisdom of the world which is foolishness with God, and there is a wisdom with God which is foolishness to the world. The wisdom of God is to be ours, and we are to exemplify it in all the affairs of life. Hence the faithful, the New Creatures in Christ, should be the most exemplary, the most wonderful people in the whole world, the wisest in the management of their affairs, the wisest in the government of their children, the wisest in their eating, drinking and dressing. Not that the world will always approve, but that the end will justify the course which the Lord's Word directs, and which the wise of the New Creation, walking circumspectly, will take.

"REDEEMING THE TIME"

This signifies buying back the time, as though the time were already mortgaged. And this is so; the cares of this life, its necessities, the customs of the world, our fallen tendencies, all would absorb every hour of life in the things pertaining to this life, whereas as New Creatures our new hopes and aims and efforts are properly centered upon things above, the heavenly, the King's matters. Where may we obtain the necessary time wherewith to study and to refresh ourselves in rehearsing the blessings, the promises and favors which are ours as New Creatures? And where may we obtain the time for telling these good tidings to others? If we allow the spirit of the world to direct us we shall have no time for any of these things and shall fail, but as wise and not as foolish children of the Lord, we will see and appreciate the greater importance of the heavenly things, and be ready to sacrifice our earthly interests and customs and ambitions in favor of the heavenly. Thus we may redeem or buy back the time that we had previously spent for worldly things, that we may henceforth spend such time in the interest of ourselves and others of the New Creation and in the service of our Lord and Master, to whom we have consecrated our all, which we find to be so little over and above the things necessary to provide honestly for the life that now is.

"WHEREFORE BE YE NOT FOOLS, BUT UNDERSTAND WHAT THE WILL OF THE LORD IS"

How many of the Lord's people are fools! How many allow the spirit of the world so to enter in as to hinder them from appreciating the real wisdom and the proper course, the proper walk in life! It is time for us to cease this foolishness of trying to do everything just as the world does it and to be everything that the world will approve! It is time for us to determine that by the grace of God we will be popular with our Father in heaven, whether or not it makes us unpopular with everybody else in the world! It will be sweeter far eventually to hear his voice saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," than to have the well done of the world and its applause, and to come short of the glorious blessing to which we have been called!

"INSTEAD PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING"

Instead of intoxication with the spirit of the world and its ambitions, its craze for money and for show and outward adornment, we are to be so filled with the Spirit of the Lord, that our chiefest joy, our chiefest blessing, will be in giving thanks to the Lord for his goodness, in maintaining a fellowship of heart with him and then additionally having fellowship one with another, with those who are in the truth, in the Lord. We are to speak one to another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, thus making melody in our hearts to the Lord. The Lord's people are not to be morose, sullen, unhappy, always in tears. This is not the will of God concerning them; they are on the contrary to be continually rejoicing, full of gladness, the basis for this to be their faith in the Word of God, which they all continually eat and are nourished by, together with their fellowship with the Lord, which will continually be a ground for praise and thanksgiving; and additionally, their fellowship with one another, which will be more sweet than any earthly or selfish

fellowship; more precious than any sensual relationship, the exhilaration of the new mind continually growing stronger and more God-like, and seeking to build up one another in the most holy faith and character-likeness of our Redeemer. The Apostle says that we are to give to God, even the Father, thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; thanks for the trials, thanks for the clouds as well as for the blessings and the sunshine; thanks for matters that seem to be adversities, knowing that God is able to make all things work together for good to them and has promised to do so, and that the entire matter of needs and welfare are in the hands of our Redeemer, who is too wise to err and too loving to be unkind, and who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able. Well then may we rejoice!

We are exhorted also to submit ourselves one to another in the reverence of the Lord, not to be dictatorial, not to be too self-assertive, not to be anxious that our will should be done on earth or in heaven, but rather desirous that the will of the Lord should thus be done, and that we may be looking to note his leadings and providences in and through others as well as through ourselves, and especially to note the instructions in his Word.

"TO THE FEET OF HIM"

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him."—Isa. 52:7.

Oh precious "Feet," so weary and so worn,
Make haste to "enter in;" for when 'tis done,
How sweet will be the rest so much desired—
When that last step upon the race is run!

Dear "Feet," so tired, do not, do not forget,
How once those other feet were blest indeed,
When he, our Elder Brother, blessed Lord,
So gently ministered unto their need.

And doth he not today, so stoop and soothe
The "Feet," who yet must "strive to enter in?"
"How beautiful!" Ah, yes, how glorious,
To bring good tidings that "our God doth reign"!

And so, dear "Feet," by him so well beloved,
Come joyfully, attuned with music sweet;
Come hasten on with patient, loving zeal—
"A little while"—we all with him shall meet!
—Mary H. Robinson

MARCH 14

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city—Prov. 16:32.

While anger, in the nature of hatred, malice, strife, envy, should be put away by all who are seeking to be copies of God's dear Son, anger in the sense of righteous indignation against wrong-doing, sin in its various forms, is proper; and although it should be used with great moderation, backed by love, there are circumstances in which it would be wrong not to have righteous anger and use it—Z '96, 279 (R 2068).

The reason why those slow to anger are better than the mighty is that love and sympathy prompt them to make allowances for the weaknesses of others, which the mighty are indisposed to do; and the reason why he that rules his spirit is greater than he that takes a city is that trying to dislodge Satan, the world and the flesh from their fortress in his heart requires greater perseverance, strategy and valor than that of him who takes a city. Such self-rule is a real conquest—P '35, 31, 32.

Parallel passages: Prov. 25:28; 1 Cor. 13:4, 7; 2 Cor. 6:4-6; Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 4:1, 2, 26, 31, 32; Col. 1:11; 3:12, 13; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Tim. 3:10; 4:2; 1 Sam. 10:27; 24:1-15; Matt. 27:12-14; 1 Cor. 9:25, 27; Titus 2:2.

Hymns: 13, 44, 1, 244, 179, 274, 99.

Poems of Dawn, 133: *Steadfast, Immovable*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 59 (R 5635).

Questions: Was I long-suffering and self-controlling this week? In what circumstances? What helped or hindered therein? What were the effects?

STEADFAST, IMMOVABLE

TO play through life a perfect part,
Unnoticed and unknown;
To seek no rest in any heart
Save only God's alone;
In little things to own no will,
To have no share in great,
To find the labor ready still,
And for the crown to wait;

Upon the brow to bear no trace
Of more than common care;
To write no secret in the face
For men to read it there;
The daily cross to clasp and bless

With such familiar zeal
As hides from all that not the less
Its daily weight you feel;

In toils that praise will never pay
To see your life go past;
To meet in every coming day
Twin sister of the last;
To hear of high, heroic things,
And yield them reverence due,
But feel life's daily offerings
Are far more fit for you;

To woo no secret, soft disguise,
To which self-love is prone;
Unnoticed by all other eyes,
Unworthy in your own;
To yield with such a happy art
That no one thinks you care,
Yet say to your poor bleeding heart,
How little you can bear;—

Oh! 'tis a pathway rough to choose,
A struggle hard to share,
For human pride would still refuse
The nameless trials there;
But since we know the gate is low
That leads to heavenly bliss,
What higher grace could God bestow
Than such a life as this!

R5635: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT

KING SAUL, ALTHOUGH ANOINTED OF GOD, WAITED FOR THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE—HIS OPPORTUNE MOMENT AND HOW HE UTILIZED IT—HIS ACCEPTANCE BY THE PEOPLE—OPPORTUNITIES OPEN FOR ALL—LESSONS FOR ALL IN SAUL'S EXPERIENCES—SPECIAL LESSONS TO THE CHURCH, ALSO CALLED TO KINGLY OFFICE—THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD—ALL MEN TO BE MADE KINGS AGAIN BY MESSIAH'S REIGN—ALL LOVERS OF INIQUITY TO BE DESTROYED.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."—Proverbs 16:32.

ISRAEL had asked for a king. God, through the Prophet Samuel, had caused the anointing of Saul to be the king. The people of Israel had assembled, and God's Prophet Samuel had indicated God's choice for them. Some of the people had gladly accepted the choice; but the rougher element had refused it, sneeringly saying, Who is he? What is his record, that we should hope for anything great in his hand?

It looked as though the Lord and His plan had failed—as though the choice had been an unsatisfactory one and had come to naught. Saul made no attempt to exercise authority, seeing that he had such half-hearted support from the people. He returned to his home—resuming his life as a farmer; but we may be sure he was patiently waiting for the opportune, or psychological, moment to arrive when, with God's blessing, he would enter upon the duties and responsibilities of a king, for which he had been Divinely anointed.

Saul's farm life continued only a month, until the opportunity offered which brought him the support of all the people as king. The Ammonites, residing in the east of Israel's possessions, were making war on one of the tribes of Israel. For some time they had besieged Jabesh-gilead, until the city was in such straits for food, etc., that they asked terms for surrender. The taunt of the Ammonite general was that on one condition he would save their lives; namely, they should each submit to having one eye put out, as a shame on the whole people of Israel.

Time was asked—seven days—for decision. If they could not get help in that time, they would submit to the terms. Messengers were dispatched, possibly to all the tribes. At all events some came to the place where Saul resided, evidently hoping that the one who had been chosen king, acceptable to some, would take steps for their deliverance. The disgrace of the situation struck home to Saul's heart. Israel to whom God had promised the possession of the land and His assistance, lacked faith and leadership.

Saul was appointed leader, and the psychological moment for him to lead had come. He killed the yoke of oxen he had been driving and sent pieces to all the tribes, saying that whoever did not respond, to become a defender of the general interests and to wipe out the shame, would have his oxen hewn to pieces. This was a peculiar command for a king; but it seems to have touched the right spot, for three hundred and thirty thousand men responded. The messengers returned to Jabesh-gilead with assurances of succor before noon the next day; and they gave answer to their besiegers to the effect that they would by the time appointed march out for the Ammonites to do with them as they thought best—meantime expecting such a deliverance as would make their enemies impotent to harm them.

King Saul divided his army into three sections, and from three different quarters came suddenly upon the besieging hosts, routing them, destroying many lives and delivering the people of Israel. Thereupon the masses of the Israelites realized that God had indeed given them a wise king, whom they had been slow to recognize; and they inquired for those who had spoken against Saul at first, saying, Let them now be slain. However, the king was wise and generous, and said, "There shall not a man be put to death this day; for today the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel."—Verse 13.

THE DIVINE CHARACTER VINDICATED

We again remind our readers that although this war and the slaughtering of those Ammonites had the Divine approval and blessing, it did not signify what many of us once supposed; namely, that those thousands of Ammonites slaughtered in their sleep or in their waking moments, went immediately to the theological Hell, there to suffer eternal torments. On the contrary, they merely went to the great prison-house of death, the tomb, there to sleep until in God's arrangement Christ would die as the world's Redeemer—and more, until at His Second Advent the Redeemer should take His great Power and reign, begin His work of calling back from death all that are in their graves.—John 5:28, 29. See Revised Version.

To grasp the situation we must remember that all men are under a death-sentence, conviction, not worthy of life everlasting. All were to die anyway; and it mattered little whether they would die from starvation or sickness or pestilence or by the sword. The penalty merely reads, "Dying, thou shalt die"—not live, anyhow or anywhere. This view of matters has a distinct bearing on everything appertaining to the Lord's authorization of wars, and permission of famines, sickness, etc. While God has enforced the penalty, "The wages of sin is death," and has thus manifested His justice, He in another way has been preparing for the manifestation of His Love. The first step of this love-manifestation was in the sending of His Son to be man's Redeemer—to die for Adam's sin, under which all the race is condemned to death.

Still the Divine Plan is hidden from the world in general. Only the Lord's consecrated people may have a clear understanding through the Bible of God's great purposes of love for the race. These are informed, and are able to comprehend the Message, that ultimately God will establish a Kingdom which will bind Satan's power, release humanity from its mental, moral and physical weaknesses—the results of the curse—and restore all the obedient to full perfection and to relationship with God.

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES AWAIT ALL

Looking out into the world, we perceive that opportunities for progress and greatness are by no means equal. Nevertheless, few men and few women make use of all the golden opportunities which do come to them for their own betterment and for usefulness on their part to their fellows. All such may take a good lesson from Saul; for he had naturally some good traits which he subsequently diverted or misused.

That Saul had humility is evidenced by the fact that when the suggestion of his becoming king was made, he repudiated the thought of his worthiness of the position, saying that there were greater tribes than the one of which he was a member, and that even in his own tribe, his family was not the most prominent. Again, at the time when Samuel the Prophet called the people, that the Lord's lot might be determined as to who should be the king, Saul was in hiding amongst the stuff, sitting amongst the piles of baggage. He knew how the Lord's lot would fall; and it was to his credit that he was not

strutting about amongst the people showing himself, and saying, The Lord would surely choose me. Again, when some of the people murmured that he was not acceptable, Saul quietly went to his home and to his farming, letting the matter rest. Thus he displayed patience and wisdom, as well as humility.

His subsequent action and leading the army of Israel showed his faith in God and his courage. Had Saul maintained these characteristics, his experiences later would have been very different. But nearly every young man and young woman on the threshold of life, as well as when older, can gain some valuable and lasting lessons from Saul's experiences.

It may surprise some when we say that Christians—God's consecrated people—may especially learn lessons of profit from Saul's experiences. They, like Saul, have been nominated of God, not only to be kings, but also to be priests, "a Royal Priesthood." As Saul was anointed with the oil, so the Royal Priesthood are anointed with the Holy Spirit. As the people rejected Saul, and he waited patiently for the Lord's time, so the people, mankind, are not yet ready for the Reign of the Royal Priesthood, of which Jesus is the Head; and God's time has not yet come for the establishment of the Kingdom. Lessons of patience, of humility and of confidence in God are requisite that after enduring, they might inherit the promises.—Hebrews 6:12.

The great Armageddon is at hand, and terrible lessons will be learned by the world at great cost. Thereafter the Kingdom of Messiah will be very popular; and they will be saying, as they did in Saul's case, Let all those who oppose be put to death. However, The glorified Christ—Jesus the Head, the Church His members—will be very gracious, and a general amnesty will be proclaimed for all who will desire to come in line with the Kingdom.

Not only those who persecuted the Savior will be forgiven and be assisted back into harmony with God through Him, but those, also, who have despised the Royal Priesthood and persecuted them unwittingly, will be mercifully dealt with. "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, The Lord be glorified: [We do it for the good of the cause] but He shall appear for your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

The shame that will then come upon all who in the meantime had resisted the Lord's choice for His Kingdom class will be a sufficient penalty. After the shame and God's forgiveness to all the willing and obedient, The Christ will bring blessings of "Restitution, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:21.

A WORLD FULL OF KINGS

God created Father Adam the king of earth. Had he remained loyal to his God, he would have retained not only his life and health and happiness, but also his kingly authority over the beasts, the fish and the fowl—ruling them with telepathic powers. The breaking of the Covenant with God by Adam not only brought death and separation from

God, but impaired his ruling powers as respects the lower creatures. The redemption accomplished by the death of Jesus is eventually to reach every member of Adam's race, and not merely will be applicable to their restoration to human perfection of mind and body, but will include a restoration of kingly powers.

In a republic there is a recognition of the fact of a human equality before the law. In a republic, every man is a king; and these kings vote for one of their number to be a president-king, or otherwise to hold a government executive position as the servant of all. This is a theory, an ideal, but we all know that it is more or less defective. It is in vain to claim that all men are born free and equal when we know that there are great inequalities of birth, of character, of talent, of will-power. While, therefore, a republic would be the ideal condition for perfect men, it only partially meets the requirements of the case so long as man is imperfect.

Nor will Messiah's Kingdom be established as a republic. Instead of giving humanity more power and leaving everything to be settled by the popular will and vote, Messiah's Kingdom will do the reverse. It will lay down the law, punish every infraction of the law, and point men to the fact that they are not qualified to govern themselves, and that therefore, God has decreed the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom to rule over humanity, while they are in the imperfect condition, and to bring them up by Restitution to full perfection, where they will be able, as originally designed, to all be kings; or, failing to come up to this standard, they will be destroyed as incorrigible, lovers of iniquity.

Surely the Divine Program for humanity is beautiful, simple, and sublimely grand! It leaves nothing to be desired further. As the Bible declares, it will be "the desire of all nations." Those whose eyes and ears of understanding are open to appreciate this Message of the Bible have much advantage every way over the average man at the present time. This knowledge is very assistful to them as they come to realize that the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon them is with a view to preparing them to be the Royal Priesthood of the future and, with Jesus, to bring to mankind the blessings of Jehovah, lost by sin, redeemed at Calvary.

MARCH 15

The just shall live by faith—Heb. 10:38.

It is not enough that, by faith, we receive the first impulse of life, but, having passed from death unto life, by the same means, we must *continue* to receive and appropriate spiritual nourishment, that we may grow thereby; we must walk by faith, following the leading of the holy Spirit through the Word of Truth. The life of faith is an individual matter, as well of the heart as of the head. It is far more than an acceptance of doctrines which we consider Scriptural and therefore true; it is the *assimilation* of that which we have proved to be the Truth, so that its principles become our principles, and its promises our inspiration—Z '95, 92, 93 (R 1798).

Mankind's efforts under the fallen condition to gain everlasting life by works have proven disastrous. The sacrifice of Christ has made it possible that a righteousness apart from the law might be given all who exercise faith therein. Whoever, therefore, accepts Christ as his Savior, gains reckoned eternal life through faith, and thus the just shall live—gain everlasting life reckonedly through faith. The consecrated also live by faith in that theirs is a life of faith as distinct from living by sight. And, finally, actual eternal life is gained on all planes of being by faithfulness. Thus in three senses the just shall live by faith—P '34, 31.

Parallel passages: Hab. 2:4; John 3:15, 16, 36; 5:24; 6:40; Rom. 1:17; 3:19—5:1; 10:4; Gal. 2:16-21; 3:5-13, 21-26; Eph. 2:8-10; Phil. 3:9; Heb. 11:3-39; Jas. 2:17-26.

Hymns: 174, 15, 54, 124, 178, 246, 295.

Poems of Dawn, 71: *Have Faith in God*.

Tower Reading: Z '94, 147 (R 1652).

Questions: Have I this week lived by faith? What helped or hindered therein? What were the results?

HAVE FAITH IN GOD

WHEN the stormy winds are blowing,
And the angry billows roll,
When the mighty waves of trouble
Surge around thy stricken soul,
Have faith in God,
Who reigns above;
Yea, trust in Him,
For He is love.

When the way is rough and thorny,
Danger all along the path,
When the foe is ever planning

How to crush thee in his wrath,
Have faith in God;
His loving care
Shall keep thee safe
From every snare.

When thine eyes are dim with weeping,
And thy heart is full of woe
For the loved that now are sleeping
In the silent grave so low,
Have faith in God;
The dead shall rise
And meet the Savior
From the skies.

Art thou filled with eager longing
For the night to pass away?
Art thou weary of the watching
For the dawning of the day?
Have faith in God;
He is our stay;
Soon, soon will come
The perfect day.

Art thou hoping, waiting, praying,
For the presence of the Lord?
Art thou waiting for the Kingdom,
And the glorious reward?
Have faith in God;
Our King is here,
And soon His glory
Will appear.

R1652: CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE.

"But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in

him. But we are not of them who draw back unto destruction, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."—Heb. 10:32-39.

WITH very many of God's people, as well as with the world's people, the ideal Christian life is one of constant peace and tranquility. They have never learned that "the peace of God which passeth all [worldly] understanding," promised to the Christian, is to rule in and keep his *heart* (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15), and does not apply to his outward life. They forget, or perhaps never learned, that our Master's words were, "In the world *ye shall have tribulation*," but in me ye shall have peace (in your hearts). "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?" "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, [in this present evil world or dispensation], shall suffer persecution." It is of a wicked class, and of the saints, that the Prophet declared, "They are not in trouble as other men."—John 16:33; 15:18; Matt. 10:25; 2 Tim. 3:12; Psa. 73:5.

Only to those who have some knowledge of God's great plan is this, his dealing with his people, understandable and readable. The world marvels that those whom God receives into his family, as sons by redemption and adoption, should be required or even permitted to suffer afflictions. But to the well-instructed saint the Apostle says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." And this one may now clearly discern the object and utility of present trials, afflictions and persecutions. He sees that these are in fullest accord with his high calling, his heavenly calling,—to be an heir of God and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ our Lord, "*if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*"—Rom. 8:17.

But why should a share in the coming glory be made dependent and contingent upon present sufferings? We answer, for two reasons.

(1) Because severe trials and testings of our love for God and his truth, and of our faith in him and his promises, are only a wise provision on God's part, in view of the very high honor and responsibility of the great office to which he has called us. If it was proper that our Lord and Redeemer should be tested in all points as to faith and obedience prior to his exaltation to the excellent glory and power of his divine, immortal nature, much more so it is fitting that *we*, who were once aliens and strangers, far from God, and children of wrath even as others, should be thoroughly tested; not tested as to the perfection of our earthen vessels, for God and we well know that in our fallen flesh dwelleth no perfection, but tested as to our new minds, our *consecrated wills*, whether or not these are *fully* consecrated to the Lord, firmly established in the love of truth, purity and righteousness in general. And also to see whether we would *compromise* any of the principles of righteousness for worldly favor, selfish ambition, or for any of "the pleasures of sin for a season." Those who *love* righteousness and *hate* iniquity, who develop *positive characters*, these are the "overcomers" who shall, as members of Christ, inherit all things. The undecided, the luke-warm—neither cold nor hot—are far from having the spirit of the Kingdom class, and will surely be rejected—"spewed out."—Rev. 3:16.

(2) A share in the coming glory is dependent upon present sufferings, for the reason that the coming glories are to be bestowed only upon those who have the spirit of Christ, the spirit (disposition) of holiness. And whoever has received this holy spirit or disposition and been transformed by the renewing of his mind or will, so that no longer *selfishness* but *love* shall rule over his thoughts and words and deeds, that person, if in the world at all, could not avoid present suffering. His love for God, his zeal for God's service and people, his faith in God's Word and his uncompromising attitude respecting everything relating to these would be so greatly in contrast with the prevalent spirit of doubt, selfishness and compromise that he would be thought peculiar, called an extremist and fanatic, if not a hypocrite. Evil surmisings, out of hearts not fully consecrated, will attribute every good deed to some selfish or evil motive, and therefore, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my [Christ's] name's sake;" for "the world knoweth [understandeth] us not, because it knew him not." (Luke 21:17; 1 John 3:1.) The reason for all this is evident: it is because "the god of this world hath blinded the eyes" of the vast majority of men; because the faithful, who appreciate the truth, who have new hearts (wills) and the right spirit on these subjects, are but a "little flock."

And these conditions will not be changed until the testing of the "little flock" is finished. God will permit evil to be in the ascendancy until that testing, sifting, refining and polishing of the Bride of Christ is fully accomplished. Then Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, and not be permitted to further blind and deceive the nations during that Millennial age of blessing; but, on the contrary, the little flock of overcomers, with Christ, their Lord and Head, will bless all the families of the earth with a full knowledge of the truth.

Therefore, dear brethren and sisters, let us give heed to the Apostle's words, and not cast away our confidence. Confidence in God, and in the outworking of his great plan, and confidence in all who trust in the precious blood and are bringing forth the fruits of the spirit in their daily lives—meekness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love.

The Apostle here clearly shows that there are two ways of enduring the afflictions of Christ: (1) to be made a gazingstock both by afflictions and reproaches, and (2) by avowing our sympathy for the reproached ones and thus sharing their reproaches and afflictions. For if one member suffer, *all the members* of the body of Christ suffer with it.

"Call to remembrance the former days," and note that your afflictions and trials came principally after you had been illuminated with the light of the knowledge of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord; and that they have increased as the light of present truth has increased with you. It is not difficult to discern the reason for this. The great Adversary is not interested in disturbing those who are "asleep in Zion;" but he is ever on the alert to mislead and entangle those that are awake. And the more active we become in the service of the Lord and the truth, and consequently the more actively opposed to Satan and error, the more he will fight against us. And the more faithfully and vigorously we fight the good fight of faith, as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, the more we will have of the Master's approval now, and the greater will be our reward in the Kingdom.

No doubt there are many and more severe trials just before us. From God's standpoint, having been blest with great light, we should be able to endure greater trials and afflictions. From Satan's standpoint, we, as a Gideon's band, armed with the truth, are more injurious to his cause than all others combined. The only wonder to us is that he has not assailed us still more fiercely in the past. Perhaps he was hindered; perhaps he will be granted yet more liberty to buffet us, as the night draws on. Such is our expectation, based upon the direct statements and the types of Scripture.

But such reflections should bring us no sadness, no fear; for he that is on our part is more than all that be against us. (1 John 4:4; Rom. 8:31.) The Lord of hosts is with us. His promises, as well as his providences, are walls of salvation and protection on every hand. What shall separate us from the love of God in Christ? Shall tribulation? No! it shall but cause us to draw closer to him; and under his protecting care we shall rest. His grace is sufficient for us. His strength is made manifest in our weakness. When we feel weak in ourselves, then we are strong in him. He will never leave us nor forsake us.

"Watchman, what of the night?"
"The morning cometh, and a night also."

See *Poems and Hymns of Dawn*, pages 62 and 286.

MARCH 16

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. ... And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren—1 John 3:14, 16.

One of the final and most searching tests of these "brethren," and the one under which probably the most of those once awakened and armed will fall, will be love for the brethren. Seemingly many will fail at this point and be therefore accounted unworthy of an abundant entrance to the Kingdom on this score. Should any be specially weak and liable to stumble, the true soldier of the cross will not despise him, nor revile him, even as the Elder Brother, the Captain, would not do so. On the contrary, he will be the more watchful and helpful toward the weaker, even though he most enjoy himself in the company of the stronger—Z '99, 88 (R 2450).

One of the evidences of our justification and of Spirit-infilling is love for the brethren, disciples of Christ Jesus. He who has this quality in the self-denying measure that thankfully and appreciatively lays down life for the brethren, because of his relation to them in Christ, may rest assured of his possession of the Spirit. We who have been received into the Divine family owe it to the Lord that we lay down our lives for the brethren. This is a debt that the covenant under which we are requires us to discharge—P '33, 46.

Parallel passages: John 13:34, 35; 15:9-19; Rom. 12:9, 10; 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 13; Gal. 5:13, 22; Col. 2:2; 3:12-14; 1 Thes. 3:12; 4:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2:17; 3:8; 4:8; 1 John 2:10; 3:11, 17, 18, 23; 4:7, 11, 12, 20, 21.

Hymns: 299, 208, 165, 166, 167, 22, 170.
Poems of Dawn, 38: *Lord, Here I Bring Myself*.
Tower Reading: Z '13, 339 (R 5346).

Questions: Have I this week loved and served the brethren? How? Why? With what results?

LORD, HERE I BRING MYSELF

LORD, here I bring myself,
'Tis all I have to give,
My heart's desire is wholly this,
Henceforth for Thee to live;

To own no will but Thine,
To suffer loss or shame,
All things to bear, if only I
May glorify Thy name;

Henceforth mine every power

Each day for thee to use,
My hands, my feet, my lips, mine *all*,
As Thou, my Lord, shalt choose.

Dear Lord, my constant prayer
Is for increase of grace,
That I *by faith* may walk with Thee,
Till I behold Thy face.

R5346: "BECAUSE WE LOVE THE BRETHREN"

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."—1 John 3:14.

WE are glad to testify that both from personal contact and through correspondence we have every reason to believe that the Bible Students, who constitute the large majority of our readers, have been growing in grace lately—during the past few years. Contrasting the present with three, six or ten years ago, we notice a great increase in spirituality—the Spirit of the Lord—the Holy Spirit of Love.

Not only is this manifested in activities in the service of the Truth, but also in broader sympathies one for another and for all Christians—and, indeed, for the entire groaning creation. This is just what it should be every year; every week, indeed, should mark progress in Christ-likeness, as we remember that, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His," and therefore will have no part in the Kingdom—whatever inferior blessing he may obtain under stripes and disciplines necessary to the development of the proper character.

We remember further the Apostle's statement that the Divine predestination respecting the Church is that we must each individually in character become copies of our Lord. (Romans 8:29.) Surely such clear statements of the Divine will and of the terms upon which we may make our calling and election sure should be stimulating.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding all the progress noted, many of the little classes are experiencing friction, which causes more or less concern and unhappiness. As the Truth makes us free and opens the eyes of our understanding, it enables us to see our own imperfections and the imperfections of the brethren and of the world more clearly than ever. Unless there be a large amount of love, this will mean a disposition to find fault, to criticize.

We may safely give ourselves considerable liberty along these lines in dealing with our own character. We may find fault with ourselves and criticize ourselves often to advantage. Yet even this should not be carried so far that we forget the Lord's gracious promise that He will judge us according to our heart intentions and not according to our imperfect attainments. We are, perhaps, better able to appreciate our own shortcomings,

and how they were unintentional; but when the shortcomings are those of others, it tests our love, patience, brotherly-kindness, meekness, gentleness, etc. Yet such testings are very profitable. We pray that the Lord will assist us in growing in the graces of the Holy Spirit. Let us remember that the only way to assist us would be by giving us testings along these very lines. Our strength of character, our development in these graces, will be in proportion as we receive these testings in the proper spirit.

PROOF OF RELATIONSHIP AS NEW CREATURES

Our text seems to imply that the love of the brethren is one of the most beautiful experiences of the Christian. Whoever finds that he has full love for all the brethren, full sympathy for them, therein has a specially strong Scriptural proof that he himself is a New Creature—that he has passed from death unto life. And whoever has any other sentiment than love to any of the brethren surely lacks proof, or demonstration, along this line of his relationship to God as a New Creature.

If we keep this always in mind, how valuable an assistance it will be to us! Do we not frequently desire to reassure ourselves of the Lord's favor and of our continued relationship to Him as New Creatures, passed from death unto life? If we do, here is the text, the application of which, if we are in the right condition, should bring peace and joy. And if we are in the wrong condition, it should bring alarm for our personal safety as New Creatures.

One of the points of friction in many of the classes is the relationship between the class and its servants. So far as we can judge, the fault is sometimes with the one and sometimes with the other. We are frequently asked in respect to the duties of the Elders, the responsibility of the classes, etc. In general, we prefer to refer all such inquiries to our very full discussion of the subject in the sixth volume of *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*. We know not how to improve on the suggestions there made. We believe that if what we have written were thoroughly studied, the recommendations there given would be found ample for every case.

On doctrinal matters we prefer not to write personal letters; for in a few cases we have found that the persons receiving the letters have either misunderstood them, or only partially communicated their contents to others when discussing the matter. Again, some have said, "Brother Russell wrote thus and so in *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, but we have a later letter which intimates that he has changed his mind." We wish the dear friends to feel assured that if our judgment changes respecting any important truths we will put the change before all *THE WATCH TOWER* readers as speedily as possible. Until you see such changes mentioned in *THE WATCH TOWER* give no credit to them; esteem the statements of the *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* just as though they were written yesterday and direct to yourself.

PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Briefly summarizing the principles governing the Church of Christ, let us say: There are two views prevalent amongst Christians respecting Church government:

(1) The Episcopal view, which holds that the Church is to be ruled and governed by bishops, because of the claim that these are Apostolic bishops; that is, that they are successors to the Apostles, and invested with Apostolic wisdom and inspiration and authority for the regulation of the Church and its affairs. This view is held by Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics and Episcopalians.

(2) The other view is the Congregationalist, and holds that each congregation of the Lord's people is a unit, and has the right to govern itself and to make its own regulations for its own welfare, subject to Divine guidance. Congregationalists, Baptists and some others claim to be governed by this view. Other denominations, with more or less confusion and indecision, divide authority between the ministers and the laity.

We hold that the Bible arrangement combines the Episcopal and the Congregational views. Thus the Scriptures teach that the twelve Apostles were and still are the Episcopate—the only inspired and authoritative Apostolic Bishops. Whatsoever these declared to be binding on earth is binding amongst the Lord's people. Whatsoever they declared loosed, or not binding, would not be obligatory upon the Church in the sight of Heaven. From this viewpoint, the words of Jesus respecting all other so-called apostolic bishops are quite pointed. He declares that they are "false apostles and do lie"—they are not apostles in any sense of the word. (Revelation 2:2; 2 Corinthians 11:13.) Hence we are not to give heed nor to in any manner recognize the claims of these bishops, whom Satan has deluded into thinking that they have Apostolic power—Apostolic succession.

As the people of God have the original Episcopacy, the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, for authority and direction, they are thus organized under an Episcopal government, or government of the Apostolic Bishops—nevertheless their organization is properly congregational. Each company of the Lord's consecrated people is entirely free, and should have its own faith in the Bible and all the precious truths of the Bible. No congregation and no individual can properly be bound by the vows of other congregations or other individuals.

The Congregation, Ecclesia, Church, coming together to act as one, to worship together, to serve God's Cause together, should do so because of their mutual appreciation of the Divine character and Plan. They are not under anybody's government, or rule, except that of the Bible Episcopate—the Apostolic teachings. As for the Elders and Deacons of each Congregation, they are to be chosen by the Congregation from their own number, in accordance with the instructions of the Bible. No earthly power has a right to intervene between the instructions of the Divinely-appointed twelve Apostles and the companies of the Lord's people who choose to assemble themselves in harmony with the Apostolic instructions. This at one stroke wipes out all papal authority and the authority of all apostolic bishops falsely so-called.

Since the Deacons and Elders, Pastors and Teachers, are lifted to their places of service and honor by the *votes of the brethren*, it places the Congregation in greater authority than its servants. But the Congregation, in turn, is bound not to force its preferences, but merely to act loyally in harmony with the Divine direction given by the Apostles in the Bible. Thus we see that the truth on the subject from the Divine standpoint has been measurably lost sight of for centuries, to the disadvantage of the Church—some taking one part of the Truth and some another—few, if any, recognizing the whole. Indeed, this is what we find to have been the case in respect to nearly every doctrine.

While particulars have been set forth in *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, Volume VI, yet in what we have above stated lie the principles involved. Whoever thoroughly grasps the principles should be able to appreciate the details. And it would be only a question of thought and patient deliberation to settle all the details of the affairs of any little Class, in accordance with the Scriptures. Thus while the Class gives certain authority and service into the hands of those chosen to be its Elders, and appoints others to assist them in the work as Deacons, or servants, nevertheless, both Elders and Deacons are answerable to the Congregation, to the ecclesia.

THE ECCLESIA SUPERIOR TO ITS SERVANTS

In case of any dispute, the judgment, or decision, of the Congregation should stand as the right thing for the time being. If it prove later to have been unwise, the Lord is able to overrule the error of judgment for good—for instruction. To illustrate: Should the judgment of the Class at any time differ from the judgment of the Elder or Elders, the proper course would be for the Elders to submit to the higher authority, which is the Class, the Church, the Ecclesia; for he who *appoints* is superior to him who is appointed. Our Lord's arrangement for the Classes, or Ecclesias, is, "Wherever two or three of you are met in My name, there am I." The Lord has promised to be with the *Class*. He has not said, Wherever there is an *Elder*, there am I, and to him shall the Class gather; but, Wherever there is a *Class* there am I; and it may appoint an Elder, whom I will recognize and bless as its representative and for its good, in proportion as he shall strive to be a suitable vessel to be My servant in blessing that Class.

This appreciation of the true relationship between the Elder and the Class should help the Elders to cultivate those fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit described by St. Paul as meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, long-suffering, love. But, on the other hand, the Congregation, Ecclesia, having chosen one of its number to serve it as an Elder Brother and to look out for its interests, should hope that they had wisely chosen in harmony with the Lord's Word and providences. So hoping, they should be prepared to give support and encouragement to the Elder, in proportion as they see him striving to know and to do the Lord's will and faithfully to lay down his time and talents in the service of the Class. Should they subsequently find that apparently they had not fully discerned and followed the Apostolic instructions respecting the selection of the Elder, they should still be kind and gentle toward him, remembering that the fault was theirs in

electing him—a fault to be rectified at the next election—and trusting and praying that they may know the will of the Lord more perfectly and be wiser in their selection.

DUTIES OF THE ECCLESIA

From this viewpoint the Congregation has everything to say in respect to the number of meetings to be held, where they are to be held, by whom they are to be conducted, the character of the lessons or studies, etc. Nothing of this kind is for the Elder to decide, though as a member of the Congregation he has the same right to be heard that the others have. In proportion as he is esteemed highly, his opinion will have weight with the Ecclesia, Class, or Congregation. Nevertheless, the Class should never forget the thought that however highly the Elder may be esteemed, he is not their guide. The Elders and all others are to be heeded in proportion as they are seen to wisely interpret the teachings of the Holy Scriptures.

We believe that with these principles seen, approved and looked up to, there will be less and less friction in the Classes. The Elders, in just their proper sphere and conscientiously seeking to serve in harmony therewith, will be restrained from doing and saying many things out of their province and likely to stir up difficulties among the members of the Classes.

A POTENT FACTOR IN ALL DISPUTES

It will generally be found, we believe, that *pride* is a potent factor in all Church disputes. Sometimes the Elder undertakes to do for the Class more than it wishes him to do and more than it has authorized him to do. Or, misguided by the sentiments prevalent among all denominations of Christendom, he thinks of his Eldership as an office of authority over the Church, and not as an honorable *service*, the authority being vested in the Class. Sometimes the difficulty is with some member of the Class, who, seeking to preserve the rights and authority of the Class, goes to an extreme, and unnecessarily harries the Elder, criticizing him for doing the right thing, but not doing it exactly the way this well-intentioned brother thinks he should do.

Love should apply the Golden Rule. We should be willing to give the Elder as much reasonable liberty of action as we would like to enjoy if we were in his place—provided, of course, that this liberty should be in full harmony with the Word of God. Furthermore, we should remember that the Elder is the servant of the *whole Class*, and not the servant specially of any one member of it. Any criticism, therefore, of his conduct should come from the Class and not merely from an individual member of it. If an individual member has an important thought which the Elder ignores he should be at liberty to ask the judgment of the Class on the subject for his own instruction and for the instruction of the Elder; but no individual member should undertake to criticize the Elder or to find fault with his procedure.

If the Class approves of the Elder, the individuals thinking differently are at liberty still to *think* as they please, but should *yield* to the *majority*. In other words, peace and

order in a class are items of great value in respect to all progress in Bible study. Nothing should be done to disturb the peace and order unless there be something positively wrong, unscriptural, connected with the matter. Then the brother or the sister calling attention to the matters which he considers unscriptural, should say little about his own opinion and deal chiefly with the Scriptural injunctions which he believes are being violated.

"LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE"

These suggestions are intended to increase and promote peace and unity amongst the Lord's brethren wherever this journal goes. We have confidence that all who are begotten of the one Spirit, the Holy Spirit, are desirous of knowing and doing that which is right—that which is pleasing and acceptable to God and for the best interests of His Cause. "By one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Our thought is that all being one with the Lord—of one heart, of one will—our difficulties lie almost entirely in our heads, in our misapprehension of some of the principles governing the Divine arrangement. And these principles, we may be sure, are perfect, right. In proportion as we can come into harmony with these principles, we shall be at peace one with another, joyfully assisting each other toward the Kingdom, in which we shall have a share with our Lord.

Let us continually remember that love for all the brethren is a sure indication that we love as New Creatures. And love for the brethren means that we will do them no injury, that we will speak no evil respecting them unless of absolute necessity; and, finally, that we will not even surmise evil in respect to their words and deeds. "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God (by His Spirit dwelleth) in him." For though we should give all our goods to feed the poor, and though we should even sacrifice our bodies to be burned in the interests of righteousness, yet if we have not *love*—the *Spirit of love*—we are nothing in God's sight.—Romans 13:10; I John 4:16; I Cor. 13:3.

MARCH 17

Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath—Matt. 25:28, 29.

Why is the one-talented man chosen as an illustration of these talent-burials? It is to show the responsibility of those who have least—that the Lord expects even the least of His consecrated people to know of and to use the talents (opportunities) he has in his possession, and that he will not hold guiltless even those who have the smallest ability (opportunity) to serve Him and His brethren and His Truth, and who neglect to use it—Z '01, 59 (R 2764).

The talents are the opportunities that God gives each according to his ability for service. Those who fail to use their opportunities will be deprived of these altogether; while those who use them will not only retain their own, but gain others in addition—even those lost by the negligent. Let this admonish each of us to seize and use the golden opportunities of service now—P '32, 30.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 4:1, 2; Matt. 13:12; Mark 4:25; Luke 8:18; 12:35-38, 42; 16:2; 19:26; 1 Cor. 15:10; Lev. 10:1-7; Acts 1:20; Matt. 24:45-51; 1 Pet. 4:10.

Hymns: 208, 13, 130, 136, 145, 183, 299.
Poems of Dawn, 145: *I'll Do My Very Best*.
Tower Reading: Z '06, 315 (R 3869).

Questions: Have I this week been a faithful or an unfaithful steward? How? Why? With what results?

I'LL DO MY VERY BEST

I MAY perform no deed of great renown
No glorious acts to millions manifest;
Yet in my little labors up and down,
I'll do my best.

I may not paint a perfect masterpiece,
Nor carve a statue by the world confessed
A miracle of art; yet will not cease
To do my best.

My name is not upon the rolls of fame,
'Tis on the page of common life impressed;
But I'll keep marking, marking just the same,
And do my very best.

Mine may not be the beautiful and grand,
But I must try to be so careful, lest
It fail to be what's put into my hand—
My very best.

R3869: BEFORE CHRIST'S JUDGMENT SEAT

Matthew 25:14-30.

Golden Text:—"A faithful man shall abound with blessings."—Prov. 28:20.

THE PARABLE of the pounds was uttered on the way to Jerusalem, the parable of the talents about five days later, on the Tuesday preceding our Lord's crucifixion, if Matthew's account is in consecutive order. The two parables, although similar in many respects, are different. One pound was given to each servant by a nobleman going into a far country to be invested with his kingly authority, and the servants each increased his trust in varying degrees. The parable of the talents now before us is different in that one received five talents, another two, another one—corresponding to the varying conditions of the Lord's people, mentally, morally, physically, socially, etc. Since one pound apiece was given it follows that the pounds could not represent talents, opportunities, which are very dissimilar. The pound must therefore represent something that is common to all of the Lord's people.

The holy Spirit is common to all the Lord's people, but not in the same measure, since each must receive it according to his capacity; therefore the holy Spirit could not be represented by the pound. The Word of God is common to all of the Lord's people, but a natural ability to understand the Word of God is not the same in all the consecrated; hence the pound could not represent the Word of God, the divine revelation. One thing, and only one, we believe, is common to all of the Lord's people in every sense of the word, and that is justification. Justification is a gift of God through faith in the precious blood, and is common to every one accepted of the Lord. It compensates for his weaknesses and blemishes, whether they be few or many; it therefore in the most absolute sense represents the one important blessing of God bestowed upon his people. Upon the use of that "pound," that blessing, that entrusted gift, depends the Master's reward in the end. The proper use of it is an investment of it in the Lord's service in a full, hearty consecration of time, influence and all to the service of the Lord. Any failure to use our justification will signify a complete loss of everything hoped for in respect to the Kingdom blessings and privileges of this, Gospel age. By *justification* our powers, however humble, are made acceptable to the Lord as though we were perfect. And every service we are able to render has its merit or value in our justification. We are not forgetting that we previously (Dec. 1, 1900) applied these pounds as signifying the holy Spirit, etc., common to all of God's people. We still hold to that application with the *limitation* that the holy Spirit is reckoned to us only on the basis of our *justification*. Thus it is through our *justification* that we are *complete* in him who is the Head of the New Creation and partakers of his holiness of spirit.

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Our lesson today deals especially with the talents, which undoubtedly represent the opportunities and privileges of those consecrated servants of the Lord who throughout this Gospel age are accepted as followers of Jesus and laborers in the vineyard. It should be noticed that in no way the parable relates to the world, but merely to the Church. While the world has certain talents, privileges, opportunities, these are not at the disposal of the household, because the world by wisdom knows not God, is blind to his gracious offer that they may become his servants, co-laborers together with his Son. True, the world should recognize that it is bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, and that it would be a reasonable service to lay down time, talent, energy, influence in the service of the Redeemer. But the world is blind and cannot realize the situation at present. Its opportunity will come by and by, when the darkness shall have rolled away and the Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth to fully illuminate the situation and cause the knowledge of the Lord to fill the earth.

There are various valuable lessons taught by this parable, and one of these is respecting the character of the Church's judgment. It is admitted that those who have become the Lord's bond-servants are possessors of various talents, powers, privileges and opportunities, some more and some less, and it is admitted that these were entrusted to them as the Lord's, and they were made the Lord's stewards after that they had recognized him and accepted him as their Master and consecrated themselves to his service. It should be clearly seen then just where the responsibility begins which will terminate when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

True, whatsoever a man sows he will reap. Every noble desire or effort will bring reward, every wrong course a measure of punishment in the present life, even before we come into the attitude of the Lord's consecrated ones—"bond-servants." This is true not only of the consecrated but of the whole world, but the parable does not take in the world nor the affairs of the Church up to the time they became the Lord's servants. It merely deals with them subsequently—as the servants. It shows that in the day of reckoning the Lord will ignore the affairs of our lives which preceded our consecration, and will merely deal with, reckon with, judge us, according to our use or misuse of our consecrated time, influence, talents, etc.

To realize these things clearly and distinctly should mean to every one of us renewed zeal and energy, and carefulness that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts, and so far as possible all of life's conduct, might testify to our faithfulness in the use of talents and opportunities entrusted to us, and might bring us the Master's approval when our trial time shall come. As the Apostle declares, "Judgment [trial, testing] must begin at the house of God [the Church]." (I Pet. 4:17.) This, the parable before us shows, will be in the end of this Gospel age. This trial of the Church at its conclusion will demonstrate who are the Lord's elect, who shall be associated with Jesus in the great work of the future age, the Millennial age, namely, the judging of the world—the giving of the world a trial or test to demonstrate whether or not under favorable

conditions and with clear knowledge they would be obedient to the Lord or disobedient—that the obedient might be blessed with everlasting life in perfection and the wilfully disobedient be utterly destroyed from amongst the people.—Acts 3:23.

OUR VARYING TALENTS

We sometimes hear the claim made that all men are born free and equal, but there could be no greater mistake than this. Men are indeed born free so far as liberty of thought, will or intention are concerned, the only limitation being their knowledge or lack of it. But they are not born physically free, mentally free nor morally free. There is an incumbrance, a mortgage of sin and death, upon the whole human family which has descended from father Adam. This mortgage is called the curse. Some bear a larger share of it than others by heredity, environment. The original image and likeness of God has thus been marred, measurably effaced. If we assume that Adam as a perfect man had ten talents, it would be quite appropriate to say that not one of his posterity today, after six thousand years of falling, had more than five talents, and the majority much less, two talents and one talent. It is safe to estimate the mass of mankind as one-talented by nature. These talents which we possess by nature were transferred and became the Lord's when we accepted him, gave him our hearts, consecrated our all to his service.

A "talent" represented 3,000 shekels of silver, and the shekels in turn were the great and the small, representing in value in our money one thousand dollars or two thousand dollars. In the parable the servants are represented as trading with these, that is, working with them, using them. They were left free to exercise their best abilities with merely the general regulation that these were for use, and that their faithfulness would be represented in the results they would secure from using them. So it is with the Lord's consecrated people; we are not specially hampered by directions as to how we shall use our consecrated talents, powers, privileges, opportunities. The Lord has a great work for the future, and is less interested in what results we shall obtain from the use of our present talents than in the demonstration of our loyalty and zeal. The parable admits that our talents at present are inferior, not great in the sight of our Master, and that he seeks to see our diligence, our faithfulness to him and his cause.

TWO VIEWS, BOTH TRUE

We may view these talents and their use from two different standpoints, and both will be true. (1) Our natural talents may be considered, first, as representing wealth, influence, intellectual power, education and public utterance. The person possessed of all of these we might consider to be very richly endowed indeed, a five-talented person; very few are in this class. They possess grand opportunities and proportionately great responsibilities. With the proper zeal in the use of these talents such individuals would be a power for good in the body of Christ, the Church. The two-talented man might have intellectual power and the gift of public utterance, but be without education, wealth, influence, and correspondingly his ability would be less. Or he might have wealth and influence and lack the other qualities, or possess mental power and education and lack the talent of public utterance, influence and wealth. The one-talented man might have wealth or

education or influence, but lacking the other qualities would be more or less handicapped. With the majority of the people, however, these matters might be considered slightly different: as, for instance, the one talent might be understood to represent a small degree of wealth, influence, education, mental caliber and public ability; the two-talented man might represent twice as much; the five-talented man five times as much. Viewed from this standpoint the use of our talents in the Lord's service should be increasing daily, and each one of his servants should be able to honor him more and serve his cause better in every sense of the word each day, each year.

(2) These talents may be viewed from the standpoint of our spiritual qualities, meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. All of the Lord's people come short in these graces of the Spirit because of our fallen inheritance; because we are born in sin, shapen in iniquity; because selfishness in all of its concomitant parts, arrogance, rudeness, unkindness, impatience, have in large measure obliterated the opposite qualities, which are the likeness of God. Hence some that are naturally much impaired and very selfish, in whom the various fruits of the Spirit are naturally much dwarfed, might be considered as those possessing only the one talent of spiritual power and Godlikeness; others, possessing more, would correspond to the man of two talents, and others possessing this quality still more would be five talented. From this view of the talents, the object of each of the Lord's servants should be to increase these fruits and graces of the Spirit in his own heart and life, and thus, by gaining the victory over selfishness and sin, to be more and more a copy of God's dear Son, and more and more prepared for cooperation with the King in the Kingdom for the blessing and instruction of the world.

(3) The Lord has so arranged the matter that our talents, viewed from the two standpoints foregoing, in large measure combine. The person possessing the largest number of talents, abilities, opportunities, should be the person best qualified to rule his own spirit and to bring its every power into submission to the will of God, and to cultivate to the highest degree the fruits and graces of the Spirit. The Lord will doubtless measure us according to both of these standpoints, but we may be sure that eventually the chiefest of all gifts and blessings and talents in the Lord's sight is love—"Love is the principal thing." It will be only in proportion as love of God and for our fellow men shall have guided the use of our talents, whatever they may be, that they will be acceptable in the Lord's sight at all.

RECKONING WITH THE SERVANTS

In this parable the Lord clearly taught his disciples not to expect the end of the Gospel age very soon, for the statement is, "After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them." It was doubtless best every way that the exact time for the ending of the Gospel age and the beginning of the Millennial age should not be made known until now that we are in this reckoning time. In the verse just preceding this lesson our Lord had cautioned his disciples to be faithful and to remember that they would not know the exact time of his return. But surely all of the servants will know of the Master's return at the time mentioned in this parable, after he has arrived and has begun to reckon

with them. To our understanding this period of time was reached in A.D. 1878, and all of these servants of the Gospel age have been rendering their accounts since. First were the apostles and they who fell asleep in Christ throughout the Gospel age, because it is written that we which are alive and remain should not hinder, prevent, or take precedence of them that had fallen asleep. From our standpoint, then, the apostles and others of the Church have already passed the inspection that is here described, or rather the judgment of the Church is in progress and the decisions and rewards will not be given until the last members shall have passed beyond the veil to render their accounts; and this we understand will be accomplished some time before October, 1914—quite possibly sooner.

We are not to understand from the parable that all who have five talents will use them wisely, effectively, and hear the "Well done," nor that this will be the case with all who have two talents, nor that the greater number who possess but the one talent will all fail to use it. On the contrary, the parable is so arranged as to emphasize the responsibility of even those of the Lord's servants who have the smallest natural ability, whose consecrated powers are the most insignificant. If the one-talented man misusing his was disapproved, it goes without saying that the two-talented or five-talented would be even more reprehensible in the sight of their Lord. It goes without saying also that if the five-talented man succeeded and received a blessing and commendation and reward, the one-talented man succeeding would receive an equal blessing of approval and a proportionate share of the good things provided by the Master for the faithful.

FAITHFULNESS DOUBLY REWARDED

The parable shows the Master beginning with the more influential and rewarding faithfulness (1) with a share in his favor, the "joys of the Lord," and (2) with a rulership or control of larger blessings and opportunities and talents. This statement briefly outlines what is elsewhere more elaborately set forth, namely, that the chief blessing upon the Church will be the manifesting to them of divine favor and love as represented in the glory, honor and immortality with which they would be clothed upon when received into the divine presence as participators in the First Resurrection. If this were all the blessing how rich it would be! How wonderful the thought that for faithfulness for a few short years in so reasonable a service—the service of him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood—we should be counted worthy of such great dignity, honor and blessing everlastingly! The second or additional blessing is the honor of the Kingdom, the dominion, the privilege and opportunity of being participators with our Lord Jesus in the glorious work of uplifting the world of mankind out of present sin-and-death conditions. How forceful is the statement, "Faithful over a *few* things, ruler over *many* things." How abundantly the Lord does reward all of our little efforts in the service of truth and righteousness—in his service—whatever our talents, few or many.

HID TALENT IN THE EARTH

The one-talent man of the parable is represented as being strictly honest; he had not wasted the talent, he had not used it in ministering to the flesh, in riotous living of any

kind. He had kept it safe, and seemed to feel that his Lord would commend him and say, While you have not brought me any return I appreciate the fact that you exercised great care with the talent entrusted to you, and hid it and kept it safely, and that now you are able to return it. But not so. The Master was angry with him and said, "Thou wicked and slothful servant." The point of this reproof lies in the fact that these servants represented only the consecrated and not the world—in the fact that every consecrated child of God in his consecration vow has agreed to spend and to be spent in the Master's service, whatever his talents, whatever his power.

This man was admitted to the Lord's family, made partaker of the holy Spirit and granted a relationship in the body of Christ only because of this consecration to do and to serve, to use, to spend, to be spent. Hence conduct that would not be reprehensible on the part of the world is a violation of his covenant on the part of this servant. Correspondingly a punishment is meted out to him—his talent, his opportunity, his privilege, whatever it was, shall be utterly taken from him, and he shall be permitted to go into the time of trouble with which this age will end—"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"—there will be sorrow, disappointment, chagrin, in every sense of the word. The parable does not carry the matter further to show us the result of this time of trouble upon this class of servants, unfaithful to their vows of consecration, but other Scriptures show us that this is a numerous class, "a great company," who in the time of trouble will be awakened from their dreamy stupor to realize that they have been seriously at fault, and to earnestly, tearfully, painfully, repent and obtain divine forgiveness and ultimately "come up out of great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. 7.) They will be before the throne, whereas the faithful servants will be in the throne; they will have palm branches because ultimately victorious, but those in the throne, the more faithful, will wear the crowns.

It will be noticed that there are two grades of faithfulness: the servant who hid his Lord's talent in the earth was faithful in that he did not waste or squander it riotously, sinfully, viciously. He did not repudiate his Master either, for he still acknowledged himself as his servant and the talent as not his own. The higher faithfulness that in the parable was rewarded went beyond this and represented earnest, self-sacrificing zeal in the Master's cause. These in the parable are the same that are represented by the Lord through the Prophet, saying, "Gather together my saints unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I come to make up my jewels." (Mal. 3:17.) This jewel class must all be sacrificers. This is their covenant with the Lord—that they will sacrifice, that they will use their talents, opportunities, privileges, favors, zealously in his service, in the service of his household, in the service of his cause, to the honor of his name.

After entering into this covenant with him any other course of conduct would be properly, as in the parable, designated wicked and slothful. From this viewpoint it is to be feared that the class represented by this unfaithful servant is a large one, a great company. While still our term for rendering our accounts is future, while still the opportunity for using our time and influence and all in the Lord's service is with us, how it behooves every one who has made the covenant by sacrifice to be vigilant, energetic, that he may

ultimately hear the Master's precious words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

A father illustrated this principle to his child at the seashore by laying a silver dollar upon the beach within reach of the incoming waves. Soon the sands were covering it and it was out of sight: then before he allowed the child to dig it up he said, "Everything valuable that we allow to lie unused is soon buried by the tide of life as this dollar has been by the tide of the ocean." This is a good illustration: It is not necessary that we dig into the earth to bury the talent; if we simply allow it to lie unused it will soon be out of sight.

RECEIVE THINE OWN WITH INTEREST

The words interest and usury once had the same meaning, but in our day this has changed, and interest is that payment for the use of money which is deemed just and reasonable, while usury signifies an unjust and extortionate charge of interest, the result of taking advantage of some one's trouble or necessity. Usury, therefore, in our present use of the term, implies extortion, and is everywhere reprehensible. The Lord's people are everywhere warned that they shall not be extortioners or unjust. The loaning of money upon a reasonable rate of interest may at times be of advantage both to borrower and lender. Nevertheless the Lord's injunction to his people is along the lines of lending rather than borrowing—especially in opposition to borrowing where no security of value is given.

The Lord uses this illustration of interest, increase, usufruct, to represent the increase which would under his providential guidance naturally and reasonably result from our proper exercise of the talents consecrated to his service. We may be sure that his arrangements are wise, and that whoever is not slothful in business but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, will find his talents increasing to his own pleasure and profit and to the Master's honor.

ONE TALENT FAITHFULLY USED

When we remember that the large majority of the Lord's people are of necessity one talented, we feel especial interest in a little verse by John L. Shorey, which illustrates a faithful one-talented person. We quote it as follows:—

"He couldn't sing and he couldn't play,
He couldn't speak, and he couldn't pray,
He'd try to read, but break right down,
Then sadly grieve at smile or frown.
While some with talents five began,
He started out with only one.
'With this,' he said, 'I'll do my best,
And trust the Lord to do the rest.'

His trembling hand and tearful eye
Gave forth a world of sympathy,
When all alone with one distressed,
He whispered words that calmed that breast.

"And little children learned to know,
When grieved and troubled, where to go.
He loved the birds, the flowers, the trees,
And, loving him, his friends loved these.
His homely features lost each trace
Of homeliness, and in his face
There beamed a kind and tender light
That made surrounding features bright,
When illness came he smiled at fears,
And bade his friends to dry their tears;
He said, 'Good-bye,' and all confess
He made of life a grand success."

MARCH 18

Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ—1 Pet. 1:13.

Having "girded up the loins of your mind" for a long, steady and determined effort, "be sober"; do not allow yourself to become excited and, under the spur of excitement, to exhaust all your spiritual vitality in a very short time, and then to suffer a relapse into coldness or discouragement. Strive thoughtfully to consider and prepare for a long and patient endurance of all the discipline and trial of faith and patience necessary to prove an overcomer and worthy of the blessed reward promised "to him that overcometh." The race before us is not one to be run by fits and starts, but by "*patient continuance in well doing*"—Z '03, 54 (R 3149).

The Christian should ever stand with his knowledge so arranged as to be ready for service. Not impulsiveness but sober thoughtfulness should characterize his mental habits. With such a disposition the earnest hope for the glorious prize offered, which he will receive during our Lord's Second Advent, will be a constant inspiration to do, to be and to endure for the glory of the Lord—P '26, 28.

Parallel passages: Luke 12:34, 35; Rom. 13:13; Eph. 6:14; 1 Thes. 5:6, 8; 1 Pet. 4:7; 5:8; 1 Cor. 1:7; Phil. 3:20; Titus 2:13; Heb. 6:18, 19; 2 Pet. 3:12.

Hymns: 21, 25, 32, 58, 92, 216, 320.

Poems of Dawn, 179: *Beyond the Shadows*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 177 (R 5035).

Questions: Have I, or have I not, this week been sober-minded, ready for service and full of the blessed hope? How did this affect me?

BEYOND THE SHADOWS

FARTHER on—beyond the shadows
Falling darkly o'er my way,
There is home, and rest and shelter,
Where no storms can e'er dismay.

Though the way be rough and narrow,
And a cross must needs be borne,
Farther on—the night is waning
Soon will dawn the welcome morn.

Meekly to His will submitting,
In His love secure and strong,
Jesus whispers, "Bide the shadows,
It is better farther on."

Farther on—O blest assurance!
How it thrills my raptured heart,
Just to know that I shall see Him
When the shadows all depart.

Let me still be strong and patient,
Trusting where I cannot trace,
Farther on—beyond all darkness
Faith can see God's smiling face.

Only waiting, ever praying,
Let my heart be filled with song.
Sweet the promise Jesus gives me,
"It is better farther on."

R5035: QUICKENING OF THE MORTAL BODY

"If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. 8:11.

EVERY TEXT should be considered in the light of its context. In the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle's argument is that by nature we are all sinners; and that God's proposition is that He will accept us as sons on a new plane if our lives be offered in consecration: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Rom. 12:1.

After an individual has made this presentation of his body for sacrifice, and he has been begotten of the Holy Spirit, the mortal body is counted as being dead, and his mind, his will, is reckoned as the New Creature adopted into the family of God and seeking to serve Him and to grow into *His* likeness, by being conformed to the likeness of His dear Son. Therefore, in all such expressions as we find in our text and its context, the Apostle refers exclusively to the New Creature, and ignores entirely, as *dead*, the mortal body. It is from this standpoint that we can say of the New Creature that he is holy; that the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in him, and that the Wicked One toucheth him not.—Rom. 8:4; I John 5:18.

Those things which he formerly did he is to do no more. The Apostle says, moreover, that he would not be content merely to be *dead in the flesh*—in the sense of simply abstaining from sin—but that he should seek to become *energetic* in the service of *righteousness*. If we ask how this is to be done, the answer is, "by the Spirit of God." If the Spirit of God was powerful enough to raise our Lord Jesus from the dead, it will quicken, or energize, our mortal bodies. When our bodies have been reckoned as alive,

quicken, they are energized in opposition to sin and in harmony with righteousness. This, then, is the Apostle's thought in our text.

It is well that we should have in mind the thought that the consecration of our bodies to the Lord may permit us to do more in His service than we could have done if we had not been begotten of the Holy Spirit. We are not to expect that this energizing will work a miracle, such as the restoration of a person in the last stage of consumption, etc. The Lord does not work in this way. But the Lord's people would do well to cultivate the thought that if it be the Lord's will they shall be able to do something in His service. If we have this confidence, every one of us can do much more than if we do not have it, for it gives new energy of mind and body.

A great deal of harm is done in the world by people who not only have a wrong opinion themselves, but who spread contagion of thought to others. We see to what a large extent this is carried on by Christian Scientists, who deny that there is either pain or death.

While we do not advocate this course, yet we should not, on the other hand, imagine that our bodies are in worse condition than they really are, but in a wise and judicious manner should seek to use them in the Lord's service. Instead of discouraging others we would do well to encourage them to realize that it is largely according to their faith that they shall be able to do anything. If we have no strong desire to accomplish something we shall become weak, sickly.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE POWER OF MIND OVER BODY

To some extent the world recognizes the power of the mind over the body. An account in the newspapers recently told of two great, strong men who were sick in bed as the result of the coddling of their mother, who should have encouraged them to get up and take a little air and exercise. Another case reported was that of a woman who imagined that she was *glass*. At first she used to get up while the attendant put the room in order; but later she would not sit up. After she had been in bed for a year or two, the doctor told her that there was nothing the matter with her body, but with her mind. One day her relatives got her up in the middle of the room and left her there, telling her that there was nothing wrong except her attitude of mind. At first she declared that she would go to pieces. She did not, however. With proper encouragement she lost her fear of breaking and began to improve; in due time she was quite well.

You have heard of the professor upon whom some college boys played a trick. They planned to meet the professor on his way to school and to test the power of the mind over the body. The first boy met him, as they had agreed, when he was going out of his house, and told him that he was not looking well. He replied, "I am feeling quite well." Another met him a block away, then another a little further on, telling him that he looked pale and sick. Yet another met him and said, "You are a sick man." Still another greeted him with, "Professor A, you should be in bed." The next one exclaimed, "I must help you home, for

you are in no condition to be at school!" The professor went home sick. All this occurred within fifteen minutes. The story is said to be true.

All through life we are either helping or hindering others. Tell people something good; seek to cheer them, and when yourself ailing, follow the good suggestions you make to others. If you have a headache, moaning will not mend matters. Do not think so much about it; and by forgetting it, help nature to get rid of it. Nobody knows just how the power of the mind over the body is effected. The claim is that certain attitudes of mind favor certain microbes in the body. Medical journals state that children have died in spasms after having been suckled by mothers who have gotten into a rage a short time before nursing the children. It is well for all to have meek and quiet spirits, for faith, love, hope and kindness make for health.

It is very reasonable and logical that the Lord should have given us the most wonderful power in our minds to make people feel better, to control muscle and nerve. One's conduct in the sick room has an influence upon the patient. One should speak kindly and cheerfully. If nothing that will be helpful can be said truthfully, it is far better to be quiet or to remain outside of the sick room.

A sister supposed to be dying once sent for us. Upon entering the room we said, "Well, Sister, you are looking better than we had expected to see you. You are better!" "I *am* feeling better," she answered. "When did you begin to feel better?" we inquired. "When I heard you in the hall," she said. She is living today and married, and has a child. Yet we might have helped her to die, and might have had a funeral service instead of a marriage ceremony.

"WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST"

It is well for us to consider the question: If the natural mind has such an effect upon the body, how should it be with those who can claim, "We have the mind of Christ"? What effect should this mind, or disposition, which is loving, generous, kind, forgiving toward our fellows, and reverential, loyal and obedient toward God, have upon the body? Does not the Apostle declare that if the spirit, or mind, of God dwell in them their *mortal* bodies shall be quickened?

He does; but do not misunderstand the Apostle's teaching. In the preceding verse (Rom. 8:10) he states, "If Christ be in you the *body* is *dead*"—not literally dead, but reckonedly dead, in that the human will has died and that the will of God in Christ has been accepted instead. The will is dead to sinful things; it does not love nor practise them as once it did. His argument is that such a deadness to sin, although desirable, should not stop at that point; we should by God's grace seek to get *alive* to righteousness and to be as active in its service as once we were alive to sin and active in its service. He proceeds to show that this, although a great change, is possible to us; and he tells us how it is to be accomplished.

He says that the mighty Spirit of God, which could and did raise our Lord from literal death, is able to quicken (make alive) to the service of righteousness these very bodies once alive to sin, but now, by God's grace, mortified, killed, "dead to sin." He therefore urges all who have the spirit, or mind of Christ, not only to be *dead* to sin, but to permit the Spirit of Christ in them to make them *alive* to holiness and to God's service in general. He shows them further that the new mind of Christ which they have received is a spirit of adoption into God's family as sons, and that if they are sons they are not only "free" but must bear fruit unto holiness, and that their joint-heirship with Christ as sons depends upon this quickening of their mortal bodies—"if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:17.

All who catch the real sense of this passage will see that it has no reference to physical quickening and immunity from pain and sickness, but to a quickening, or energizing by the Lord's Spirit so as to be, not only *willing*, but *glad*, to "suffer with Him." Hence those who see their High Calling should not expect exemption from sufferings and trials and difficulties; and the usual aches and pains which come to the Lord's people, as well as to the world, in a natural way, should be treated as the world treats them, but borne with greater patience and cheerfulness.

St. Paul clearly marks the distinction between our new mind, which, consecrated in Christ, is accepted as the New Creature, holy and acceptable to God, and our mortal body, which he calls "this dead body"—originally dead, under Divine sentence, because of sin, but redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and justified, and then included in our sacrifice when we gave our little *all* in consecration to the Lord, as a living sacrifice, to be dead with Christ, to suffer with Him even unto death. He declares that those who are walking *after* the Spirit, seeking to serve the Lord in Spirit and in truth, from the heart, are freed from condemnation, and that they do not now walk *after the flesh*, wishing to fulfil its desires.—Rom. 8:1, 4.

And here we are to distinguish closely between walking *after* the Spirit and walking *up to* the Spirit. We should, of course, follow as closely as possible to the spirit of Truth and righteousness, and yet we cannot hope to walk *up to* the spirit of the Divine requirements so long as we are in the imperfect flesh, though we may strive in this direction continually. One thing is positive, however—we must not walk *after the flesh*. To do so would imply that we had lost the new mind, the new disposition, the new will; that we had become dead to those hopes which had led to our consecration.

The Apostle urges that all remember that one who is "in the flesh," who lives in harmony with the sinful propensities of his fallen, fleshly nature, is not pleasing to God; and that such yielding to the flesh, of course, if persisted in, will end in death. He proceeds to reason that if the spirit, or mind, or disposition of God (the spirit of holiness) dwells in one, he cannot be in sympathetic accord with the fallen human nature, its appetites and ambitions. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is not of the Body of Christ. Christ's Spirit is not a Spirit of harmony with sin, but of opposition to sin; He laid down His life to vanquish sin and to deliver mankind from its power and dominion. Therefore, whoever claims to have the Spirit of Christ, but who loves and *wilfully*

practises sin, and with *his mind serves* sin, deceives himself; for he has neither part nor lot in Christ.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS POWERFUL

St. Paul proceeds further along this same line, arguing that our adoption into God's family, our begetting to newness of heart and mind, and our acceptance thus as members of the Body of Christ, while it means, first of all, that the body is ignored and reckoned as *dead* because of sin and that only our spirits, or minds, are reckoned as righteous and alive—the beginning of our eternal existence—nevertheless, this good condition is not to be considered the limit of our *ambition* and *attainment* in Christ-likeness.

On the contrary, we are to remember that the Spirit of God is powerful; that in the case of our Lord Jesus it was powerful enough to raise Him from the dead. And as we become more imbued with and controlled by the Holy Spirit of God in our hearts, in our minds, Divine power will come to us gradually through this channel of the Holy Spirit, which will permit a figurative raising of our mortal bodies from their death-state into activities of spiritual life in the service of the Lord, for the assurance given us through the Apostle is that if God's Spirit dwells in us in sufficient measure—abundantly—He will energize our *mortal bodies*—not our immortal, resurrection bodies.

It is our hope that in due time the Lord by His Spirit will give us new bodies in the resurrection; and that those bodies will be immortal, perfect in every respect; and that then, not only our minds, but our bodies also will be in fullest harmony with God and His every Law and work of righteousness. That condition will be glorious; it is already a glorious prospect. But the Apostle holds before us that even our present, mortal bodies, sentenced, then justified, reckoned dead because of sin and consecrated, may be so quickened or energized that, instead of being any longer servants of sin, or even merely *dead to it*, they may, under the careful watchfulness of the new mind, be used as servants of righteousness, of Truth.

This means, of course, a High Christian development, a large attainment toward "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The measure of the fulness of Christ, the maturity and growth necessary to its attainment, involves the "*putting on* of the Lord Jesus Christ," and is not the work of a moment, nor of an hour, nor of a month, nor of a year. It is the *work of a life time*. But unless it is begun, it will never be completed. And, indeed, we may be sure that we can never fully put on Christ's characteristics. However, this is the standard for which every one of the Lord's people must continually strive.

The Lord will see our endeavor, our strenuous fighting to put off the old nature, to put off "the works of the flesh" and to be clothed with the garments of righteousness suitable to our relationship to Him, and our success will be proportionate to our attainment of the mind, or disposition of Christ—holy conformity to the will of the Father in all things. How comforting in this connection is the promise of our Lord, that our "Heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit (the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of wisdom) to

them that ask Him than are earthly parents to give good gifts unto their children!"—Luke 11:13.

MARCH 19

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation—1 Pet. 1:14, 15.

Some Christians have the erroneous idea that God does all the fashioning, and that His children are to be merely passive in His hand; but Peter does not so express it. He exhorts us to fashion ourselves according to the Divine instructions. There is work to be done in us and about us, and those who are not up and doing, but who passively sit and wait for the Lord to work miracles in their behalf, are greatly deceived and are giving the enemy great advantage over them, which he will certainly use to bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness, unless they bestir themselves to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling—Z '03, 55 (R 3150).

We were once Satan's servants, governing our conduct by sinfulness, selfishness, worldliness, ignorance and error. Now as God's children we would obey the will of Him who is holy, whose perfect will, blending wisdom, justice, love and power, and taken into the heart, transforms His children into His own character likeness; and the contrast between the old disposition and the new is greater than that between night and day—P '36, 31.

Parallel passages: Gal. 4:6; 3:26; Rom. 12:2; 8:14-16; 1 Pet. 4:2; 1 John 2:15; 3:3; Luke 1:74, 75; Eph. 2:10; 1 Cor. 2:12; 6:9-11; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Thes. 4:7; Heb. 12:14; 2 Pet. 3:11; Col. 1:22; Lev. 11:44; 19:2.

Hymns: 91, 21, 74, 78, 90, 194, 267.

Poems of Dawn, 43: *The Transformation*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 184 (R 5481).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? With what results?

THE TRANSFORMATION

TO the Potter's house I went down one day,
And watched him while moulding the vessels of clay,
And many a wonderful lesson I drew,
As I noted the process the clay went through.

Trampled and broken, down-trodden and rolled,
To render more plastic and fit for the mould
How like the clay that is human, I thought,
When in Heavenly hands to perfection brought!

For *Self* must be cast as the dust at His feet,
Before it is ready, for service made meet.
And Pride must be broken, and self-will lost—
All laid on the altar, whatever the cost.

But lo! by and by, a delicate vase
Of wonderful beauty and exquisite grace.
Was it once the vile clay? Ah! yes; yet how strange,
The Potter hath wrought such a marvelous change!

Not a trace of the earth, nor mark of the clay—
The fires of the furnace have burned them away.
Wondrous skill of the Potter!—the praise is his due,
In whose hands to perfection and beauty it grew.

Thus with souls lying still, content in God's hand,
That do not His power of working withstand—
They are moulded and fitted, a treasure to hold,
Vile clay now transformed into purest of gold.

R5481: FASHIONING OURSELVES AS OBEDIENT CHILDREN

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."—1 Peter 1:14, 15.

THE APOSTLE is not addressing the world, but those who have become children of God—those who have passed out from their position of condemnation with the world, and have been justified by faith in the precious blood, who have been accepted of the great Advocate Jesus, and have been begotten of the Holy Spirit. But it is not sufficient that we become children of God; for these newly begotten children are only started in the Narrow Way, they are in an imperfect, undeveloped condition. They have this standing as children because they have put themselves into the hands of God and desire to do His will, loving righteousness and hating iniquity.

On the basis of this stand that we took—of enlisting under the banner of Jesus, to fight against sin and self and Satan—God purposes to prove how thoroughly in earnest we were when we espoused His cause. He wishes us to attain to that development of character which will fit us to be associates with Jesus in His great Kingdom, which is to bless the world.

If we are obedient children, everything will work well. We shall get the proper tests, the proper chiseling and polishing, everything that will make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." But if we do not prove obedient, this will hinder us from ever

getting into the Elect company, although we may have a place in that company of children who have had to be chastised and finally brought to proper obedience.

By this we are not implying that any of God's children are exempt from discipline; for we are told that every son receiveth chastisement. (Heb. 12:6-11.) Those chastisements that came to our Lord Jesus were not deserved, but were experiences by which He proved His thorough loyalty and worthiness of exaltation. And so the chastisements that come to His followers are to fit them for future service and to demonstrate their worthiness of being counted in as members of His Body.

The chastisements which are in the nature of punishments for sin should bring about a thoroughly loyal condition of heart in reasonable time, or the one chastised will lose his place in the Body. If he prove ultimately disobedient, he will be counted unworthy of any of God's favors, and will die the Second Death. The exhortation of our text, therefore, is to the highest attainment and the utmost loyalty to the Father.

HOW TO FASHION OUR MINDS

There is a fashioning of our *minds* in progress. It is *not* the fashioning of our *will*. The will is *given up* to *begin* with. But the will has to do with *regulating* the *mind* as well as the *body*—the will has to do with this fashioning. We *will* that our minds shall be educated along the lines of obedience, that we may be properly exercised by all the trials which God has purposed for us.

We as New Creatures should learn to think as God would have us think, to develop habits of thought which upbuild the New Creature. We should eat and drink according to His will, and our clothing should be regulated according to His will. We are to seek His guidance in our life in all things—because of the weaknesses of the flesh, the promptings of the Adversary, and our environment. The Lord has made provision, and has given us definite instructions in the Scriptures, by which we may regulate our lives in harmony with His Word; and we should seek more and more to know the will of God and to profit by His providences in our lives, and to apply the knowledge gained, so that whether we eat, or drink, or sleep, or labor, we shall do all to the glory of God.

Our organism of flesh we receive by heredity. These bodies of ours have various weaknesses and inconsistencies—some in one direction, and some in another. But they are all, more or less, perversions of the true ideal which God originally gave. Centuries of sin have left their mark upon us, upon our minds and bodies; and this mark is seen in the theories which have come into our minds. These errors in the past had control of us.

Before we saw the Lord's way, we thought it was right to follow after earthly pleasures and pursuits and to put *self first*. We naturally said, This is the proper course for us to take. We see that the prominent and the great are following this course, seeking first the affairs of this present life—praise of men, how finely they can be clothed and housed, how fine a carriage or automobile they can have. They seek—and are in large measure able to secure—the gratification of the taste for earthly things, whether it be for the

satisfaction of the mind, as various kinds of literature, or for the body, as for certain kinds of foods or drinks, etc.

But when we become children of God, we ask, What is God's will in respect to what we shall eat or drink or wear, as to the use of tobacco, as to the cut of our clothes, etc.? It is not for us to decide *now* whether we shall go to the theater or play cards or dance. All these matters should have been decided before we consecrated ourselves. Now, in harmony with the Covenant we have entered into with Christ, we are to know strictly the *Father's will*. As we learn to see things from God's standpoint, we change our ideas as to what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, etc. And this change going on in our minds is the "fashioning."

THE FASHIONING A GRADUAL PROCESS

Although we discover some things very quickly, we do not learn all things at once. Some things are less conspicuous before our minds than are others, and represent the finer shadings of what would be proper for a New Creature. We gradually come to note these things more and more; and we ask, Which things shall we continue to choose? The knowledge of God's will is a matter of *education*. We come to see that *this is right* and *that is wrong*. (The world sets such a style for evening dress, such a style for morning dress.) When we become Christians we have new standards, and it takes some time to get everything harmoniously adjusted therewith.

In line with this thought, the Apostle says, "Be ye *transformed*, by the renewing of your *minds*"—not by the renewing of the new *will*. We already *possess* the new *will*. But we see that the *body* is regulated by the *mind*. Therefore the new will says, I must begin with the *mind* I must get my mind to *see* things correctly, according to God's will. I will use the Bible and all the providential indications that will give me a knowledge of God's mind, and I will begin to conform my mind thereto. Thus our minds become gradually fashioned—transformed into the mind of the Lord. As we come to *see* more and more what is the will of God, our minds decide to *do* His will. Our reason plays an important part.

God wishes to appeal to our reason, because we are thus better developed than in any other way. We are all in the School of Christ—under the tutelage of our Lord. In this School we are learning to do His will. We have the teachings of our Lord Jesus and the writings of the Apostles; and our Lord declared that whatsoever the Apostles should bind on earth would be considered bound in Heaven; and whatsoever they should loose on earth would be so considered in Heaven. Our education progresses, until, at the end of this life, those who have thoroughly learned the lessons of this School will be those who have been *obedient children*. These will have been transformed by the renewing of their minds, that they might prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."—Romans 12:2.

OUR STANDARD—JEHOVAH'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The new *will* is, in substance, a will to be like our Father in Heaven. The Apostle Peter exhorts, "As He who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy." Holiness is the standard of perfection. Our *will* must be holy when we first make our Covenant with God. Nothing less than a holy will is acceptable to Him. If we had had an unholy will, a will not submissive to God, we would not have been accepted. So if our *will* be holy, we shall, as far as we are able, *do* His will.

As He who has called us is holy, so we, as far as our will is concerned, will be holy. And we will so direct our mind, as to be holy in life so far as is possible. We will apply the principles of God's holiness to every affair of life. We will observe the Golden Rule, that we should do to others as we would that others should do to us. Whoever neglects to apply these principles of holiness to his own life is not growing in the new life, not being transformed. We should seek to have our minds fully in accord with God's mind, and our conduct as far as possible also in alignment.

If our mind is not running in the proper groove, we must see to it that we turn it into the proper groove. We want to render obedience to our highest conception of what is the Lord's will, as far as we are able. Our will will be determined by God as loyal in proportion as it has been on the *alert to watch* the *mind* and the *body*, the tongue and everything pertaining to our conduct.

The Apostle enjoins upon us that we shall be "holy in all manner of conversation." (1 Pet. 1:15.) The word *conversation* here has its broad meaning. It relates to our intercourse with others—all of our conduct with respect to others—our manner of life. We are to be holy in *everything* that pertains to our lives—in our thoughts, words and deeds. This is a very high standard; and no wonder that the Lord has set a high standard! It is for us to learn what this standard is, and to help others to know what it is.

This is why we spend a few years this side of the veil after we have given our hearts to Jesus. We *say* that we have taken up our cross to follow Jesus, and the Lord wishes to *demonstrate* whether this is true. He is watching our course, and the foreordained number will be found for the Bride class. Others will be given another position not so good; and those who manifest that they have not the true spirit of obedience will die the Second Death.

MARCH 20

If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free—John 8:31, 32.

Divine Truth is never found except in the Divinely appointed channels, and those channels are the Lord and the Apostles and Prophets. To continue in the doctrines set forth in their inspired writings, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and faithfully to conform our characters to them, is what is implied in continuing in the Word of the Lord. If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord, as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the truth"; we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us," to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," to "war a good warfare," to "witness a good confession," and firmly to "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our course—Z '03, 61 (R 3153).

Our Lord assures us that God's Word is the Truth. Those who remain in His Word—continue as its learners and doers—will eventually know it as the Truth, from its self-evidencing power in the responsive heart. This will make them true learners of Christ, and with hearts subject to the Word, they will be freed from sin, selfishness, worldliness and error, and free to practice righteousness, truth, love and Kingdom-mindedness—P '30, 30.

Parallel passages: Gen. 18:19; Ex. 19:5; 24:7; Num. 9:23; 14:24; Neh. 1:5; Psa. 1:2; 99:7; 111:10; 143:10; Isa. 1:19; Matt. 5:19; 13:23; Luke 6:46-48; John 8:36; 14:15.

Hymns: 315, 22, 44, 154, 296, 54, 246.

Poems of Dawn, 91: *Into His Marvelous Light*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 227 (R 5506).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? How? Why? With what results?

INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT

OUT of disaster and ruin complete,
Out of the struggle and dreary defeat,
Out of my sorrow, and burden, and shame,
Out of the evils too fearful to name,
Out of my guilt and the criminal's doom,
Out of the dreading, and terror, and gloom;

Into the sense of forgiveness and rest,
Into inheritance with all the blest,
Into a righteous and permanent peace,
Into the grandest and fullest release,
Into the comfort without an alloy,

Into a perfect and permanent joy.

Wonderful love that hath wrought all for me!
Wonderful work that hath thus set me free!
Wonderful ground upon which I have come!
Wonderful tenderness, welcoming home!

Out of the terror at standing alone,
Out, and forever, of being my own,
Out of the hardness of heart and of will,
Out of the longings which nothing could fill,
Out of the bitterness, madness and strife,
Out of myself and of all I called life;

Into the light and the glory of God,
Into the holy, made clean by His blood,
Into His arms, the embrace and the kiss,
Into the scene of ineffable bliss,
Into the quiet, the infinite calm,
Into the place of the song and the psalm.

Wonderful holiness, bringing to light!
Wonderful grace, putting all out of sight!
Wonderful wisdom, devising the way!
Wonderful power that nothing can stay!

R5506: THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

"If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free."—John 8:31, 32.

AT HIS FIRST Advent our Lord came to the Jewish nation, which was a House of Servants in covenant relationship with God. To these was to be granted the first privilege of becoming sons of God, and their blessing would be in proportion as they were faithful to the light that would come to them. Before they could become *sons* of God, however, it was necessary that Jesus should be their Redeemer, should make reconciliation for iniquity, and thus open up the way. This He had come to do, but He had not done it as yet. Whoever would come to understand the Divine purposes and arrangements, and act in harmony with them, should be made free, should be liberated from the condemnation resting upon them as Jews, from the results of the weaknesses of their flesh, and would be brought into full accord with God.

We can see that this great privilege also meant something more than all this. It meant something still higher—even joint-heirship with Messiah. But all these things were a hidden mystery as yet. They were known up to that time only by our Lord Himself; they

were made clear to Him because He had been begotten of the Holy Spirit. There were many things hard to be understood. Jesus spoke in parables, in dark sayings, for the very purpose of making the Way of Life then opened up a "narrow way." And so we read in the Scriptures that some said of the Master's words: "This is a hard saying! Who can hear it?" Who could believe it?

The particularly hard saying referred to was that His "flesh was meat indeed, and His blood was drink indeed," and that by eating and drinking of these they might gain eternal life. And so we read that after this many forsook Him and abandoned the thought of being His disciples, so blinded were they to their own interests. Instead of following on patiently, they said, This is all foolishness! We do not understand it!

Jesus was anticipating this condition of things when He spoke these words to them. He would put them on their guard. It was as though He would say, You have declared that "never man spake like this man!" Already you have heard words very different from the words of the Scribes and Pharisees. Now continue; hold on for a little while. If you will do this, you will grasp the situation in due time. Exercise faith—exercise patience. You have begun to have interest in these things, and as you fully become My disciples you will be granted a knowledge of the Truth. And this Truth will make you free; it will give you all the blessings and privileges that come to the children of God. Greatly blessed were the few who took heed to the Master's counsel!

BLESSINGS BEGUN AT PENTECOST

These words of Jesus were not addressed especially to the twelve Apostles, but to the Jews in general who were sympathetically drawn. Nicodemus may have been one of these; he was inclined to stumble over the spiritual things; he could not see how one could be born again. The Holy Spirit was not yet given, we read, "because Jesus was not yet glorified." St. Paul tells us that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Corinthians 2:14.

But some saw enough in Jesus to attract them to Him. These, in honesty of heart, said, Surely His words are true, and His criticisms of our nation are true. We do not see how He is going to fulfil these prophecies; but He says to us, Hold on and you will understand later. And some did hold on—"above five hundred brethren." As Jesus had promised, these were given the privilege of becoming disciples indeed.

When Pentecost came, the Heavenly Father received all who had continued in Jesus' Word, and they were begotten of the Holy Spirit into the Lord's family. Then they began to see spiritual things—they were illuminated. All the light did not come at once, but they progressed as the days and years went by. They were indeed Christ's true disciples—such followers of Jesus as the Father was pleased to recognize. They were not only made free from the condemnation of the Law Covenant, but made free from sin and death. They received a new *will*, a new *mind*, and the Holy Spirit showed "the deep things of God" unto them.

In His prayer to the Father, our Lord said, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." By the word Truth Jesus was here referring to the Father's revelation of His Divine Plan through the Holy Spirit; and the sanctifying influence would come through the knowledge of that Truth, received into an honest heart. This sanctification, or setting apart, strictly speaking, began with the Pentecostal blessing, and still continues to operate. And this sanctification progresses as long as the individual allows the Truth to have its designed influence in his life. We see a difference between our text and the one just quoted. In the latter case it is the Word of Jehovah, and in the former it is the Word of Jesus. Jesus says, If you continue in *My* Word, you will become more and more acquainted with the Heavenly Father, and will know His will, His way, His method; thus you will know His Word. All things are working out His will—the will of the Father—and seeing and doing the will of the Father, the sanctifying process will follow. Jesus says to all, "I am the Way; I am the Truth; I am the Life." I am the only One through whom you can come to the Father and become His sons; and abiding in Me will bring you the grand consummation.

THE CHANNEL OF ALL OUR BLESSINGS

We perceive, then, that Christ is the sufficiency which God has provided for us in all respects. "He of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness [Justification], and Sanctification, and Redemption [Deliverance]." (1 Corinthians 1:30.) We first receive, through learning of His sacrificial work on our behalf, necessary wisdom, instruction and guidance, by which we may through His merit come to the Father. And He is our Wisdom all along the way. The Heavenly Father had a glorious Plan before the foundation of the world; this was hinted in Eden, just after the fall. In due time He gave a further intimation of that Plan through Enoch and through Abraham, and still later through Moses and the Prophets. But how the world was to benefit from it was all hidden, all kept secret.

Not until Jesus came was the way of life opened up, made manifest. "He [Christ] hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." The essence of the Gospel was never even declared, much less known, before Jesus came. The Apostle Paul says that this salvation "at the first *began* to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him." (Hebrews 2:3.) Our Lord *began* to speak it; but the secret of the Gospel, its *Mystery*, was not fully revealed until after Pentecost. It was not until after Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit that He Himself began to comprehend it clearly—not until then did He begin to set before us the way of life and immortality. And even then His words were parabolic, and it was not until His followers were begotten of the Holy Spirit that they were able to enter into "the deep things of God."

JESUS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

In addition to His being our Wisdom, Jesus becomes our Righteousness. He covers our sins. He imputes to us His own righteousness, the merit of His own sacrifice. And

this imputation brings us to a condition of complete righteousness—not *actual*, but reckoned, which God is pleased to recognize in the way He has arranged.

Our Lord does not become the Righteousness of everybody—not even of those who give some heed to His Words—but to those alone who come to the point of full submission to the Father's will. And there is a good reason for this; for only those who offer themselves to become members of His Body during this Gospel Age, only the spirit-begotten, would be profited by a justification by faith. Others would be condemned to death by it now. In the next Age, others will come to Him. But only those who come to Him now, to walk in His steps, have a faith-justification.

JESUS OUR SANCTIFICATION

The step of consecration on the part of those who become Jesus' disciples is in the Scriptures called *sanctification*. But it is not the same sanctification which comes to us through Him. God says, "Sanctify yourselves, and I will sanctify you"—that is, Set yourselves apart, and then I will set you apart; I will put you into this place where you desire to come. So, to all of us who come to the Father through Him, Jesus not only becomes our Justification, but through Him we also have Sanctification—the complete setting apart. We are accepted in Him, and His grace and Advocacy enable us to attain complete and final sanctification.

God sets us apart by begetting us of the Holy Spirit to the new nature and making us prospective members of the Royal Priesthood—prospective members of the Body of the Anointed One. This is Scripturally called a foretaste, or "earnest," of our inheritance, which will be experienced to the full when we are changed from the human to the spirit nature—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." But this "earnest of our inheritance" is given us with the intention of our growing in the process of sanctification already begun in us until its completion. We attain this through Christ.

JESUS OUR DELIVERANCE

Those who make satisfactory progress will have in the resurrection full deliverance from sin, from all imperfections of the flesh, and from the flesh itself—full deliverance through the power of the First Resurrection. Christ thus becomes our Deliverance. We shall then attain the full completeness of sons of God on the Divine plane.

In all these things Christ is the Center; through Him alone can we obtain these blessings. While the Father gives them, they are given through His Son, who is the Father's Representative. Jesus received the Spirit of the Father and has shed it forth upon us. This is pictured in the type, in the anointing of the high priest. The holy anointing-oil was poured upon his head, and it ran down over his body. So we are anointed through our Head as members of the great High Priest.

"He who raised up Jesus from the dead will raise us up also by Jesus"; that is to say, Jesus will be the active agent. But there are certain features of the Divine Plan which

Jesus will accomplish *in His own name*; for instance, the world's blessing and uplifting. While the Father is the Author of the entire Plan, yet this blessing comes to the world exclusively through the sacrifice of the Son. Christ will do the work of the Millennial Age, and will then deliver mankind up to the Father.

But His work for the Church is different: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us." (1 Peter 1:3.) It is not the Son who has begotten us, though it is through the Son that we receive this Divine favor. The price, or cost, of obtaining this special Divine favor is the sacrifice of our lives. The particular thing which the Church receives more directly from the Son is *justification*. Yet this justification is *of* the Father, and it is not an *actual* justification, but an imputed justification. It is a special arrangement on the Father's part for us that we may come into His favor now in advance of the world—the First-fruits unto God and the Lamb.

Ours is a wonderful God, and His great Plan of the Ages is marvelous beyond expression! Our hearts rejoice that our eyes have been anointed to see these glorious things hidden to the many during this Gospel Age, knowing that all the blind eyes shall yet be opened, and all the deaf ears be made to hear!

"THEY TURN THEIR EARS FROM THE TRUTH"

The Lord's preaching always produced two opposite effects upon the promiscuous multitudes that heard Him: He attracted one class and repelled the other. Those who were full of pride and conceit, and who preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil and because they realized that if they admitted the light of Truth they must of necessity conform their characters to it—all such were repelled by the teachings of Christ. And if the Lord had undertaken the work of the ministry according to the methods pursued today, depending for support on the good will and contribution of the people, that support would often have been very meager, or at least, very fluctuating.

On some occasions multitudes received His testimony, but later deserted Him, walking no more with Him as He continued to enforce the lessons of Divine Truth. (Luke 4:14-29.) Sometimes the multitudes hung upon His teachings, "wondering at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth"; yet again and again they forsook Him, only the merest handful remaining.—John 6:60-69.

What consternation would follow in the various churches of today, if the professed ministers of the Gospel should follow the Master's example in similarly declaring the whole counsel of God! How quickly they would become unpopular and be charged with breaking up the churches! The congregations of the great temples of fashion ostensibly dedicated to the service of God and the teachings of Christ would not stand it. They go there to be entertained with pleasing and eloquent discourses from titled gentlemen who presumably know the tastes and ideas of the congregation, and will preach to please them. They are quite willing to pay their money for what they want, but they do not want the Truth.

Those who followed the Lord only for a little season and then forsook Him, of course then ceased to be His disciples and were no longer so recognized; nor did they presume longer to claim to be His disciples. A disciple is a pupil, a learner; and when a man ceases to be a student and pupil of Christ, the great Teacher, he is no longer His disciple. This was very manifest when the Lord was present, and when His name was one of reproach among men; but later, when His presence was withdrawn, and when His doctrines were unscrupulously mixed with human philosophies to such an extent as to divest them of reproach, and to make them really void, then men began to claim to be His disciples. This was long after His doctrines had been utterly repudiated.

THE REWARD OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

The Lord's expression, "Then are ye My disciples *indeed*," implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be Jesus' sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: "If ye continue in *My Word*, then are ye My disciples indeed." The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord.

It is a blessed thing to take the first step in the Christian life—that of acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer and Lord and yielding ourselves fully to the Father through Him. But the reward of this step depends entirely upon our *continuance* in His Word, in the attitude of true disciples. The disposition of human pride is to wander away from the simplicity of Divine Truth and to seek out new theories and philosophies of our own, or to pry into those of others who desire to be considered wise and great according to this world's estimate.

The reward of continued discipleship is, "Ye shall *know* the Truth"—not, Ye shall be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth." (2 Timothy 3:7.) Here is the mistake many make; failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies, which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. To those who seek for Truth among these human theories, there is no promise that they shall ever find it, and they never do.

Divine Truth is found only in the Divinely appointed channel—our Lord, the Apostles and the Prophets. To continue in the doctrines set forth in the inspired writings of the Prophets and the Apostles, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and to faithfully conform our characters to them, is what is implied in "continuing in the Word" of the Lord. And this is entirely compatible with the heeding of all the helps which the Lord raises up from among our brethren in the Body of Christ, as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. (Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14.) The Lord always has raised up, and will to the end raise up, such helps for the edification of the Body of Christ; but it is the duty of every member carefully to prove their teaching by the infallible Word.

If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the Truth," be "established in the Present Truth" [the Truth due], and "be

rooted and grounded in the Truth"; we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us"; to "earnestly contend for the Faith once delivered to the saints"; to "war a good warfare"; to "witness a good confession" and to firmly "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our conflict.

We do not come into the knowledge of the Truth at a single bound; but gradually, step by step, we are led into the Truth. Every step is one of sure and certain progress leading to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in established character.

The Truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power, bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue and every grace, which time and cultivation ripen to a glorious maturity.

Not only shall the true disciple thus know the Truth and be sanctified by it, but the Lord also said, "The Truth shall make you free." Those who have received the Truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance, superstition and fear. Its health-restoring beams penetrate the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorate the whole being; it quickens our mortal bodies.

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORDS GIVETH LIGHT"

Sin cannot endure the light of Truth; and those who continue to live in sin when a sufficiency of light has been received to manifest its deformity must inevitably lose the Light, because they are unworthy of it. Ignorance and superstition must vanish before this Light. And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions, however, are still under the blinding influence of error. Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation, because they hypocritically claim Divine appointment; and they have been made to fear God as a vengeful Tyrant, consigning the vast majority of His creatures to an eternity of torment. Thank God! We who have received the Truth have awakened from that horrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken. The Light has scattered our darkness.

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see coming upon the whole world as the great civil and ecclesiastical systems that have so long ruled the world are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of anarchy and terror; the alarm of all is increasing as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more apparent. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God as to the terrors of the conflict through which the world will soon have to pass, the true disciples of Christ who abide in His Word are not afraid, but rejoice; for they know that God's object in permitting this mighty storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world, and that after the storm, there shall come, by His providence, an *abiding peace*. Instructed in the Truth,

they realize the necessities of the situation, and have confidence in the Divine providence that can make even the wrath of man to praise Him, make all things work together for good.

Blessed promise!—"If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free." Dearly beloved, having received this wondrous favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines but bringing forth its blessed fruitage in our lives? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of the glorious Light by our loyalty and faithfulness, working out our salvation with fear and trembling.

MARCH 21

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that spitefully use you, and persecute you—Matt. 5:44.

Here is a way to examine the real disposition of your own heart toward such. Would you cheerfully do them kindness and help them to the extent of your ability to see the error of their way and to overcome it? Can you tenderly pray for them and patiently bear with their weakness, their ignorance and lack of development, and try by a noble example to show them a more excellent way? If such be the case, then it is the sin that you despise, and not the sinner. The sin you should hate, but the sinner, never. Not until God's unerring judgment declares that the sin and the sinner are inseparably linked together may love let go its hold upon a brother man—Z '91, 141 (R 1330).

The perfection of love is love for enemies; nor is there anything in love harder to develop than love for enemies. He who can love, bless, do good to and pray for his enemies, is indeed rich in character; and if he maintains this quality firm unto the end, he will be sure of an entrance into the everlasting Kingdom; for this presupposes proper love for God, Jesus, the brethren and the world of mankind, all of which combined constitute perfect love—P '35, 32.

Parallel passages: Ex. 23:4, 5; Prov. 20:22; 24:29; 25:21; Luke 6:27, 35; Rom. 12:14, 17, 19, 20; Matt. 5:10-12, 45-47; Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60; 1 Cor. 4:12, 14; 1 Pet. 2:23.

Hymns: 322, 105, 134, 93, 130, 136, 25.

Poems of Dawn, 22: *Tell Me About the Master*.

Tower Reading: Z '02, 57 (R 2957).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? How did I act in its light? What helped or hindered? What effects came?

TELL ME ABOUT THE MASTER

TELL me about the Master!
I am weary and worn tonight;
The day lies behind me in shadow,
And only the evening is light!
Light with a radiant glory
That lingers about the west.
My poor heart is weary, aweary,
And longs, like a child, for rest.

Tell me about the Master!
Of the hills He in loneliness trod,
When the tears and blood of his anguish,

Dropped down on Judea's sod.
For to me life's seventy mile-stones
But a sorrowful journey mark;
Rough lies the hill country before me,
The mountains behind me are dark.

Tell me about the Master!
Of the wrongs He freely forgave;
Of His love and tender compassion,
Of His love that is mighty to save;
For my heart is weary, weary,
Of the woes and temptations of life,
Of the error that stalks in the noonday,
Of falsehood and malice and strife.

Yet I know that whatever of sorrow
Or pain or temptation befall,
The infinite Master hath suffered,
And knoweth and pitieth all.
So tell me the sweet old story,
That falls on each wound like a balm,
And my heart that is bruised and broken
Shall grow patient and strong and calm.

R2957: STEPHEN'S DEFENCE AND EXECUTION

—Acts 7:54-8:2—

Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."—Matt. 5:44.

STEPHEN'S defence before the Sanhedrin Court turned out to be a defence of the truth, rather than of himself. Full of zeal for the Lord and for a proper use of his privileges as a minister of the truth, Stephen was courageous—seemingly to the extent of ignoring all thought of personal safety. His defence is not part of this lesson, but it is, nevertheless, worthy of consideration. It displays a clear insight into the past history of his people, and a clear appreciation of the lessons inculcated through their experiences. In a word, it gives evidence that Stephen was a Bible student—"a workman who needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Stephen in all this was a worthy example to the Lord's flock, the lesson still being appropriate. With us also the first thought should be the privilege of serving the truth, and if the will of God be such, the privilege of laying down life, even, in its service. A full consecration to the Lord on our part, and a keen appreciation of the truths of the Scripture, will ultimately make us courageous—not careful for the present life when weighed in the balances with the interests of the Lord's cause. But now, as in Stephen's day, such courage can only come from a knowledge of the divine plan, and the knowledge can only come through a right

dividing of the word of truth;—and such abilities imply a devotion of time and energy to the study of truth, and the guidance of the holy spirit in the understanding of it.

The charge against Stephen was blasphemy against the holy place, Jerusalem (and especially its holy Temple, which sanctified it), and against the law of Moses. Passing by the charges, Stephen went into a history of the Lord's leading of Israel from the time of Abraham down to his own time; and thus showed his full faith in the holy places and in the promises and presence of God, which made them holy. His familiarity with the facts, and the reverent manner in which he stated them, and the conclusions which he drew from them, must have shown his judges clearly that so far from being a blasphemer of Moses and his institutions and holy things, he was a firm believer in these, and a zealous advocate of them. So with us: when discussing holy things there may at times be those who, intentionally or ignorantly, will attribute to us evil conditions or evil motives. With us, as with Stephen, the best manner of dealing with such charges is to show, without ostentation, and by deeply reverent manner, that we are trusting implicitly in the gracious promises of God, and that we appreciate fully his various providential leadings and dealings in the past, not only as respects ourselves, but with all his holy people. Now, as in Stephen's case, the best answer respecting our fidelity to the holy things is represented in our knowledge of them, and in the reverent manner in which we mention them.

Stephen rehearsed to his hearers the fact that Moses, the great Law-giver, whom they now revered, had at one time been rejected by Israel, saying, "Who made thee a judge or a ruler over us?" But he was God's agent and representative, and hence, in due time, he became Israel's deliverer. He reminded them also that Moses had said, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me." The lesson which Stephen desired his hearers to draw is, that as Moses was rejected at his first offering to the Israelites so the one like unto Moses would, like him, be rejected—had been rejected, in the person of Jesus. Nevertheless, as Moses subsequently became the leader and commander of the people, and delivered them, so also Jesus would in due time become the great deliverer of his people,—at his second advent. He pointed further to the fact that the prophets all down through the Jewish age had been refused by the people in the time of their presence and ministry with them, many of them being foully dealt with; but nevertheless subsequently they were discerned to have been the Lord's representatives. Stephen would have his hearers recognize Christ as the great prophet, whom God had set forth to be the instructor of the people. We see no attempt to defend himself, except by showing up the truth. He evidently relied upon his course of conduct and teaching corroborating the history which he was now delineating. Let us also, in our intercourse with others whom we would lead into the truth, pay less attention to self-defence than to a presentation of the divine Word. As the Apostle declares, the sword of the spirit, the Word of God, is sharper than any two-edged sword.—Heb. 4:12.

About this time, apparently, some manifestation of impatience on the part of the Court caused Stephen to hasten to his conclusions abruptly, saying, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the holy spirit; as your fathers did so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted, and they have slain them which showed before the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the

betrayers and murderers; who have received the law by the dispensation of angels, and have not kept it." (Vss. 51-53.) It is not necessary to suppose that these simple, true words were uttered in any harsh tone or strifeful manner; for everything about Stephen's attitude seems to imply gentleness, forbearance, love. It was the truth, and it was the right time to tell it. He evidently knew what was likely to be the result anyway, and wished to give his testimony, that as those who had foretold the just one had been killed it was no more remarkable that those who afterward bore witness to him should be killed also.

His persecutors were thwarted; their attempt to traduce him and show him an enemy of the Lord, of the nation, and of the law, had abundantly failed. He stood before the Sanhedrin a great teacher, reproving them, and showing from their own Scriptural records that they were now intent on doing toward him as their fathers had done toward the Lord's faithful in every age. His hearers were "cut to the heart." This expression reminds us of the record (Acts 2:37) of those who heard Peter preach on the same theme—they were "pricked to the heart." But people can be pricked to the heart, and yet have very different results follow. Much will depend upon what is in the heart when it is pricked. If it be good the results will be good; if it be evil the results will be evil. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, and the course of action is guided. These men were in a wicked condition of heart, and the truths uttered by Stephen were to them stings, rebukes, arousing their hatred to a pitch of frenzy—"they gnashed on him with their teeth."

Undaunted by their manifestations of hatred and malice, Stephen was so filled with an appreciation of the Lord's goodness, and of his being a servant of the truth, that he was all aglow with interest in his theme, and his face illuminated with an angelic expression, such as the truth only can impart. It was then that looking away from his own surroundings—away from his enemies' faces—he was granted a glimpse of the Lord at the right hand of the Father. Whether it was a mental vision, such as any of us can awaken in our minds, such as the Apostle referred to when he said that we should be continually "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith," or whether it was actually a vision granted to Stephen at this particular time, we know not;—most probably it was a vision.

He of course did not see in reality what he described, as that would be an impossibility;—"No man hath seen God at any time," and the Only Begotten of the Father is now the express image of his person, and he also would be invisible to humanity; even the light of his glory would have smitten Stephen down, as it smote Saul of Tarsus a short time afterward. But that Stephen should have had a vision or revelation of his Master and his high exaltation is entirely reasonable; he told what he saw, and this furnished the occasion of his death. His adversaries could have found nothing against him in anything he had said, or that any witness could have proved, but now, affecting great indignation at the thought that Jesus, whom they had crucified, Jesus the imposter, had become exalted to heavenly glory, next to Jehovah himself—this furnished an opportunity for the claim that Stephen was a blasphemer, and therefore ought to be stoned to death. All being in a wrong attitude of heart, the same impulse affected all, and they rushed upon the faithful servant of the truth, pushing him out of the city to a

secluded spot, where they stoned him to death. Let us likewise be faithful to the Lord, and we also shall have revelations of our Lord's glory—not, probably, visions or dreams, but such mental pictures as are clearly delineated before us in God's Word, which now is commonly in the hands of his people; and under the leadings of the holy spirit reveals to us the deep things of God which human eyes have not seen nor ears heard.—I Cor. 2:10, 13.

The stoning of Stephen would seem to have been a violation of the Roman law. The Mosaic law, indeed, commanded stoning as a penalty for blasphemy; but from the time the Romans took possession of the country they seem to have decreed that life could not be taken in any legal form except that of the Roman law; but Stephen's enemies were so enraged that they were evidently willing to risk some personal injury rather than be defeated in their purpose of destroying their enemy, whom they could not match with Scripture or logic.

The Lord's servants to day are in no particular danger of being stoned to death after the same manner; but the majority of them have had experiences, nevertheless, which in many respects correspond. False representations, anger, malice, hatred, strife, etc., hurled against the Lord's people, are often hard to bear; and yet all those who receive such figurative stoning in the same manner that Stephen received his literal stoning, are sure to be greatly blessed. They find that although such experiences are severe as respects the flesh, they are nevertheless helpful, profitable, as respects the new nature. They thus demonstrate the truth of the Apostle's statement, "The outward man perisheth, but the inward man is renewed day by day,"—by just such experiences rightly received.

It is here that attention is drawn to the fact that Saul of Tarsus was probably a member of the Sanhedrin, which tried Stephen, and surely one of those who consented to his death;—standing guard over the outer garments of those who executed the will of the Sanhedrin, in doing the actual stoning. He refers to the matter himself subsequently, in contrite language. (Acts 22:20.) Let us have hope, therefore, that some of those who today assault us, because of loyalty to the Lord and his Word, may yet be amongst those who will penitently acknowledge the error of their ways. Indeed, a number of instances of this kind have occurred; a number of those who are now deeply interested in present truth at one time were so bitterly opposed that they burned the publications which represent these truths, and gloried in the deed. It shows us, too, how God looks at the heart, and teaches us that some who are not bad at heart may at times be so blinded by prejudice that light appears darkness to them and darkness light.

Stephen's attitude in receiving his persecution was most noble. He prayed for himself and for his enemies—that the latter might be forgiven, so far as he was concerned;—they will have enough to answer for and to receive "stripes" or just retribution. For himself, that the Lord would receive his spirit. There has been some query as to what would be implied in this expression, "Receive my spirit." We have already shown that the primary sense of the word spirit is energy or "life," and that the spirit, energy or life, of all flesh was forfeited through sin; but that believers, recognizing the fact that Christ has died for our sins, recognizing the fact also that whosoever accepts Christ, as his Redeemer,

receives through him a new right to life—that to such the spirit of life is no longer reckoned as forfeited, but reckoned as being restored to them again,—and that unto eternal life, if they are faithful. Not that Christians are privileged to retain their hold upon the spirit of life now, and thus avoid dying, but that God has promised us, through his Word, that he who has the Son has life—has received back again by faith through him a future right to life, to be fully attained through a resurrection. Nevertheless, it is explained to us that "our life is hid with Christ in God," and will not be ours until "he who is our life shall appear" at his Second advent,—and grant, according to the Father's plan, new or resurrection bodies to his people. (Col. 3:3, 4.) Stephen meant to express to the Lord his confidence, his trust, in a future life through a resurrection, when he made this expression, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit"—receive my life, preserve my life, that it may be granted to me again in the resurrection, according to thy gracious promise: I commit my all to thee, in hope.

Stephen's attitude under persecution may well commend itself to us: our love for the Lord and our benevolent sympathy with all the gracious features of his plan should lift us above any and everything like vindictiveness or spitefulness against our enemies; and should permit us to see that their mistreatment of us, is largely because they are blind to the truth. They know not us, even as they knew not the Lord; and, as he said, if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, and said all manner of evil against him falsely, we must not be surprised if the same should be our lot. We know, therefore, to count it all joy when we fall into such matters; and should rejoice that we are counted worthy of a share with the Lord in the trials and difficulties of this present time, that in due time we may be made partakers also of the glory to follow. With us also the one thought should be the pleasing of our Lord and the attainment, through him, of the life everlasting—having him to care for our spirit of life, and to revive us again in the resurrection in due time.

"HE FELL ASLEEP."

In the midst of his prayer he fell asleep—he died. Commenting on these words an "orthodox" writer says: "Tho the pagan authors sometimes used *sleep* to signify *death*, it was only a poetic figure. When Christ, on the other hand, said, 'Our friend, Lazarus, *sleepeth*,' he used the word, not as a figure but as an expression of a fact. In that mystery of death in which the pagan saw only nothingness, Jesus saw continued life, rest, waking—the elements which enter into sleep. And thus in Christian speech and thought, as the doctrine of the resurrection struck its roots deeper, the word 'dead,' with its hopeless finality, gave place to the more gracious and hopeful word, 'sleep.' The pagans' burying place carried in its name no suggestion of hope or comfort. It was a burying place, a hiding place, monumentum, a mere memorial of something gone; ... but the Christian thought of death as sleep brought with it, in the Christian speech, the kindred thought of a chamber of rest, and embodied it in the word cemetery—the *place to lie down to sleep*"—*Word Studies*.

Throughout the Scriptures the word "sleep" is frequently used as a synonym for death—but only in view of the hoped-for awakening—the resurrection. It was because Abraham and his posterity believed God that he was able to raise them up from the dead,

and that his agreement so to do was implied in the promise that all the families of the earth should be blessed, that it was impossible for them to think of their departed ones as being totally *extinct* in death;—from that time onward sleep, as a synonym of death, became common amongst those who waited for the consolation of Israel. And in New Testament times, in harmony with our Lord's declaration, "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth," and again, "Lazarus sleepeth," etc., we have the term sleep commonly used amongst the followers of Jesus in the various New Testament writings. (See Matt. 9:24; John 11:11.) Many, however, who use the term sleep, and who place it upon the tombstones in their cemeteries, overlook entirely the fact that it implies that the sleeping one is unconscious, that he will not be conscious until the waking time, the resurrection. The figure is a beautiful one, viewed from the right standpoint, the standpoint of divine revelation, which shows us the blessings of mankind, restitution, which are to be expected as soon as the morning of the new Millennial day shall have been fully ushered in.

Doubtless there were many who considered the martyrdom of Stephen a great calamity to the Church, a great loss of influence; a cutting off of one of the ablest exponents of the gospel. But we are not sure that they took a correct view. Viewed from God's standpoint, quite possibly the testimony which Stephen gave at the close of his life was a most beneficial one; first in its influence upon the believers, in teaching them by precept and example faithfulness, even unto death; and that the Lord's people could die as they lived,—joyful through the faith that is in Christ. His death also probably bore a valuable witness to some of his enemies. Quite possibly the Apostle Paul's first favorable impressions toward Christianity were received through his witness of the courage and zeal of this noble martyr,—whose spirit of Christ he doubtless witnessed in others of the hated "sect, everywhere spoken against."

So with us; we know not which act in life may glorify the Lord most, or whether our living or dying would be most helpful to his cause. We are to leave this in the Lord's hands, and to remember that our course in any event must be one of faithfulness, and that if faithful nothing can by any means harm us, but all things must work together for our good.

MARCH 22

If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world—1 Cor. 11:31, 32.

The ascertainment of gains and losses as Christians, and how and when and where these came to us in the constant battle with the world, the flesh and the devil, will surely profit all who make such reckonings with an eye single to the pleasement of the Lord. Spiritual Israelites are to live a daily, an hourly life of nearness to the High Priest. The *blood* of the dear Redeemer is to be continually invoked for the cleansing of the slightest defilement of conscience, that thus the garment of our Lord's imputed righteousness may not become draggled, but that the slightest spot being removed, we may have it "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing"—Z '03, 3, 4 (R 3125).

To judge one's self, means such an inspection, criticism and regulation of one's conduct as keeps him in the love of God. Such who so do are faithful Christians and do not need constantly to be driven on by the scourge of chastisement. Yet, if we are remiss in such activity, the Lord, in seeking to reform us, resorts to the rod of chastisement to prevent our becoming reprobates, and to secure our reformation—P '34, 31.

Parallel passages: Job 13:23; Psa. 4:4; 19:12; 26:2; 77:6; 119:59; 139:23, 24; Jer. 17:9; Lam. 3:40; Hag. 1:7; Matt. 26:22; 1 Cor. 5:7, 8; 11:27-29; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 6:3; Psa. 32:5; 94:12; Heb. 12:5-13; 1 Pet. 2:20; Rev. 2:5, 16; 3:2, 3, 19.

Hymns: 130, 78, 13, 82, 1, 105, 154.

Poems of Dawn, 174: *Perfect Through Suffering*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 247 (R 5519).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they borne? In what did they result?

PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING

GOD never would send you the darkness,
If He felt you could bear the light;
But you would not cling to His guiding hand,
If the way were always bright;
And you would not care to walk by faith,
Could you always walk by sight.

'Tis true He hath many an anguish,
For your sorrowful heart to bear,
And many a cruel thorn-crown,
For your poor, tired head to wear;

He knows how few would reach heaven at all,
If pain did not guide them there.

So He sends you the blinding darkness,
And the furnace of seven-fold heat:
'Tis the only way, believe me,
To keep you close to His feet—
For 'tis always so easy to wander,
When our lives are glad and sweet.

Then nestle your hand in your Father's
And sing, if you can, as you go;
Your song may cheer some one behind you,
Whose courage is sinking low;
And, well, if your lips do quiver—
God will love you better so.

R5519: THE IMPORTANCE OF DAILY SELF-SCRUTINY

"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

—1 Corinthians 11:31, 32.

IN THESE words the Apostle seems to be saying that if we as Christians should properly criticize ourselves, examine ourselves, correct ourselves, the Lord would not find it necessary to take us in hand and give us judgments, or criticism. But if we fail to do this judging, or criticizing, of ourselves, then it will be necessary for the Lord to do it; for He has taken us into His family, He has made us sons, and we are in the School of His Son, our great Elder Brother, to be trained and instructed. This is our Judgment Day.

The object of this chastening on the part of the Lord is not to vent His displeasure upon us by causing us pain; but it is as the Apostle states, "that we may not be condemned with the world." We judge ourselves when we criticize our own conduct, our own words—our own thoughts, even—and try them by the principles laid down in the Word of God—justice, kindness, mercy, love. As our Master admonishes us, if we find that we have done wrong, we should leave our gift before the altar—we should first go and make apologies to the one whom we have injured or wounded by any word or act of unkindness or rudeness. Then we may come and offer our gift.

Such a course would be forcing one's self, obliging one's self to do the right thing. It is not enough that one should say, "I know that I was wrong; I should not have done as I did; but, then, I am imperfect; I cannot do just what is right in everything." This course would not be in harmony with the spirit of our text. Our text shows that if we do wrong we have a solemn duty to make it right, to the best of our ability. If we have had an *uncharitable thought against another* it is not necessary that we go to the person and tell

him this; for we might make the matter worse by so doing. But we should judge ourselves in the matter and give ourselves a thorough setting-down. We ought to give ourselves a good lesson, a lasting one. Thus we would be right in heart, in intention, approved of the Lord.

THE PROPER COURSE TOWARD OTHERS

We understand that it is the Lord's will respecting us that we should carefully scrutinize our thoughts, words and actions. If we find that we have injured another with our tongue or in any manner, we should go to that person, and to any to whom we have spoken, and make it right, make proper apologies, putting a penalty upon ourselves—a penalty that we shall not forget. If the penalty requires considerable humility, so much the better. If we neglect to punish ourselves, this would show that we are not in the proper condition; and the best thing the Lord could do for us would be to give us a severe chastisement. This might not come in the same day or week or month. But we may be sure that if we do not do right in the matter, we shall come to the place where the Lord will take us in hand. If He does so, He will give us some trying experiences. It may be that some one will do something unkind to us or say something evil about us, and the Lord may permit this. Or He may allow us to get into a position that would bring upon us some kind of punishment.

The world will be on judgment, or trial, in the next Age. If we were of the world our special judgment would come then, instead of now. We would be making marks upon our character that would require stripes in the next Dispensation. But so surely as we belong to the Church class, we must receive our judgments and punishments in the present Age. If we fail to give them to ourselves, our Master will give them to us.

There is another Scripture which says that we are to "judge nothing before the time." (1 Corinthians 4:5.) This does not refer to our judging ourselves. We cannot judge ourselves in the sense of passing sentence in our own case; but we should carefully watch our conduct, our words and our thoughts, and deal with ourselves in regard to our own derelictions and our offenses against others. Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." This means that we are to notice this fruitage of life which we see both in our own case and also in that of others—in our brethren, in our neighbors. In our own minds we are to judge and disapprove of evil actions and words. We should say, Is this right or is it wrong? We should be judging such matters all the time.

NOT OUR PROVINCE TO PASS SENTENCE

Every day we see a great many things in life that are displeasing to the Lord. We hear others use vile language or improper language. We see acts of cruelty or injustice. So we can be judging these things as we go through life and getting lessons out of them. This does not mean that we should judge the people who do these things and decide what punishment they should receive. We are neither authorized nor competent so to do. We are not to sit in judgment as to the condition of the heart, except along lines where the

Word of God plainly states that we are to judge. Appearances are very often deceptive, and things are not always what they seem to be.

The Lord tells us that the time will come when we shall be appointed judges of the world, but that this time is not now, and we are not to anticipate our work of the future either in our minds or in our words. Nor should we repeat to others what we may see or hear that would lower another in their eyes, save in a case when to do so would be a matter of duty. If we were to form judgments of others and go around telling what we think of this one or that one, we would have a hard time of it and would do an immense amount of harm. Thus we would come under the just condemnation of the Lord and surely bring upon ourselves His rebuke.

While we appreciate the truth of the Lord's words that a good tree will bring forth good fruit, and while we can see many times that there is something wrong in the conduct of certain ones, yet we are not able to judge of what would be the proper punishment for such conduct. We may know that the daily fruitage of a life indicates the condition of the heart, but we are not to pass sentence upon any. The Lord will make this decision. In the Master's words, "By their *fruits* ye shall *know* them," He gives us the thought that it is only in regard to that of which we have positive knowledge that we should render a decision in our own minds. We can know that the fruitage of a certain life proves that such a one is out of harmony with God. Yet we would have no right even then to pass sentence in the case. We cannot know what may have led to that unfavorable condition.

"I JUDGE NOT MINE OWN SELF"

In regard to judging in our own case, no one should be so well able as ourselves to know our heart. But St. Paul shows us that we should use a certain amount of leniency in judging even ourselves. He says, "Yea, I judge not mine own self; ... but He that judgeth me is the Lord." This is not a contradiction of the words of our text, but his thought seems to be that when we come to realize how high is God's standard, we might be inclined to judge ourselves too severely, not taking into account that we were shapen in iniquity. We might better think somewhat along this line: I realize that I have failed again today to live fully up to what I had hoped. I feel condemned before the bar of my own judgment because of it. But I hope the Lord will be able to make some allowance for me in this matter. I trust He can make some excuse for me that I do not see for myself. I am not sure how much allowance should be made; I am not able to judge myself accurately.

We should then go to our Father in earnest prayer, telling Him of our sorrow that we have not succeeded better in glorifying His name. We should plead the merits of the blood of our dear Redeemer, promising the Lord that we will strive to do better, if possible, by His assisting grace.

There are some of the Lord's children who possess only a small amount of self-esteem and who therefore would be inclined to be too severe in their judgments of themselves, and hold themselves to the strictest account for every imperfection. Such should try to judge themselves justly. All judgment should be just, even when we ourselves are the

culprits. Justice is the foundation of the Lord's Throne. We should never lose sight of the fact that we have the covering of the robe of our Savior's righteousness and the Mercy-Seat, to which we should go every day for cleansing from every defilement. But it is not only proper, but indeed a duty that we daily scrutinize ourselves, and see that we keep the body in subjection to our new mind. Thus doing, and thus applying daily, nightly, for the application of our Redeemer's merit to cover our unwitting mistakes and faults, we shall be kept in our Father's love and approval, and shall not need so much chastening from the Lord.

This daily taking stock of ourselves, the discernment of our gains and losses as New Creatures in Christ, and of how and where these came to us in our constant warfare with all our spiritual foes within and without, will surely prove profitable to each child of God who takes such account of himself in the fear of the Lord, desiring only to be pleasing to his Father in Heaven, to become all that God would have him to be—a saint indeed.

MARCH 23

Ye endured a great fight of afflictions, partly whilst ye were made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became the companions of them that were so used—Heb. 10:32, 33.

The strongest of the brethren need the help, the encouragement, the assistance of others. The Lord has so arranged it that we may not feel ourselves entirely self-sufficient, and that even our proper leaning upon the Lord shall seem to require also the co-operation, encouragement, sympathy and love of the fellow-laborers in the vineyard. Who that has borne any measure of the labor and heat of the day in the gospel service cannot sympathize with this thought? Here, then, is a way in which many of the Lord's dear people, who have not themselves the largest amount of talent or opportunity for service, may be co-laborers and assistants in the gospel work—Z '03, 40 (R 3143).

The Lord's people may suffer for the Truth in two ways: their advocating it prominently will draw down upon them a deluge of reproaches and a multitude of afflictions from those who hate the Truth. Others, standing by their more prominent brethren who are so used, will bring upon themselves persecution in various ways. All persecution willingly endured for the sake of the Lord is precious in His sight—Z '33, 46.

Parallel passages: Gal. 3:4; 2 John 8; 2 Cor. 4:8-18; Phil. 1:29, 30; Col. 2:1; Psa. 71:7; Acts 16:22-31; 17:5-9; 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 11:36; Phil. 1:7; 4:14; 1 Thes. 2:14.

Hymns: 134, 168, 200, 302, 305, 307, 312.

Poems of Dawn, 176: *Sometimes I Almost Wonder*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 273 (R 5090).

Questions: Have I this week been persecuted, and have I companioned with those who suffered for righteousness? How? Why? With what results?

SOMETIMES I ALMOST WONDER

SOMETIMES I almost wonder if my Lord doth
really know
About the many little things that wound my poor
heart so.
I can but wonder if He knows the anguish of my
soul,
When tempests beat upon my head, and surging
billows roll;
I wonder if He hears at night my weary, longing
sighs,
I wonder if He sees the tears that tremble in mine
eyes!

I wonder if my burdens weigh upon His tender
heart,
And in my many sorrows, if His great love shares a part!

* * *

Ah! no, I will not wonder, I will silence every
fear,
I've read that "in His bottle He doth treasure up
each tear;"
I know that He who heeds the smallest sparrow when
it falls,
Will surely, surely hearken when *His own child*
feebly calls;
I know that He who stilled the waves on Galilee's
dark sea,
Will bid the storms of life, "Be still," that rudely
threaten me.
Ah! no, I do not wonder, *I am sure my Lord doth*
know
About the many, many things that wound my poor
heart so!

R5090: FEET-WASHING AS A LESSON IN HUMILITY

"Ye also ought to wash one another's feet."—John 13:14.

WE REMEMBER the occasion on which our Lord washed the feet of His disciples. The Lord and His twelve Apostles had met in the upper room to commemorate the Passover Supper. This feast was followed by the inauguration of the Memorial Supper, the bread and wine of which represented the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus. The disciples, full of the enthusiasm which had been incited for some days previous, were all at a loss to understand the sadness of our Lord Jesus. While He was saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38) and desiring that His baptism might be accomplished, they were inclined to think that He was taking a pessimistic view of matters.

During the five preceding days the disciples had witnessed the feast in the house of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, the breaking of the alabaster box of ointment, the riding on the ass, and the spreading of palm branches for the little animal to walk on, and the demonstration of the people, who had cried, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!" (Matt. 21:9.) They had heard the Pharisees ask Jesus to put a stop to this demonstration. But He had said to them that if these people should hold their peace the very stones would cry out. (Luke 19:40.) To fulfil the prophecy (Zech. 9:9) there must be a *shout*, and there was a shout.

We remember that the little company went to the Temple, that the whole city was in commotion, that the rulers were impressed, and that they were afraid of the people. We remember that Jesus had gone into the Temple and had driven out those who sold merchandise; that when the Pharisees, the Sadducees and others tried to make Jesus appear confused, He had wisely turned all their arguments upon themselves; and that they dared not ask Him any more questions, for by so doing they would only make a bad matter worse.

From all these things it must have seemed to the Apostles that they were on the eve of attaining great prominence and that Jesus would be exalted. Therefore, they could not understand His attitude of sorrow. As an evidence, we have the fact that James and John went to Jesus and asked about the place they might occupy in the Kingdom. Could they be *next to Him*? There was no doubt in their minds that the Kingdom was near. They specially loved Him and would like to have the favor of being near Him. Others might not care so much where they were placed, but James and John would like to be *close to the Master*.

These were the thoughts uppermost in their minds. As a result, when they came to the upper room, they had not the humility of mind to take thought of serving. No doubt it was the custom of the Jews to have a *servant* to minister to the comfort of the guests. But there was no servant here and not one of them had the humility of mind to offer to be the servant. Apparently they not only did not have the disposition to serve one another, but they did not desire to wash even the Master's feet.

SELFISHNESS EVEN IN LOVE

Since it is difficult for us to gage our own hearts thoroughly, we should use great charity in measuring the hearts and intentions of others, and should err on the side of too great sympathy and leniency rather than on that of too strong condemnation. Doubtless had the Apostles been asked as to their motives and conduct, they would have denied that these were selfish, and would have spoken only of their zeal for the Lord and their desire to be near Him. This illustrates to us what the Scriptures declare, that the human heart is exceedingly deceitful, and that it requires careful scrutiny, lest under the cloak of good motives, it harbor qualities which, if recognized, it would spurn.

Apparently our Lord let the matter go to its full limit to see whether or not any of His followers would improve the opportunity to make himself servant of all. He waited until supper was being served (not ended as in our common Version); then, arising from the table, He laid aside His mantle and got a basin and a towel. Then, girding up His garments to keep them from getting into the water, He proceeded to wash their feet.

We can well imagine the consternation of the Apostles as they watched the procedure, and then saw the Lord go from the feet of one to those of another, as they protruded from the couches on which the Apostles reclined. The method of feet-washing at that time was different from that of today. The water was poured from a pitcher in a small stream upon

the feet, which were washed and rinsed. The basin was merely a receptacle for receiving the soiled water.

OUR LORD'S ACT A DEEP SPIRITUAL LESSON

This act was a pointed reproof for their neglect to wash *His* feet and *one another's*. They were all silent until He came to St. Peter. When our Lord paused before him, St. Peter said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet!" St. Peter had too much reverence to wish the Lord to be his servant. He had as a natural trait, more than had some of the others, that courage, or boldness, which led him to speak out. But the Lord said to him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." (John 13:8.) St. Peter did not understand how this washing would give him a part with the Lord, but he said eagerly, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head," if this gives me a more particular part with You. The Lord answered him, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." I am doing all that is necessary. What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall understand hereafter.—See verses 7-10.

In all this the Lord was giving a deep spiritual lesson—that no one is naturally fit for the Kingdom. Each one needs to be washed, to be cleansed, before he can be a joint-sufferer, before he can be a joint-heir. He must be a joint-sacrificer in order to become a member of The Christ. Jesus said to His disciples, You have witnessed My humility in this matter, and now I want to tell you that you ought to have this attitude toward one another. You should have been careful for even the humblest one in your number. Whether or not it was by washing My feet and those of all the others, you should have done whatever was necessary for the refreshment of the company.

THE ACT NOT THE INSTITUTION OF A CEREMONY

We are to remember that things were different then from what they are today. Because of the wearing of sandals, the feet would be considerably soiled even after only a short journey and would, therefore, need refreshing. It was the custom that the servant should come forth and make the guests comfortable—not to the inconvenience of the traveler, but to his further comfort. This was a menial service, which afforded Jesus the opportunity to impress upon His Apostles the lesson of the necessity of humility in all the members of the Body of Christ.

We do not get a lesson of the institution of a formal ceremony. It was only a case of *necessity*, of which the Lord took advantage to give a lesson of humility. No such need exists with us today. Our streets are paved and we wear shoes that are closely laced and are sufficient protection. So there is no necessity to wash each other's feet, at a public gathering, to have a public exhibition of feet-washing.

The incident affords a lesson in humility to us as well as it afforded one to the Apostles. We should be glad to do any service, even to the humblest of the members of Christ, in whatever way the opportunity may come. There is no suggestion in the Scriptures that feet-washing was ever done as a ceremony. We have an intimation,

however, that feet-washing was a custom in Palestine. In I Tim. 5:9-16, we read that if a widowed sister had washed the saints' feet, meaning that if she had shown such a disposition, St. Paul would advocate a special care for such a sister in need; for she had manifested a loyal and true spirit.

There are some very good Christian people who have adopted feet-washing as a religious custom. We are not to berate them unnecessarily for following their consciences. Rather we should say to them that so long as they think they are doing the Lord's will, they are right to follow the custom; but that the Scriptures relate only this one case where the feet-washing was done in public, and it was very unlikely, therefore, that it was ever done in public by the Church except on this occasion. As the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," has a deeper meaning than that one shall not take the life of another, so this washing of feet has a deeper meaning. Throughout His ministry Jesus indicated the deeper thought by His treatment of others; He lightened the burden and happified the condition of those with whom He came in contact. So we should do all in our power for the consecrated ones, members of Christ's Body.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ONE ANOTHER

This lesson suggests that the members of Christ's Body should have a mutual watch-care over one another's welfare; to keep each other pure, holy, clean and to assist one another in overcoming the trials, temptations and besetments of this present evil world, arising from the three sources of temptation—the world, the flesh and the Devil. Only as we cultivate the various graces of the Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love—can we hope to be specially helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and in getting rid of the defilements of the world and of the flesh.

It requires peculiar qualifications to enable us to assist each other in this respect. Before we can help others to cleanse their way of life in every little particular, so that every thought, word and deed shall be brought into subjection to the Divine will, it is necessary that we have experience along the same lines. Only as we cultivate purity of thought, word and deed in our own lives, only as we put on the various graces of the Spirit, can we wash the feet of the saints.

Many who would reject well-meant criticism of conduct, who would resent well-meant offers of assistance to a higher standard of character, as interferences with their private business, would be very amenable to the influence of the same person if he approached them with such evidences of true devotion and loving interest as would be indicated by the performance of some menial act. It is the sympathetic ones who are most successful in helping the various members of the Body of Christ out of the besetments and difficulties incident to the following of the Lord in the present time. Oh, let us study and strive and pray that we may be very successful in obeying the Master's injunction, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet!"

How many opportunities we have for comforting, refreshing, consoling and assisting one another in some of the humblest affairs of daily living or in respect to some of the unpleasant duties, experiences or trials of life! By love we are to serve one another, but not as a mere formality. Any service done or attempted to be done in love, with the desire to do good to one of the Lord's people, has, we may be sure, the approval of the Head of the Church.

Let us lose no opportunities of this kind; let us remember the Master's example. Let us not merely assume the guise of humility, but let us actually have that grace of character which will enable us to do kindnesses and service to all with whom we come in contact. Then we shall all the more enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the Body of Christ—The Christ.

MARCH 24

I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee—Heb. 13:5.

Why, then, should we fear what man may do unto us, or be distressed in regard to the Lord's work, as though Satan or any other evil power could prevail against it? Nevertheless, it is for us to show our devotion, not only by our zeal, but also by our prudence ... therefore we are to proceed in the Lord's work as though the entire responsibility rested upon us, but in our hearts we are to recognize that the entire weight and responsibility rests with the Lord. Long ago someone said, "I am immortal until my work is finished"; and we may rely upon it that this is practically true of all engaged in the Lord's service that "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints"—Z '03, 41 (R 3144).

Amid the loss of all things earthly, the faithful follower of Christ finds a compensating blessing far transcending his losses. The consciousness of the Lord's presence in sympathy, appreciation and co-operation (which the world neither knows, can give nor take away) encourages him in his darkest hours and makes his sorrows joyous; for he knows that God is with him, and will not leave, fail nor forsake him—P '32, 30.

Parallel passages: Gen. 28:15; Ex. 33:14; Num. 6:24-26; Deut. 31:6, 8; Josh. 1:5, 7, 9; 1 Chron. 28:20; Psa. 37:25; Isa. 41:10, 13; 49:13-16; Matt. 28:20; John 14:1-3, 16-18, 26; 16:7, 13; 2 Cor. 13:14.

Hymns: 293, 333, 63, 110, 120, 328, 67.
Poems of Dawn, 77: *Not Seeing, Yet Believing*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 295 (R 5547).

Questions: What experiences of the week showed the Lord's present aid? How did I receive them? What were the results?

NOT SEEING, YET BELIEVING

THE clouds hang heavy 'round my way,
I cannot see.
But through the darkness I believe
God leadeth me;
'Tis sweet to keep my hand in His
While all is dim;
To close my weary, aching eyes
And follow Him;
Through many a thorny path He leads
My tired feet.

Through many a path of tears I go,
But it is sweet

To know that He is close to me,
My God, my Guide;
He leadeth me, and so I walk
Quite satisfied.
To my blind eyes He may reveal
No light at all;
But while I lean on His strong arm
I cannot fall.

R5547: JEHOVAH'S ABIDING PRESENCE WITH HIS PEOPLE

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exodus 33:14.

THE children of Israel had come out of Egypt; they had crossed the Red Sea, and had come to Mount Sinai. Moses had gone up into the Mount, had received the tables of the Law, and had come down and found the nation in idolatry, worshipping the golden calf which they had made. While Moses was still in the Mount, the Lord had told him that Israel had already turned aside from the true God to idols, and was offering sacrifice to a molten calf as the god who had brought them forth out of Egypt; and He instructed Moses to go down to the people. The wrath of God was hot against them, and He proposed to Moses that He consume them and make of him a great nation. But Moses besought the Lord for Israel, and the Lord was entreated of him and spared the nation from annihilation, and promised him that he should still be their leader.

Then Moses went down from the Mount. He realized that Israel had grievously sinned, and his anger was kindled against them. He cast down the tables of the Law, which were in his hands, and broke them, when he saw and heard the dancing and feasting and shouting around the idol which they had set up for themselves. Here was a nation delivered by God from Egyptian bondage. The Red Sea had opened for them to pass over, by the power of Jehovah. They had also received various blessings along their way, notable proofs of Divine guidance. Yet in spite of all this, here was rebellion and idolatry! What could he expect of a people who had so little appreciation of God, that they were quickly turned aside? Even Moses' own brother, Aaron, led astray by the insistence of the people, felt it necessary to co-operate with them in the making of the golden calf.

Then Moses took the calf which they had made, and burned it in fire, ground it to powder, scattered it upon the water and compelled the children of Israel to drink of it. He reproved Aaron, and then stood in the gate of the camp and said to all the people, "Who is on Jehovah's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men."—Exodus 32:26-28.

MOSES' CRY AND ITS ANSWER

The day following, Moses explained to the people how great was the sin of which they had been guilty and told them that he would go to the Lord in prayer, if peradventure he might make atonement for their sin. Then he went to the Lord in earnest supplication, pleading that if God would not forgive His people, He would also blot out *his* name from His book. But God answered, "Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book." He promised to send His angel before Moses, but assured him that He was not yet through dealing with Israel for their iniquity. He instructed Moses to tell them of their stiffneckedness and to command them in His name to put off their ornaments, that He might know what course He would pursue with them.

The people obeyed God. They laid aside their ornaments, and humbled themselves and worshipped the Lord. Moses, heavy of heart, felt that unless God would in some special way give him the necessary wisdom and grace for the great task of leading so perverse a people into the inheritance which the Lord had promised them if they would serve Him, he would be utterly insufficient for the undertaking. So he again appealed to God in earnest prayer. He told Him of his trepidation and his earnest desire for His sustaining help and His presence with him in all the way, pleading, This is too great a work for me!

Then the Lord assured Moses that He would go with him, that he should have His presence throughout the entire journey to the Promised Land; for he had found grace in His sight. He said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Moses then besought the Lord, "Show me Thy glory." It was here that God put Moses into the cleft of a rock and covered him with His hand while He passed by and let Moses see His glory from behind, saying, "No man can see My face and live."

When God speaks of His presence with His servants we are not to think of His being with them in His *bodily* presence, but by His Spirit and through His angelic messengers, sustaining, blessing and guiding them. He protects them from whatever will harm them. He watches over their every interest and tenderly cares for them.

IDEA OF GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE AN ERROR

It is a common, but erroneous, thought that God is actually present in person everywhere. We do not understand the Scriptures to so teach. This generally prevailing error that God is everywhere present in person, and at the *same time*, has led many to think of Him as being not a person at all, but merely an influence. We understand the Bible presentation of the matter to be that God has a personal, bodily presence, aside from the power and influence which He exerts; and that He has a central seat of government, where He resides.

"Heaven is My Throne, the earth is My footstool," says Jehovah. The One who has His seat in Heaven and whose footstool is the earth is a great God! But this is, of course, a forceful figure of speech, showing His all-embracing power and control. God does not

actually sit in a certain part of His Universe and have His literal feet in another part. The language of Scripture accommodates itself to the mind of man, and speaks of God as if He possessed the same bodily members as humanity. But actually we know not what a spirit body is like. "It doth not yet appear," even to the saints of the Lord who are still in the flesh.

We understand that the bodily presence of Jehovah is in Heaven. Everything in the Bible teaches us that He is very great—infinite in power. We read that "the Lord looketh down from Heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of His habitation He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth." (Psalm 33:13, 14.) He has beheld men in their distress, and has provided for their deliverance "in due time." But we should clearly distinguish between this thought of God's looking down from Heaven and the thought that He is personally present on earth. We can see a mile off, or five miles off, by the power of our sight. We can be a hundred or more feet away and be present by the power of our voice; or aided by the modern invention of the telephone, we can be present by our voice several hundred miles away. In that sense of the word the Lord is present everywhere throughout His mighty Universe, and His power can be exerted everywhere. He has means by which He can be cognizant of all earthly affairs and of matters pertaining to all His great domain.

We have these powers only to a very limited extent. The telegraph, the telephone, the telescope, etc., are all means by which our presence, power and influence are extended to a certain degree; but our powers are limited to this small planet, except as we further extend them by means of prayer, and thus set in motion influences whose extent we are not now able to fathom. But this latter privilege is only for a few at present. Not many thus have access to the Power which controls the Universe. And these who have the privilege of coming to the mighty King of Heaven may come only in His appointed way, subject to the conditions which He has made.

We can place no limitations upon the power of Jehovah. The inventions of this Time of the End, which have increased our powers of communication, and so have united all parts of the globe, give us but a very faint conception of the infinite powers of the Almighty God. These inventions, we believe, will continue to increase and multiply through the incoming Age, thus adding more and more to the powers and blessings of mankind. These will give mankind a greater and greater appreciation of the majesty, glory and might of their Creator as they come to know Him as He is and to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Yet no human mind, even in perfection, will be able to comprehend the Mighty Maker of the Universe.

GOD'S GUIDANCE THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

So God promised Moses that His presence, His power and sustaining grace should go with him all the way. He wished Him to understand that he was not to perform his great work alone, without all-sufficient backing. "I will be with you," was the promise. The Lord's presence was indeed with the children of Israel in a very marked manner—continually with them from the time they crossed the Red Sea, guiding by blessings or by

chastisements, as they should need. He was with them in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, and by His presence in the Shekinah glory which covered the Mercy-seat in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle. After the Tabernacle was set up by God's instruction, these manifestations of His presence, His power and His watchful care never failed. The pillar of cloud and of fire guided their journeyings; and when these rested, it was an indication from God that they were to abide where they were until the pillar of cloud or fire again moved from its place.

Moses had said to the Lord, "If Thy presence go not with us, send us not up hence"—this is too great a task for any man to accomplish alone. But if Thy presence will continue with us, if I can be shown Thy will and be continually directed by Thee, then I will be able to lead this people through the wilderness journey to the land of Canaan. Frequently the Lord spoke to Moses through the Tabernacle. Thus we see that the promise of His presence with him was fulfilled. The Lord gave him rest. He lived to be one hundred and twenty years old, yet was not his strength impaired nor his eye dim. We remember that there was a time when Moses realized that the work of judging the people was too great for him. He took the matter to the Lord, and seventy judges were then chosen to share his burden. The matters that were too difficult for them they brought to Moses. He went to God with all his difficulties and burdens and he had continual blessing.

THE LESSON TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

The experiences of Natural Israel have very important lessons for Israel according to the Spirit. A people originally a part of the world, we have been invited to come out from the world and to journey to a new Country, to come into a Heavenly inheritance. We are marching toward the glorious Kingdom promised us if we are faithful. There are trials and difficulties along the way. But our God has promised us, as He promised Moses His servant, that His presence shall go with us. Sometimes He *seems* to withdraw from us and to leave us to ourselves; but He does not really do so. He tests our loyalty and our faith in Him by withholding the *sense* of His presence at times.

Shall we, then, like Israel of old, conclude that God is no more with us, and turn again to the gods we formerly worshiped—gods of wealth or of pleasure, gods worshiped by the nations around us? Shall we give ourselves up to revelry, worldly merry-making and sin? Shall we forget all the way by which our God has led us, all the great deliverances which the past of our lives have recorded? Shall *anything*—either "tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, or any other thing in creation, be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?" Surely not!

The closer we live to the Lord, and the greater our faith, the more we shall realize the Divine direction, and the more we shall make use of the means He has provided for our strengthening and upholding. We may call upon Him in time of trouble; we may go to Him in prayer; and He never fails those who put their trust in Him and earnestly seek to walk in His appointed way. This being true, we may go forth upon our journey in perfect

trust and confidence. Having consecrated our all to the Lord, we are to seek for His guidance, for His presence is with us, in all the affairs of our life.

Few have such mighty burdens to carry as Moses had. But all of God's children have burdens to bear, and important responsibilities are resting upon each of us who have taken upon us the vows of our God. Each member of the Body of Christ, the true Israel of God, is privileged to have the continual guidance of the Lord in every experience of our wilderness journey. Heavenly Manna is furnished for our daily sustenance. The Water of Life flows out to us for our daily refreshing, from the smitten Rock of Ages. Our Father's chastening rod restrains us when we are in danger, or when we wander into any forbidden path. How lovingly He brings us back into the right way, and heals our wounds, and graciously forgives our stumblings and weaknesses! Surely we may have implicit confidence in our Heavenly Guide. Thus we may rest in Him and be kept in perfect peace. Our hearts can truly exclaim with the poet:

"He has guided my steps where I could not see,
By ways that I had not known;
The crooked was straight and the rough made plain
As I followed the Lord alone.
I praise His name for the pleasant palms
And the water-springs by the way;
For the glowing pillar of fire by night,
And the sheltering cloud by day.

"There is light for me on the trackless wild
As the wonders of old I trace,
When the God of the whole earth went before
To search me a resting place!
Hath He changed for me? Nay, He changeth not;
He will bring me by some new way,
Through fire and flood and each crafty foe,
As safely as yesterday."

He who so faithfully cared for Israel after the flesh, who were a perverse and fickle people, will surely care more abundantly for His true, Spiritual Israel, who love Him supremely and are daily seeking more fully to know His will that they may do it.

The Apostle Paul, in warning Spiritual Israel not to fall after the same example of unbelief of Natural Israel, and thus lose their hold on the Lord, says, "We who have *believed* do enter into *rest*." (Hebrews 4:3.) It was unbelief that led to the disobedience and perversity of Israel after the flesh, and that led to their final rejection by the Lord as His favored people, to whom should apply the most precious promises. They have lost forever as a nation the special place of favor which was theirs by inheritance. What a lesson this should be to Spiritual Israel! And yet we see that today the great mass of Spiritual Israel are falling "after the same example of unbelief." And they, too, will lose the chief place of favor, which was offered them when it was taken from unbelieving

Natural Israel. Only a faithful "remnant" of both Natural and Spiritual Israel will gain the great inheritance held out to them by the Lord.

THE GLORIOUS INHERITANCE OF SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Those who prove faithful during the present Dispensation shall inherit the most precious things which God has to offer, the secret things which were for ages kept hidden, but are now revealed to the true saints of God. The faithful of past ages shall inherit the earth as rulers and princes over mankind, during the glorious Reign of Messiah. Gathered to these will be Natural Israel then living. They shall have a rich heritage. What remains for them in the ages of glory to follow, we may not know with certainty, but it will be a blessed portion, we may be sure.

The faithful of the present Age have been raised to "sit in Heavenly places with Christ Jesus"—"the Lion of the tribe of Judah." These faithful ones are the twelve tribes of Israel who are to reign with Him. These—only a Little Flock, in all 144,000—are of the faithful remnant of Natural Israel, who were gathered at the beginning of this Gospel Age, and the faithful remnant from the Gentile Church of this Age. (Revelation 7:4-8; 14:1-5.) These have "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," and which none others can know. *"My peace I give unto you,"* whispers the Master to these. We have a rest of faith now; and we are assured that we who have entered into this rest shall in due time, if we faint not, enter into the complete "rest that remaineth for the people of God." This rest we shall enter into when we experience our glorious "change" in the First Resurrection, when we are transformed in body and made like our Lord, and shall see and know as we are now seen and known of God. We shall then be blessed with the exceeding glory which He has promised—immortality, His own nature—and a seat with our Savior in His Throne.

The God of Israel is indeed ever present with His true people. He never forgets us, but is constantly looking out for our interests, guarding us in every time of danger, providing for our every need, both temporal and spiritual, whatever is best for the interest of the New Creature. He reads every thought of our hearts; He marks every impulse of devotion and love to Him; He shapes all the influences surrounding our lives for our disciplining and refining, and hearkens to our every cry for aid and comfort and sympathy and fellowship with Him. He is never for even a moment forgetful or off guard. "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." (Psalm 121.) If we call Him in the busy hours of the day, or in the silent watches of the night, He is near to uphold and sustain and protect, whether we can realize His presence at all times or not.

How blessed the assurance of such constant, abiding care and faithfulness! No real child of God is devoid of these evidences of his precious relationship to the Father—the God of Israel. And the saints who have been called with the Heavenly Calling, and are faithfully responding, are His true Israel in the highest sense, heirs of all His choicest promises. How goodly a heritage is ours!

MARCH 25

Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—2 Pet. 3:17, 18.

We grow in knowledge as we take note of the promises of God, and by faith apply them to ourselves, and seek to discern in our lives the fulfillment of those promises; we grow in grace simultaneously, for unless each item of knowledge be received into a good and honest heart, and bring forth its measure of obedience and righteousness (grace), we shall not be prepared for the next step of knowledge, and would thus be stopped, or possibly turned back. And as a loss of knowledge would mean a measurable loss of grace, so also a loss of grace would mean a corresponding loss of knowledge—going into darkness, the promises of the Lord's Word becoming more and more dim and obscured, in proportion as our goodness or grace would be lost in worldliness or sin—Z '03, 70 (R 3156).

To be forewarned is to be forearmed. In this evil day the Lord has forewarned us of coming evils against which we will be immune, if we cultivate the proper spirit; but which will as errors of the wicked surely entrap us, if we do not so do, thus bringing us to a loss of our reward. Our only safety in the presence of these evils is daily growth in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus—P '26, 28.

Parallel passages: Prov. 4:14; Mark 13:23; 2 Pet. 1:10-12; 2:18; 1 Cor. 15:58; Gal. 5:1; Eph. 4:14, 15; 1 Tim. 4:1, 2; 1 Pet. 2:2; 1 John 2:18-21, 26.

Hymns: 49, 145, 130, 22, 267, 198, 196.

Poems of Dawn, 304: *'Twas a Sheep*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 122 (R 4802).

Questions: How have I been affected by my knowledge of the evil conditions coming? Have I grown in grace and knowledge? How? Why? With what results?

'Twas a Sheep

'Twas a sheep, not a lamb, that went astray
In the parable Jesus told;
'Twas a grown-up sheep that wandered away
From the ninety and nine in the fold.
And out on the hilltops and out in the cold
'Twas a sheep that the Good Shepherd sought,
And back to the flock, and back to the fold,
'Twas a sheep that the Good Shepherd brought.

Now, why should the sheep be so carefully fed
And cared for still today?

One reason is that if they go wrong
They will lead the lambs astray;
For lambs often follow the sheep, you know,
Wherever they wander, wherever they go.

And if sheep go wrong, it will not be long
Till some lambs are as wrong as they;
So, still with the sheep we must earnestly plead,
For the sake of the lambs today.
If the lambs are lost, what a terrible cost
Some sheep will have to pay!

R4802: "CONSIDER HIM LEST YE BE WEARIED"

"Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

TO "CONSIDER HIM" seems to be to take note of, to have in mind, to reflect upon and not to easily forget how our Lord endured various trials and oppositions of sinners against himself. In our own experiences we have, as the Lord's followers, endured some opposition of sin and sinners against ourselves; but we have not yet resisted unto *blood*. We have not yet passed through the trying experiences through which he passed. When we remember that while we are poor, imperfect creatures like our neighbors, he was "holy, harmless, undefiled," then it is good to reflect that he endured patiently the opposition of sinners. When trying experiences came to him, he did not consider them as being merely from the individual with whom they originated, but as being, on the other hand, under the supervision of the Father. If, therefore, the Father permitted such experiences to come to him, he was bound to prove his loyalty by patient endurance. As he said, "*The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*"—John 18:11.

So it is with us, Spiritual Israel, "*The Lord your God proveth you.*" (Deut. 13:3.) In proportion as we are able to take our Lord's viewpoint in our experiences in life, we may be calm. If the Father permits trying experiences for our testing, or for the testing or proving of others, in ways we may not understand, it is for us to rejoice to have his will done. The poet has beautifully expressed this thought when he says:—

"My times are in thy hands,
My God, I wish them there."

If we faithfully endure to the end, the reward will be ours. If we prove our loyalty and *keep our faith that God is supervising our affairs*, and that no good thing will be withhold from those who are walking uprightly, we shall some day hear his "Well done, good and faithful servant."

We know that our Lord endured *physical* opposition. But our English word "*contradiction*" properly translates the original, implying *verbal contradiction* of his words. As we consider our Lord's case, we see that the people opposed him, not physically, but *in his words*, his *teachings*. It was left for the high priest and Sanhedrin and soldiers to do him *physical* violence and put him to death; and he could have resisted them if he had so chosen.

"WHEN HE WAS REVILED, HE REVILED NOT AGAIN"

The Apostle, therefore, seems to refer to the contradiction of his words. This is implied by St. Peter, who says, "When he was reviled, he reviled not again." (I Pet. 2:23.) So when we consider the three and a half years of Christ's ministry, we find that his doctrines were disputed, and that he was slandered. The Jews said that he had a demon; that he performed his miracles by the Prince of demons; that he was a blasphemer. These contradictions and oppositions on their part might have called out from him some very just, truthful statements, respecting them. He might have given them as good as he got, and better. He might have told them that the *Devil* was working with *them*, etc. His perfect power of language would have given him ability to more than cope with them. When they thought to entrap him in his *words*, he entrapped them in *their words*. But he reviled not. He did not render evil for evil, nor railing for railing. This, the Apostle shows, is the proper course.

But in the daily affairs of life, when people say all manner of evil against us, when they revile us, it is natural to the fallen flesh to think of something evil to say in return. Thus these things become tests upon us. If we yield to such a spirit, we are following the course of the enemy and not that of the Lord. "*Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds*" when attacked by the Adversary—whoever may be his agents and whatever may be their missiles. He cannot harm but will only increase our reputation in the Lords' sight, if we *endure faithfully*; and he can do no outward harm that God cannot overrule for the *good* of his cause—though that *good* may mean "siftings" of "chaff" and "tares" from the "wheat."

Evil speaking, backbiting and slandering are *strictly forbidden* to God's people as *wholly contrary* to his spirit of love, *even if the evil thing be true*. As a preventive of anything in the nature of slander, the Scriptures very carefully mark out *only one way of redress of grievances*.—Matt. 18:15-17.

PROFESSED CHRISTIANS OFTEN WORST SCANDALMONGERS

Many, among even advanced Christians, seem to be *utterly in ignorance of this Divine ruling*, and hence professed Christians are often the most pronounced scandalmongers. Yet this is one of the few *special, specific commandments* given by our Lord; and considered in connection with the statement, "Ye are my *friends*, if ye do whatsoever I

command you," the constant violation of this, our Lord's command, proves that many are not far advanced in friendship—discipleship.

Let us look carefully at this rule, which if followed would prevent gossip, "evil speaking," "backbiting." See, as above cited, Matt. 18:15-17. Its first provision, for a conference between the principals *alone*, implies candor on the part of the accuser, who thinks that he has suffered. It also implies his thinking no evil of the accused. They meet as "brethren," each thinking *his own course* the *right* one, to discuss the matter; to see whether they can come to the same view. If they agree, all is well; the matter is settled; peace prevails; the threatened break has been averted, and no one is the wiser. In the great majority of cases, a frank, open discussion between the principals will bring about harmony. But both must be equally candid and governed by the Spirit of the Lord.

Thus did our Lord guard his true disciples from the insidious sin of slander, which leads onward to other and grosser works of the flesh and the Devil, and stops growth in the Truth and its spirit of love. Let us also note that those who *hear* slanders and thus encourage slanderers in their course of wrongdoing, are *partakers of their evil deeds*; guilty partners in the violation of the Master's commands. God's true people should refuse to listen to slanders and should point the offender to the Lord's Word and the *only* method therein authorized. Are we wiser than God? Experience teaches that we cannot trust to our own judgments and are on safe ground only when following the voice of the Shepherd implicitly.

WE SHOULD REFUSE TO HEAR GOSSIP AND SLANDER

If any Brother or Sister brings to you an evil report of others, stop him at once, kindly but *firmly*. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:11.) Refuse to have any share in this violation of the Master's commands, which does great mischief in the Church. If the Brother or Sister be only a "babe" in spiritual matters, call attention to the Lord's ruling on the subject. (Matt. 18:15; I Tim. 5:19.) If the conversation is not addressed to you but merely in your hearing, promptly show your disapproval by withdrawing.

If, after having had his attention called to the Lord's command on this subject, the slanderer still persists in "evil speaking," "backbiting" and telling you his "evil-surmisings," reprove him more sharply, saying as you go, "I cannot, must not, hear you; for if I did, I would be as criminal in the matter as you are, violating the Lord's command. And even if I were to hear your story I could not believe it; for the Christian who does not respect the Lord's Word and follow his Plan for the redress of grievances, shows so little of the Lord's spirit that his word cannot be trusted. He who twists and dodges the Lord's words would not hesitate to twist and misrepresent the words and deeds of fellow-disciples." Then withdraw fellowship from such until his error has been confessed with promises of reform. If to any extent you listen to such conversation, or express "*sympathy*" with it or with the gossip or slanderer, *you are a partner in the sin and in all its consequences*; and if a "root of bitterness" is thus developed, you are more than likely to be one of those "defiled" by it.—Heb. 12:15.

Be pure: maintain a conscience void of offense toward God and men. Begin with the heart; harbor no thoughts that in any sense of the word would be evil. To make sure of this, have Christ Jesus as your pattern, well and much before your mind. When evil is obtruded upon you, either from without or from within, lift up your heart in prayer to him for the grace promised in every time of need. Keep constantly before you the prayer, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer."—Psa. 19:14.

LET US CULTIVATE APPRECIATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF DIVINE LAW

While seeking to follow the various specific commands of Scripture, let us seek more and more to understand and come in sympathy with the *principles which underlie* the Divine Law. These will enable us to judge of the right and the wrong of such of our words, thoughts and acts as may not be particularly specified in the Lord's Word. Indeed, as we come to understand and sympathize with the principles of Divine Law, to that extent we are getting the spirit of the Divine Word. Note the testimony of the Psalmist on this point, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou, *through thy commandments*, hast made me wiser than mine enemies, *for they are ever with me*. I have more understanding than all my teachers, *for thy testimonies are my meditation*. I understand more than the ancients, *because I keep thy precepts*. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, *that I might keep thy Word*. I have not departed from thy judgments, *for thou hast taught me*. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! *Through thy precepts* I get understanding; *therefore, I hate every false way*. *Thy Word* is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."—Psa. 119:97-105.

Shun a contentious and fault-finding disposition as contrary to the spirit, or disposition of Christ—contrary to *love*. A certain amount of combative courage is demanded in overcoming the world, the flesh and the Devil and their various snares. This fighting disposition may become a valuable aid to ourselves and to the Master's cause if rightly and wisely directed against sin, *first* in *ourselves* and *secondly* in others; if used for the Lord and his people and against Satan and all his powers of darkness and superstition. This, in the Scriptures, is called fighting the *good fight*, and we all should be gallant soldiers in this battle for Right and Truth, lovingly defending our Captain's honor and his people's liberties.

THE POWERS OF EVIL WOULD MAKE COMBATIVENESS A CHIEF VIRTUE

But such a good use of combativeness is not pleasing to the Prince of this world, who will seek to *pervert* what he cannot directly *use*. Consequently, he attempts with some to make combativeness a chief virtue. He encourages them to fight everything and everybody; the brethren, more than the powers of darkness; nominal churchmen, more than the errors and ignorance which blind them and make them such. Indeed, his desire is to get us to "fight against God."

Let us be on our guard on this point. Let us, first of all, *judge ourselves*, lest we cast a stumbling-block before others; let us fight down in *our own hearts* the wrong spirit which seeks to make mountains out of trifles and disposes us to be captious and contentious over non-essentials. Greater is "He that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16:32.) Let us guard ourselves that our defense of the Truth be, not from motives of self-glorification, but from love for the Truth, love for the Lord, for his people, the brethren. If *love* be the impelling spirit, or motive, it will show itself accordingly in a loving, gentle, patient, humble course toward all the fellow-servants. Let us be "gentle toward all." Let "the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God," which is quick and powerful, do all the *cutting*.

Beware of all thoughts, feelings and conditions of heart directly or remotely connected with malice, envy, hatred, strife. Give these no place in your heart even for a moment; for they will surely do *you* great injury, aside from leading to the injury of others. Keep your heart, your will, your intentions and desires full of love toward God and all his creatures—the most fervent toward God, and proportionately toward all who have his spirit and walk in the way of his direction.

DO NOT TRUST TO CONSCIENCE ALONE

If conscience were a *sufficient* guide you would have no need of the Scriptures. The majority of people have as good as no conscience; for they are blind to the principles and laws of God given to *guide* conscience; and still worse off than these are those mentioned in I Tim. 4:2. Hence the imperative necessity for carefully heeding the Lord's Word, and *walking circumspectly* according to its light.

We are not to faint in our minds nor become discouraged, feeling that so much has been said against us that we must give up the race. On the contrary, we are to feel assured like our Lord, that nothing can befall us except with the knowledge of the Father, who is working all things for our good. It was thus our Lord was prepared for his exaltation. So we, if we are rightly exercised by our various experiences and follow as closely as possible the commands laid down for our guidance, will find that even revilings, slanders, oppositions to righteousness, will work out blessings for us, as they did for our Lord.

But how many become weary and are in danger of losing the prize because they fail to consider what *the Lord* faithfully endured of opposition! If such would consider that the Lord, who was *perfect*, suffered in every sense *unjustly* for righteousness' sake, and that their own conduct is *imperfect*, they would not be weary in well doing, but would learn to fight and to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ"; they would continue to "fight the good fight of faith." "*We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we [the Church] are, yet without sin.*"—Heb. 4:15.

MARCH 26

We are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others—1 Thes. 5:5, 6.

The Christian, as a disciple of the Lord, as a pupil in the school of Christ, is being fitted for a place in the Millennial Kingdom—for a share in its wonderful blessings and rewards. Hence we see the necessity for the frequent admonitions of the Scripture that the Lord's people shall be awake—not of those who slumber; not of those who are idle; not of those who are overcharged with the cares of this life; but that they be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Their service toward the Lord is primarily the bringing of themselves into as close harmony with the Lord's will, and into as close likeness to the Divine pattern as possible; and secondly, it is that by precept and example they may help others of the called ones in the same narrow way—Z '03, 70 (R 3155).

In the Scripture symbolism, night represents sin, and darkness represents error, in which the poor world of mankind lies under the manipulation of Satan. Amid this night the light of the Lord has been shining, and some, unlike the world, have been awakened; and seeing its rays, and following them, they have been led into righteousness and truth. These, the Lord's people, are constantly alert to the light and walk therein—P '36, 31.

Parallel passages: Rom. 13:11-13; Eph. 5:8, 11, 14; Col. 1:12, 13; 3:8; Eph. 6:13-18; 1 Thes. 5:1-4, 7, 8; Phil. 4:8; Isa. 9:2; Matt. 25:5; 1 John 2:8; 1 Pet. 5:8, 9.

Hymns: 297, 272, 47, 4, 183, 196, 78.

Poems of Dawn, 214: *The Day Is At Hand*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 181 (R 5256).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? Why? How did it become so? What were the results? What should be done with them?

THE DAY IS AT HAND

POOR, fainting spirit, still hold on thy way—
The dawn is near!
True, thou art weary; but yon brighter ray
Becomes more clear.
Bear up a little longer; wait for rest;
Yield not to slumber, though with toil oppressed.

The night of life is mournful, but, look on—
The dawn is near!
Soon will earth's shadowy scenes and forms be gone;
Yield not to fear!
The mountain's summit will, ere long, be gained,

And the bright world of joy and peace attained.

"Joyful through hope," thy motto still must be—
The dawn is near!
What glories will that dawn unfold to thee!
Be of good cheer!
Gird up thy loins; bind sandals on thy feet;
The way is dark and long; the end is sweet.

R5256: A WORD TO THE WATCHERS

"Let us watch and be sober."—1 Thess. 5:6.

THE APOSTLE PAUL is addressing the Church, himself included, when he says, "Let us watch and be sober." He indicates in the context that we are to watch for the Day, for Messiah's Kingdom, which will produce that Day. We know to expect the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. The Church is to be delivered from sin and death early in the morning of that wonderful Day. Their part is to be in the First Resurrection, to glory, honor and immortality with their Lord.

St. Paul tells us that God has so arranged His Program that the Day will come as a thief in the night—stealthily: and that those who are asleep will not be aware that the Day has come, and might therefore not be expected to be in a waiting attitude. Our Master's words are, "Take heed to yourselves, lest ... that Day come upon you unawares. ... Watch ye therefore." (Luke 21:34, 36.) We believe that He leaves the matter in obscurity, because it will be better for us as a whole not to know the exact time. For instance, in the long period of the Dark Ages it was better that Christians did not know just when the time of Christ's return would come. There were wonderful events transpiring in their day, and have been, in fact, in every day, but so much the more, we read, as the Day approaches.

While the Adversary is ever active in his efforts to do harm to the Lord's cause, he will be still more seductive in his evil influences during the last days. We must therefore, as the Day draws near, be more and more alert in guarding every point of attack. The Lord allows us to do this watching, and He will reward the faithful ones, for He takes pleasure in the watchers. These will not be careless. Any who are careless will not be of the Kingdom class, for they are not of the kind that He wishes to glorify.

God wishes those who are awake to be learning more and more of His Plan. These will grow in grace and in knowledge as they watch. They will not be like the world. The world will be in a stupor—they will be unworthy of the Day. Darkness covers the whole earth at the present time. But God's people are granted a special light. They love the light. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psa. 119:105.) It is not a light like that of the moon, which reaches far out, but merely a little light at the feet of

those who are watching for it. Those who are going to sleep will find their light going out.

EVIDENCES OF THE NEW DAY

The way that the Lord has been marking out for His people all down through the Age has been a narrow way—a very narrow way. His light is given only to those who are seeking—those who are waiting—those who are watching. These will discern the dawning of the morning.

Others will not see. They have not watched to catch the foregleams of the New Day. While things transpire that are evidences of the New Day, they are quite unconscious. For instance, the wonderful blessings of our day are manifestations of the New Dispensation. The dawn is here. We are astonished that the people do not see. But they attribute these wonderful things to different causes. They think that these are merely the results of man's taking another step forward in progress from the monkey-stage. He has become more intelligent, goes to concerts, churches, etc. He is getting farther away from the monkey! The power to use steam and electricity proves to these that we are entering the *Brain Age!* They forget that the few are talented inventors, etc.

We can see that all these great blessings belong to the New Dispensation. God is bringing it about. We can see that it is not the educated people, but those less educated, who have discovered the wonderful inventions most useful to man. The inventions which have proved the greatest blessings the world has ever known have been discovered by unlearned men. These things are not due to the "brain age," as they tell us. Perhaps none of the present generation will compare with Shakespeare; perhaps none will compare with St. Paul; none perhaps will compare with Solomon, or David, or Moses.

WATCHMEN FOR A PURPOSE

The Apostle says, "Let us watch and be sober." We cannot say that he here refers to abstinence from the use of liquors, tobacco and other things which have a stupefying effect on the nerves. The thought is that we should be watchful and sober in mind. We find a great many people who are excitable—carried about by every wind of doctrine. They cannot give the reason for what they accept. They do not know that the Truth is intended for only the one class of people—for those who are *watching*.

How carefully we should watch all the increasing signs of the New Day! But the watchman who stands at the post of duty, and sees things going on, but keeps his mouth shut, is of no use at all. We want a watchman for a purpose! Those who are on the alert should call the attention of others to these wonderful things. They should seek to arouse the Household of Faith.

There are people who are as fully consecrated as ourselves, perhaps, only they are not awake. We should give them a kindly shake to arouse them to see the wonderful things. And since we are to be called away soon to the marriage, we are to remember that a part

of our watching should be to keep our garments white. We are to watch to some purpose. If we realized how near the Bridegroom is, how careful we would be of our robes! Others do not know, but the Bride-elect knows how near the Bridegroom is. She will watch and be sober.

In one sense of the word, there might be many things to lead to excitability. We might merely jump up and down as we see the wonderful things, and clap our hands, etc. But not so! We are to be sober. Yet we are not to be stupid—stolid. We should remember that the Lord is giving us this knowledge to be used, and we should use it more and more. As we more clearly see our imperfections, we should watch and be sober, and we shall accordingly be circumspect, we shall be helpful to others, and will put on more and more the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit—patience, meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love. And as we watch, we shall be putting off anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. Thus we shall be pleasing and acceptable to the Bridegroom, and we shall thus be making ourselves ready to enter in with Him into the joys and blessings that are now so near—at the door.

MARCH 27

I pray for them ... that they all may be one ... that they may be made perfect in one ... that the world may know that thou hast ... loved them as thou hast loved me—John 17:20-23.

In amazement we inquire, How can this be? Our Lord Jesus was always in perfect harmony with the Father—a Son who gloriously reflected His likeness; but it has not been so with us; we were sinners and had nothing worthy of love. Yes, but we have been washed and cleansed, and, however imperfect our earthen vessels may still be, our hearts are perfect in His sight who is able to read the heart. And, as He sees us with a perfect heart—a perfect purpose and intention—striving to overcome the weaknesses and disabilities of our imperfect flesh, and with painful, yet determined, effort to do His will, and humbly trusting in the provisions which He has made for our redemption from the fall, God recognizes in us that which is worthy of His love—Z '03, 79 (R 3160).

Blessed thought! The Lord's people enjoy the intercession of Christ, who prays the Father to perfect each one in the knowledge and faith of the Son of God as fellow disciples of Jesus Christ; nor need this cause wonder, since their completeness in oneness must precede their bringing the world to faith, by which the world will recognize that the Father loves them as His true people with the same kind of love as that which He bestowed upon Jesus—P '30, 30.

Parallel passages: 2 Sam. 1:26; Psa. 133; John 17:11; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 1:10; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 4:3-6; John 14:11, 20; 1 John 1:3; 3:24; Col. 2:2; 3:14; Heb. 13:23; John 12:26; 15:9; 16:27; Eph. 2:4; 1 John 3:1, 2.

Hymns: 45, 63, 67, 68, 165, 176, 333.

Poems of Dawn, 50: *God Knows*.

Tower Reading: Z '03, 359 (R 5358).

Questions: What experiences of this week showed the truth of this text? How? What were the results?

GOD KNOWS

GOD knows—not I—the devious way
Wherein my faltering feet must tread,
Before into the light of day
My steps from out this gloom are led.
And since my Lord the path doth see,
What matter if 'tis hid from me?

God knows—not I—how sweet accord
Shall grow at length from out this clash

Of earthly discords which have jarred
On soul and sense; I hear the crash,
Yet feel and know that on His ear
Breaks harmony—full, deep and clear.

God knows—not I—why, when I'd fain
Have walked in pastures green and fair,
The path He pointed me hath lain
Through rocky deserts bleak and bare.
I blindly trust—since 'tis His will—
This way lies safety, that way ill.

His perfect plan I may not grasp,
Yet I can trust Love Infinite,
And with my feeble fingers clasp
The hand which leads me into light.
My soul upon His errand goes—
The end I know not—but God knows.

R5358: CHARACTER-LIKENESS TO THE LORD

"I pray for them ... that they may be one, ... that they may be made perfect in one, ... that the world may know that Thou hast ... loved them as Thou hast loved Me."—John 17:9, 20-23.

THESE WORDS, we remember, were uttered by our Lord on the night of His betrayal, supposedly while on the way from the "upper room" where the Memorial was observed to the Garden of Gethsemane. The ones He evidently prayed for were the twelve Apostles, or rather the eleven, by this time; for in conjunction He says, "I have lost none of them, save the son of perdition." But the context shows that His prayer includes His faithful followers all the way down the Age. He says, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for all those who shall believe on Me through their word." He prayed that His followers might be one, even as He and His Father were one—the same kind of oneness, a oneness of mind.

This text is one of the best proofs that the Lord Jesus and the Father are not one in person. He could not have prayed for all of the Church to be one in person. It is a oneness of will, a full harmony of will, a oneness of purpose. The Lord said, "Not My will, but Thine be done." He thus came into full oneness, harmony with the Father—with the Father's will, the Father's Plan. It is not a mutual concession, where each gives up some of his rights in order to become one.

His first work for dealing with the world of mankind—before He would become the world's Savior and the Mediator of the New Covenant—was the election of the Church. This was the work which He had now begun, and He was committing to them the

testimony. He desires that all the Church have a oneness of purpose, a oneness of will with His will. And we can see that this could be obtained only in the one way—by fully surrendering our will. And this, the Scriptures declare, is done by becoming dead.

TWO CAUSES OF DISSENSION

A man or woman is merely what his will is and what that will can make out of the body and its circumstances. And so at the very beginning of our discipleship, the first thing is to see that we are dead as respects our will, and alive toward the Lord Jesus Christ. All who do this He calls New Creatures. He grants them the Holy Spirit, that the new mind, the new will, may be theirs. In proportion as they obtain the new mind, the new will, in that same proportion will the oneness with one another exist.

That which causes dissension amongst the Lord's people is either a lack of loyalty or a lack of knowledge. If it is a lack of loyalty, they will gradually drift away. The Lord does not choose to force any of His family. He is choosing such as worship Him in spirit and in truth, such as are in every respect loyal. He has set aside for the purpose of selecting this class the entire Gospel Age. This work of selecting has been in progress for nearly nineteen centuries. And this company will be a Little Flock. They will, evidently, be a very select class. They are required to walk by faith, not by sight.

Not many have the loyalty to God and to righteousness to walk that way and to count the world as loss and dross—as nothing, with all its projects. As the disloyal ones leave the ranks, more and more the loyal ones will find themselves drawn together, and more and more of oneness will be found among those who are faithful. This would necessarily be true in every time and in every country. All who are thoroughly loyal would desire to do the Father's will, desire to lay down their lives in the Father's service. And this desire would make them *one*.

FRICTION MINIMIZED WITH MATURITY

The Lord speaks of their being perfected in one. As each individual member makes progress, he becomes more worthy to fill the place or use the opportunity provided for him. And thus the Body becomes more efficacious. But the thought that our Lord here expresses is rather that of *completeness*. He is referring to the end of the Age, when the work will be completed, perfected, when they will all be one. But the grand consummation will be effected by something which the Lord will Himself do. We find that, necessarily, because of the differences of our flesh, we cannot in everything see exactly alike. Now we can only see more or less obscurely.

At present we cannot see fully and completely. Consequently there will always be more or less friction, even amongst those who are fully consecrated to do the Father's will. This friction should become minimized, as we become mature. But we cannot see eye to eye until the glorious consummation, when we shall have experienced the resurrection change, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." We are to have our trial in these imperfect bodies. And

those who show their loyalty in fighting against the world, the flesh and the Adversary, to the end, will be joint-heirs with Christ, sharers in His Kingdom, executors of the Divine Program for the blessing of the world of mankind.

AN ASTOUNDING STATEMENT

At the *Epiphania*, or bright shining, of the Lord's manifestation, God will have completed His present work of directing the Church, and the world will be informed that they are under a different Dispensation. When the world shall have come to understand the matter fully, they will know the truth of our Lord's words, in His last prayer with His disciples, that the Father loves the Church as He loves the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a very astounding statement. It shows that there is nothing selfish in our Lord. He did not say, "They will always be inferior to Me. They will never have the glory that I shall have."

On the contrary, the Lord Jesus knows that the Heavenly Father will exercise His Love along the lines of principle, character. And all who will be members of the same glorious company must have the same glorious character that our Lord had; that is to say, they must be *loyal to the core*. They must have demonstrated that they loved righteousness and hated iniquity. We read, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." (Hebrews 1:9.) So He was anointed to be the Head of the Church class. But the Church class are declared in this Scripture to be His associates—not of inferiority, but of common fellowship, being on one plane. And the world will then know that the Father loved the Church as He loved Jesus. We understand that the Church will be on the same *plane* with her Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, we are to keep in mind that God "made Him to be Head over all—God blessed forever!" The Church will never be on an equality of position with Christ.

This is very wonderful to us, that our Heavenly Father should love us as He loved Christ, that the Lord would love the jewel, in the mire or wherever it might be found! The Lord Jesus has been selecting these characters out of the mire of human sin. And those who prove to be of the "more than conqueror" class—loyal as the Lord Jesus was loyal—the Father will love as He loved the Lord Jesus, and will glorify them with His Son.

"When thou passest through the waters,
I will be with thee!
Sure and sweet and all-sufficient
Shall His presence be.
All God's billows overflowed Him
In th' great Atoning Day;
Now He only leads thee through them—
With thee all the way."

MARCH 28

Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ—2 Tim. 2:3.

The true soldier does not debate his cause. He is rightly supposed to have settled upon its justice and righteousness before he enlisted to serve it. Thereafter he avouches it and defies contradiction of it. He is ready to spend all and be all spent in its defense. It is glorious to serve Christ in honesty and in fullness of fidelity. There is an ineffable joy in being on the right side, in knowing that beyond the field of blood and the valley of shadows is an abundant entrance into the joys and peace of the triumphant King of kings. For that hope none should shrink from the hardness of battle, none quail before the rage of the enemy, and none tremble before the certainty of hunger, thirst, nakedness, wounds or death—Z '03, 84 (R 3162).

The Lord's people are soldiers in that army of which Jesus is the Commander. Their warfare requires strong endurance because of the many hardships to which they are exposed. Self-denial must be persevered in amid their many privations. Their many defects tax their endurance almost unto fainting. Their faults call for endurance against discouragement, and the strenuousness of their trials and sufferings can be borne only by a spirit that is inured to hardship and is sustained by the Lord—P '35, 32.

Parallel passages: Heb. 2:10; Isa. 59:16, 17; 54:17; Eph. 6:10-17; Rom. 13:12; 2 Cor. 6:7; 10:4, 5; 1 Thes. 5:8; 1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7; 1 Cor. 16:13; 1 Pet. 5:8, 9; Phil. 1:27; 4:1; Josh. 1:6, 7; Dan. 11:32.

Hymns: 272, 20, 183, 164, 44, 266, 13.

Poems of Dawn, 77: *Amen, Amen.*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 54 (R 5403).

Questions: What have I endured in the Christian warfare this week? How? Why? What helped or hindered? What were the effects?

AMEN, AMEN

I CANNOT say,
Beneath the pressure of life's cares today,
I joy in these;
But I can say
That I would rather walk this rugged way,
If Him it please.

I cannot feel
That all is well when dark'ning clouds conceal
The shining sun;
But then I know
God lives and loves; and say, since it is so,

"Thy will be done."

I cannot speak
In happy tones; the tear-drops on my cheek
Show I am sad;
But I can speak
Of grace to suffer with submission meek,
Until made glad.

I do not see
Why God should e'en permit some things to be,
When He is love;
But I can see,
Though often dimly, through the mystery,
His hand above.

I may not try
To keep the hot tears back; but hush that sigh,
"It might have been;"
And try to still
Each rising murmur, and to God's sweet will
Respond—"AMEN."

R5403: ENDURING HARDNESS AS GOOD SOLDIERS

**"Thou, therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."
—2 Tim. 2:3.**

THERE are many illustrations used in the Bible, and all of them very forceful. The one which represents the Christian as a soldier, has a great deal of meaning. We are not to suppose that the angels in Heaven are soldiers, nor that that term would be applicable to them. There is no war going on in Heaven, but there is a war going on here on earth.

Six thousand years ago our first parents became entrapped, and the whole race was sold under Sin—became the servants of Sin and Satan. More and more this influence has prevailed—not that all willingly surrender to Satan, but that he puts darkness for light and light for darkness, and thus deceives mankind and leads them captive at his will.

All who desire to be in harmony with God would be out of harmony with Satan and Sin. And they might at times have resisted these, and have tried to do God's will. But there was no organized undertaking for the overthrow of Sin until Jesus came. His mission was to overcome Satan, overcome Sin, and to bring everything into full harmony with God's arrangement. Earth, this province of God's great Empire, being in a rebellious state, needed to be conquered and restored, and Jesus undertook the work, with Divine backing.

The first step was laying down His own life as a Ransom-price for the sin of the whole world, and thus making good for the original transgression. But before taking His power and exercising it in the overthrow of Satan and Sin, Jesus, according to the Father's will, began the selection of a Church class, variously styled members of His Body, His Bride, His companions and brethren in the Kingdom, His Royal Priesthood, under Himself as the great Royal High Priest. All those who have heard the Message, and whose hearts have been responsive, who have recognized the wrong conditions here prevailing, and who have felt sympathy for the race that is here sold as slaves of Sin and Death—all these have been invited to become members of this select class.

TERMS OF WARFARE STATED AT BEGINNING

These were informed at the very beginning that it would be necessary for them to fight a good fight. They were invited to enlist in the army to battle against Satan, and instructed that they should have full confidence that ultimately faith would have its victory. They were also told that they must suffer, laying down their lives as their Head and Forerunner laid down His life—not living for the world, but contrariwise, accepting His arrangement and living altogether for the purpose of carrying out their consecration with Him.

The final honor to which God has invited them is to a share in His great Kingdom, with His Son. This implies a change of nature to all who have become soldiers of the Cross, followers of the Lamb; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." These are called to forego the rights and privileges of the present time, and by their lives to leave their mark, for a testimony to the world, for the benefit of mankind, and especially for the glory of God and for the calling out of others who might desire similarly to walk in the narrow way.

The warfare that these are called upon to wage is a warfare against sin and the powers of darkness. (Eph. 6:11.) They are pledged to the Lord for right, for truth, for goodness. They are thus to fight the good fight. These soldiers will find, too, that some of their greatest difficulties are right in their own person. They have tendencies toward sin, because of being members of the human family, children of wrath, of sin, even as others. Their relationship to the Lord is as New Creatures.

SELF OUR SPECIAL FOE

The New Creature is obliged to fight against and to control the flesh. This is a great battle which each fights for himself. Each soldier may more or less assist and set an example to the other soldiers, but the chief battle is with *himself*. It is a *hand-to-hand* conflict. Although he is expected at all times to be on the alert against the wiles of Satan and the world, yet his special fight is with the enemies in his own flesh. St. Paul himself had taken the shield of faith—wherewith to quench the fiery darts of the wicked—and the helmet of salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Timothy was

a young soldier, and the Apostle was encouraging him with advice. He had already come into the Lord's company, under the Lord's standard.

THE QUALITIES OF A GOOD SOLDIER

St. Paul intimates that any one of us may be a good soldier, or contrariwise, a bad soldier, a poor soldier. We can imagine some soldiers who would be very disregardful of orders, not prompt to obey the command of the Leader. We can see that a good soldier is (1) one who is very much in sympathy with the Captain of his Salvation. He is an intelligent soldier, and sees that he has on the proper armor, that he wears it properly and that he gets the very best possible use out of this armor. He sees that in his walk he has a soldierly bearing, as a proper representative of the King, and of the great Kingdom so near at hand.

(2) He is not ashamed of his flag, nor of the garment of Christ's righteousness. He is to lift up the standard of righteousness everywhere. He enlists in this warfare, knowing that it means his death—the death of the flesh, of the human nature. He is to be a good soldier—not merely outwardly loyal, merely wearing the uniform, but having the full spirit of the Cause. This means that whatever experiences come to him he is to receive these thankfully, and be glad to have the privilege of enduring something for His Captain and in the interests of the Kingdom to which he has sworn allegiance.

The thought which the Apostle is impressing is that all good soldiers should endure hardness—hard, distressing conditions, circumstances that are quite unpleasant, difficult. Earthly soldiers are obliged to tramp through water and mud, enduring long, wearisome marches. Sometimes they are short of rations, sometimes obliged to sleep on the ground. Sometimes their battles are waged in the face of great opposition.

So the soldier of Christ is to endure whatever experiences may come to him, under the guidance of his Captain, not only willingly, but gladly, rejoicing that he has been permitted to enter this army of the Lord, knowing that these experiences are working out for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." These various hard experiences of the Christian are designed to work out for his good, that he may "lay hold on eternal life," and gain a share in the Kingdom with his Redeemer.

MARCH 29

By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God—Eph. 2:8.

As members of the fallen race we were incapable of doing any work which our holy God could accept. Our present standing, therefore, as Christians, is not the result of anything that the old creature did, or could have done. It is not of ourselves; it is the gift of God. This lesson must be thoroughly appreciated, else we shall be continually in danger of falling. ... So far from considering the new heart, mind and will as an evolution of the old creature, the Apostle would have us understand distinctly that it is a new and separate creation. We were created in Christ Jesus, God's workmanship—prepared *for* good works, but not *by* good works—Z '03, 90 (R 3166).

Our salvation is an unmerited favor of our Heavenly Father. Every gift or blessing comes from Him without our deserving it. While He requires faith as a condition, our faith no more merits His favor than the beggar's receiving alms earns them by right. It is of His grace that the salvation of justification and the salvation of God's calling have come to us. How we should thank and appreciate our great Benefactor!—P '34, 31.

Parallel passages: Rom. 3:19-5:2; 11:5, 6; Deut. 9:5; Gal. 5:4; Eph. 1:19; 2:5; 2 Tim. 1:9; Matt. 16:17; Rom. 10:13, 14, 17; Phil. 1:29; Jas. 1:17; Rom. 11:28, 29.

Hymns: 251, 187, 246, 291, 295, 67, 176.

Poems of Dawn, 24: *Christ, All in All*.

Tower Reading: Z '90, 5 (R 1262).

Questions: What have this week's experiences been in line with this text? How were they borne? What helped or hindered therein? What did they effect?

CHRIST, ALL IN ALL

IN Christ all fullness dwells: from Him proceeds
All that fall'n man, poor, wretched, guilty, needs.
In Him the contrite, bruised in spirit, find
Whate'er can heal the sorrows of the mind—
Forgiving love, that saves from blank despair,
Rich grace, that banishes each anxious care,
Soft pity, that relieves the bursting sigh,
And truth, revealing joys that never die.
Thrice happy they, who to His word attend,
His favor seek, and on His strength depend.
'Tis theirs to know His heart-consoling voice,
To share His smile, and in His name rejoice.
To them, reclaimed in mercy from the fall

And heav'nward marching, Christ is all in all:
In want, their treasure—in distress, their stay—
In gloom, their day-spring—vigor, in decay—
'Mid foes, their guard—in solitude, their guest—
In storms, their hiding place—in toils, their rest—
In bonds, their freedom—their relief, in pain—
In life, their glory—and in all things, gain.

R1262: FAVOR UPON FAVOR.

"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom, also, we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."—Rom. 5:1, 2.

In the October issue of the TOWER we took a hasty view of God's great favor, which all the world may enjoy, of justification through Christ. We saw what a blessed, full salvation, full restitution to all that was lost in Adam, is implied in that term justification. And while we do not now experience that justification in the actual restoration to perfection—mental, moral and physical; while we still suffer, from the fall, many weaknesses and sad deformities of character and person, while we are still subject to death and must sooner or later sink under its power; nevertheless, having by faith accepted the promise of actual justification, through Christ, we have peace with God; for we hold in our possession, so to speak, a check on the bank of heaven for full salvation, justification or restitution, payable to the bearer in God's due time—the Millennial age. And, therefore, we reckon ourselves, as God reckons us, justified freely from all things, our shortcomings being no longer imputed to us, being atoned for by the precious blood wherein we trust, and the righteousness of Christ counted to us.

Our sins were laid upon Christ, our Redeemer, and his righteousness is transferred correspondingly to our account. O how we have rejoiced over these checks when by faith we received them and began to realize their import! How often we have opened the blessed book of God and read that check over and over again—"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him [Ah! that includes me, we said] should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.) Some of us shouted over it, and some of us wept over it tears of joy and gratitude. And for this grace we will never cease to praise God through all eternity.

But now we want to consider this additional favor or grace of which the Apostle speaks, into which, also, we have access by faith in Christ, and in which those who have received it rejoice in hope of the glory of God—this, which some Christians call "the second blessing," but which we regret to say many such but vaguely comprehend. What is it? Can there be anything grander than what we have seen the grace of justification to be? anything more desirable than the pardon of our sins and our reconciliation and peace with God? Can there be anything more desirable than the outcome of this reconciliation in the perfection of every physical, mental and moral power? than a body in the glow of

health and beauty of form and feature, forever decked with the bloom of eternal youth? than a mind in full possession of all its powers, and trained, educated and disciplined beyond the range even of all the intellectual prodigies we have ever known? and a moral refinement gloriously reflecting the divine likeness and perfectly acceptable to God? Can there be any desirable grace beyond this and the perfect condition of the glorious earth whose now desert places shall then blossom as the rose?

From a human standpoint it would seem not. Surely this is all the human heart could wish for or aspire to. And when "God shall wipe away all tears, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain," surely all who love righteousness will be satisfied, and, as Isaiah says, "the whole earth shall break forth into singing." (Isa. 14:7.) Praise the Lord! the prospect even now puts a new song into our mouths. But notwithstanding all this we learn that God has provided "*some better thing*" for the Gospel church. Paul speaks of this when, after recounting the faith and good works of the ancient worthies who lived previous to the Gospel age, and hence previous to the special call of this age, he says, "These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not [yet] the promise, God having provided *some better thing for us*, that they without us should not be made perfect."—Heb. 11:40.

And it is concerning this that we read the expressions, "favor upon favor" (John 1:16. Diaglott), "exceeding great and precious promises," "the prize of our high calling," "the heavenly calling," etc. This high calling is a call to joint-heirship with Christ as his bride, to be partakers of his divine nature, to share his likeness, and glory, and honor, and to be associated as co-workers together with him in his high office, when, at the appointed time, his Kingdom shall come—even to sit with him in his throne as kings and priests unto God. See Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 3:21; 1:6.

The human mind staggers in its endeavor to comprehend such a height of glory; yet those whose hearts are deeply in love with the Lord can appreciate the exceeding favor of the invitation to be the beloved bride of Christ, to be made like him and to be in his glorious presence forever. Amazing grace! and the wonder grows when we reflect upon the high exaltation of Christ, even beyond the glory which he had with the Father before the world was—a glory of person which is "the express image of the Father's person" (Heb. 1:3), a glory of wealth which places the whole universe at his feet as "the Heir of all things" (Heb. 1:2), a glory of power, of "all power in heaven and on earth," a glory of office, too, which is second only to that of Jehovah, the great Emperor of the Universe (1 Cor. 15:27, 28), and a glory of character which shines with all the luster of unsullied purity.

To aspire to such a height of glory without invitation would indeed be the height of presumption and folly. But when invited to it, it is our privilege to accept the favor with thanksgiving and humble endeavor to fulfill the conditions of the call. This is the high privilege of the saints of the Gospel age; but strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto it, and *few* there be that find it.—Matt. 7:14.

Paul shows us that through Christ we have access by faith into this grace, even as through him also we by faith had access to the grace of justification. He also shows that before we have access to this grace we must have received the grace of justification. Then, believing that "faithful is he that hath called us, who also will do it," and fully relying on his grace, we earnestly seek to know and fulfill the conditions. These conditions, those especially who are fully consecrated to God, are anxious to learn. And such have already taken the first steps, at least, in fulfilment of the conditions. We have already accepted thankfully the grace of justification, by faith in Christ our Redeemer; and this gives us a reckoned standing in God's sight. That is, we are henceforth reckoned as holy, as though actually justified, and treated from that standpoint. The Apostle says we are "holy and acceptable to God." (Rom. 12:1.) And being thus justified, holy (through Christ's imputed righteousness), and therefore acceptable to God, he says: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God [manifested in the grace which justified you], that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, ... which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.) There is the condition of the high calling, briefly stated—That we present our bodies, our justified humanity, a living sacrifice. And you will remember that this is just what our Lord Jesus did, saying, "A body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." (Heb. 10:5-7.) As he offered his life a sacrifice for sin, so we are invited to sacrifice our life faithfully, unto death, as he did; and in so doing we are counted in with him as part of the sin-offering, though our sacrifice would have no merit whatever of itself, because apart from him we ourselves would be under condemnation. But being first justified by faith in him, we are acceptable sacrifices to God, as the Apostle states. And in this privilege of sacrificing ourselves now consists the special advantage of justification by faith during the present age, rather than in the future.

In fulfilling the condition of the high calling, then, we will be doing just what Jesus did, remembering that he left us an example that we should follow his steps. (1 Pet. 2:21.) Remember, too, the Apostle's words—"If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall reign with him." "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."—2 Tim. 2:11, 12; Rom. 6:5.

Call to mind now what was the likeness of his resurrection. It was an exceeding high exaltation (Phil. 2:9), far above the human nature, "far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named." (Eph. 1:21.) It was an exaltation even to the divine nature, of which, says Peter, we also, who follow his steps as he set us an example, may become partakers. (2 Pet. 1:4.) To follow in the Lord's steps of humiliation and sacrifice, even unto death, is no light undertaking. It means the giving up of our will for the accomplishment of the divine will. Our sacrifice is not the giving up of our sins: those we fully renounced when we received the grace of justification, before we were acceptable as sacrifices. Our sacrifice must, therefore, consist in our self-denial of those things to which as natural men we have a right. Our first consideration in all that we do must be, What will be *most* to the glory of God and the advancement of his cause. If we realize that we can glorify God somewhat by one course at slight inconvenience or

expense of our own will, and yet more by another course of greater expense or humiliation, then the latter is the one to which we are committed by our consecration.

Amidst the noisy clamorings of our old (human) nature, insisting on its own will and way, to some extent, at least, it is often difficult to even discover the right course in view of our consecration. But persistently to silence the old nature, and studiously to search and determine the will of the Lord in all that we do, is the finding of the "narrow way" that leads to life—to that divine life to which the saints of this age are called. "And few there be that find it," says the Lord. How few even of those who made the covenant seem thus to studiously search for the way and humbly to walk in it.

"Oh! 'tis a pathway rough to choose,
A struggle hard to share,
For human pride would still refuse
The nameless trials there.

"But though we know the gate is low
That leads to heavenly bliss,
What higher grace could God bestow
Than such a hope as this?"

There is only one way for any to do who would keep in this narrow way of sacrifice even unto death, and that is what Paul directs, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"—"lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run *with patience* the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith," and considering him, how he endured, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds. (Phil. 3:13; Heb. 12:1-3.) If we keep looking at the things behind, we lose sight of the heavenly things and begin to over-estimate the earthly, and to correspondingly discount the heavenly. In other words, we begin to be conformed to this world. The Apostle says, "Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed;" let your minds be continually turned heavenward.

However difficult and thorny the path may be, forget not the *privilege* of walking in it. We may not repine and wish it were otherwise; for he that putteth his hand to the plow, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom. (Luke 9:62.) If our Lord had to be so severely tested to prove his worthiness of high exaltation, we should not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us. (1 Pet. 4:12.) We must "endure hardness as good soldiers," and wait patiently for "the glory which shall be revealed in us." And for our encouragement let us bear in mind the exceeding great and precious promises:—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne;" "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life;" "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom;" "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Glorious, indeed, will be that second blessing when fully realized; and even now, as by faith the prospect of its inheritance looms up before

us, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, reckoning that the sufferings of this present time, for Christ's sake, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

"The feeling of gratitude has all the ardor of passion in noble hearts."

"He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord."

MARCH 30

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness—2 Pet. 3:11.

Godlikeness certainly cannot include any harmful gossip, any unclean or unholy conversation, any disloyal or rebellious words. Let such things be put far away from all who name the name of Christ in sincerity and truth. And let us remember daily to settle our accounts with the Lord, to make sure that no record of idle words, unrepented of, and consequently unforgiven, stands against us. If daily we render up our accounts to God and seek His grace for greater overcoming power with each succeeding day, we shall be acquitted in judgment and stand approved before God through Christ, having the testimony of His holy Spirit with our spirits that we are pleasing and acceptable to Him—Z '96, 33 (R 1937).

The consideration of the dissolution of the present evil order of affairs, to be followed by a good order of affairs, constitutes a powerful appeal for holy and just living—for just living, that we may not be involved in this dissolution; for holy living, that we may be a part of the new order of affairs, for which our justice and love will make us fit as administrators of blessings to mankind—P '33, 46.

Parallel passages: Psa. 46:2-9; Isa. 2:19, 21; Jer. 25:31-38; Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:35; 2 Pet. 3:7, 10, 12; Rev. 6:14-17; 20:11; 21:1; Heb. 12:28; 1 Pet. 1:15; 2 Pet. 3:14; Phil. 2:15.

Hymns: 196, 171, 216, 310, 78, 125, 198.
Poems of Dawn, 262: *The Day of His Preparation*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 227 (R 5735).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences as to this text? How were they met? What were their results?

THE DAY OF HIS PREPARATION

LAY down your rails, ye nations, near and far,
Yoke your full trains to steam's triumphal car;
Link town to town, unit in iron bands
The long-estranged and oft-embattled lands.
Peace, mild-eyed seraph; knowledge, light Divine,
Shall send their messengers by every line.
Men joined in amity shall wonder long
That hate had power to lead their fathers wrong;
Or that false glory lured their hearts astray,
And made it virtuous and sublime to slay.
How grandly now these wonders of our day
Make preparation for Christ's royal way,

And with what joyous hope our souls
Do watch the ball of progress as it rolls,
Knowing that all, completed or begun,
Is but the dawning that precedes the sun!

R5735: "THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS"

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

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

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

The Lord's faithful, watching people, guided by the Word of Truth, will have an understanding of temporal affairs. As St. Paul has assured us, though this Day shall come as a thief and a snare upon the whole world, it shall not so come upon God's children who are living up to their privileges. "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh"; "When ye see these things, ... know that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." (Luke 21:28, 31.) The Master does not say, When ye see *all* these things, but When ye see the *beginning* of them, then we are to lift up our heads and rejoice—not rejoicing in the trouble, nor in the sufferings of others, but in the fact that these things are the foretold signs that the Present Order is about to be succeeded by a New Order, which will be far better, and more advantageous and desirable for all.

The Church herself will be the "new heavens," and will come into great glory, power and privilege. The thought in the early Church, evidently, was that these dispensational changes would very shortly come to pass. They were living in constant expectation of the coming of the Lord, the establishment of His Kingdom and the glorification of the Church. Some of them even felt too confident of the matter. The Apostle Paul writes to

the Church of Thessalonica saying that some of them had made a mistake in thinking that the Day of the Lord might have already come. He tells them that that Day could not come until the Man of Sin should be revealed. Thus in the days of the Apostles the Church was ever on the qui vive; and throughout this entire Age the Lord's people have been left in uncertainty as to the time of the Master's Second Coming, watching, preparing, for the things of the Kingdom, knowing that the Day of Christ would come as a "thief in the night" at the appointed time.—2 Thessalonians 2:3.

WHAT THE WATCHERS NOW SEE

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

A vivid description of this awful Time of Trouble is given by the Prophets. For the benefit of our new readers, we give a few citations of such prophecies, which repay investigation. (Isaiah 24:17-22; 28:21, 22; 33:7-14; 34:1-8; Psalm 18:7-19.) See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 4, pp. 15-20. Along this same line, read also Isaiah 13:1-13; Jeremiah 25:8-38; Revelation 18; 16:12-21. We believe that the present strife in Europe is very forcefully depicted in some of the prophecies cited above, and that this is only the beginning of the great trouble and overthrow, the breaking in pieces of the nations as a potter's vessel. In our own land we see the portents of the coming trouble, in strikes, labor riots, I.W.W. demonstrations, etc. The Scriptures cited above declare in unmistakable language that the whole Present Order will go up in a mighty conflagration. The troubles not long since in the Colorado mines, the more recent strikes in London, Chicago, Bridgeport and Bayonne, are only premonitory rumblings which, with many other disturbances of like nature, presage the coming storm.

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

The Apostle points out that all these things that occupy men's minds and absorb their energies are to pass away. None of them are to be permanent. We realize this to be so.

We see that their passing away is just at hand in this our day. Others do not perceive it, although many thoughtful minds see that present conditions are unprecedented, that some great change must be impending; and their hearts are failing them for fear.

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

HOLY ATMOSPHERE, NOT MIASMA, FOR NEW CREATURES

These directions are not to the world, and they are not to the flesh of the children of God, but are for us as New Creatures in Christ. The old creature being imperfect has no standing with God; but there is nothing unholy in the New Creature, and the imperfections of his flesh being covered by the Robe of Christ's righteousness he has a standing with God. The difficulty which the New Creature encounters is the weakness of the flesh in which he must tabernacle for the present, and the danger of being misled, enticed away, from the things that are holy. Day by day he seeks to control the flesh and to bring it wholly into subjection.

The New Creature begotten from above, wishes to be holy and to keep his tabernacle holy. He breathes by nature a holy atmosphere; anything contrary is poisonous to this Heavenly germ which must be fostered and nourished with the greatest care. That it may properly develop it is necessary that it be fed upon "the finest of the wheat"; it is necessary, too, that the very thoughts of the brain and the meditations of the heart should be conformed as nearly as possible to God's perfect standard for these New Creatures. To this end rich supply is furnished by the Heavenly Father, who begat us to this new nature.

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

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

"My Father! my Father! this heart would be Thine!

Oh, keep it from wanderings!

Oh, visit and nourish Thy wilderness vine,

Though it be from the bitter springs!

Till the time of my trial and pruning is o'er,

And Thy child is safe on eternity's shore!"

MARCH 31

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses—1 Tim. 6:12.

Whether our warfare be of the more public kind or of the more private sort, there must be warfare; and, more than this, there must be *progress and victory*, else we can never be accepted of the Lord as "overcomers." Another thought should be borne in mind by us all. The Lord in making His estimate will take knowledge of the *spirit* which actuated us, rather than of the results secured by our efforts. In view of this, let us see to it, not only that we do with our might what our hands find to do, but also that our every sacrifice and gift to the Lord and His cause is so full of love and devotion that the Lord will surely approve it, as done from love for Him and His, and not from vainglory—Z '03, 91 (R 3166).

The Lord's people are called upon to stand on God's side in battling for righteousness. A strong love for the prize of God's calling will be an efficient help by way of stimulating hope and courage in this good fight of faith; and having publicly taken their stand on God's side in this warfare, let them bring no shame upon the cause of God and Christ by cowardice in ignoble flight from, or surrender to, the enemy—P '32, 30.

Parallel passages: 1 Tim. 1:18; Eph. 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:5; 4:7; Phil. 3:12-14; 1 Tim. 6:19; Matt. 7:21-23; 10:32, 33; John 9:22-28; Rom. 2:7; 10:9, 10; 1 John 4:15.

Hymns: 266, 9, 272, 225, 58, 32, 201.

Poems of Dawn, 308: *We Still Can Serve*.

Tower Reading: Z '98, 153 (R 2309).

Questions: Have I this week fought to win eternal life in harmony with my profession? Why? How? With what effects?

WE STILL CAN SERVE

YOU'RE growing old? Your task is done?
And now you rest with setting sun,
Lamenting that your work is o'er,
That you can't labor any more?

Ah, weary not to do God's will!
Go, labor on, your task fulfill.
You'll always have the Master's care—
The oldest trees some fruit must bear;

For age has labors none the less
Than youth, though in another dress.
As evening twilight fades away

New glories shine, not seen by day.

R2309: THE CHRISTIAN'S WARFARE.

"Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life."—1 Tim. 6:12.

WHILE the followers of Christ are to be peacemakers, and are instructed accordingly to "follow peace with all men," nevertheless, they are the greatest warriors the world has ever known, on the principle that "he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." But, there are good fights and bad fights. A good fight is one which is in the interest of that which is good, that which is true, noble, pure, godly—a battle for righteousness; every other contest is a bad fight, for an unworthy cause.

But who are these fighters, referred to in our text, whom the Apostle Paul calls upon to fight a good fight? Does he call upon all men? or upon sinners? or upon merely nominal Christians? We answer, No; he addressed only the brigade of the "King's Own"—the body of Christ, the consecrated Church. The Apostle addresses these as the mouthpiece of our Captain of salvation, Christ Jesus, and it would be wholly out of order for a general or captain to issue orders to those who had not joined his army, and did not recognize his authority. Hence it is evident that the world in general is not addressed, and that nominal Christians who have never made a covenant with the Lord are not addressed. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." It is to these that the instructions come respecting the fight that is now on—that has been in progress since the Captain of our salvation began the war nearly nineteen centuries ago.

For whom do we fight—for God—for Christ? No, we answer. We fight for ourselves. A great mistake is made on this point by many who seem to imagine that fighting the good fight of faith is doing something for God, and deserves his thanks and reward. The Almighty God does not need that we should fight for him. He is omnipotent, abundantly able to take care of himself and his cause; he needs not our puny efforts. The claim that we are fighting for God would be as inconsistent as for the Cubans to say that they are fighting for the United States. It is the United States that is fighting for the relief of the Cubans. So it is God who is fighting for us, and assisting and encouraging us to fight the good fight of faith, on our own behalf. It is well that this feature of the case should be clearly discerned.

Against whom do we fight? We answer, our battle is not against our fellow creatures nor with carnal weapons; indeed, we can have large sympathy for even our most relentless foes, who, to the extent that modern civilization will permit, are ready and willing to spitefully use and persecute us, and to say all manner of evil against us falsely. We can readily see that they are blinded in considerable measure, either by their own prejudice and passion, or by the great Adversary's delusive false doctrines, superstitions, etc.; hence our warfare is not directed against these, and as we have opportunity we are to seek to do them good, "in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." (2 Tim. 2:25.) Hence also, when dealing with these, so far from battling

with them and resisting evil with evil, our Captain has commanded that we return good for evil, gentleness for rudeness, kindness for discourtesy; and that we seek to do good to those who speak evil of us and persecute us, that thus the eyes of their understanding may be opened, and that they may discern that there is such a thing as the spirit of love, generosity, kindness, whereas they suppose all to be actuated by the same malevolent spirit of selfishness, which controls themselves.

Our fight is to be against Sin—the great taskmaster, which captured our race in the person of father Adam, and has held it as slaves from then till now—paying regularly for six thousand years the terrible penalty of death, with all its concomitants of sickness, pain, sorrow and trouble. Yes, this is our enemy.

Indirectly, Satan is our enemy, because he it was through whose influence father Adam first became the slave of Sin; and Satan has still pursued the same course, and is even now endeavoring to bring us back again under the dominion of Sin, and to hold us there. We are not to forget, however, that our battle is not directly with Satan, nor are we to bring against him "a railing accusation" (Jude 9); rather, we are to say, with Michael, "the Lord rebuke thee;" and we are to await the Lord's time and the Lord's way for rebuking Satan. Nevertheless, we are to resist Satan; that is we are to resist his influence and deceptions and endeavors to mislead us into error and into sin.

The Lord instructs us that "We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, and with spiritual wickedness in exalted positions." (Eph. 6:12.) Satan, as the great master or general of Sin, has largely to do with all the various influences with which we must battle. It is his cunning, his "wiles," that supervise the battle against us, and since he is a spirit being, and therefore much more intelligent than ourselves, the contest would be a very unequal one, if we were without an equally powerful spirit leader. But we are not thus left helpless to battle against superior wisdom and cunning. Our chief Captain, the Lord Jesus, has conquered sin, and has been glorified, and he is on our part, so that with the Apostle, we can confidently say, "Greater is he that is on our part than all they that be against us"—Satan and his cohorts of evil spirits, and his deluded earthly agents and servants.

The Apostle seems to sum up the agencies through which our great captor Sin seeks to hold us his slaves, or if we have gotten free to regain his influence over us, as three—the world, the flesh, the devil. We have seen the powerful influence of the devil, as the great chief general of Sin. We next notice in what sense the world is our opponent, and in what sense we are to battle against it. We have just seen that we do not battle with carnal weapons, nor do we in any sense of the word battle or contest with our fellow-creatures, seeing that they are blinded by the adversary, and really little, if any, accountable for their course; our battle is not to be with these. It is with "the *spirit* of the world," its influence, that we are to do battle: it is to be fought against and resisted—the world's disposition, the mind of the world, the motives which actuate the world, the ambitions of the world, the pride of life and the deceitfulness of riches—these things, these wrong views of matters as seen from the worldly standpoint, we are to resist, to fight against;—and it is a daily battle.

Finally, our battle is with the flesh—our own flesh. Ever since sin captured our race, in the person of father Adam, its slavery has been conducive to mental, moral and physical degradation. Its only tendency is towards evil, and that continually, and only as we get rid of the blinding influences, and perverted tastes and desires, ambitions and hopes and loves which sin cultivates—only in that proportion do we get to see matters in their true light, and to have even a faint glimpse of our own degraded condition. But our great Captain, who is also "the chief priest of our profession," redeemed us from this slavery to sin, with his own precious blood. He had compassion upon us, and when we realized our deplorable condition, and accepted his aid he sets us free from the yoke of Sin's slavery.

But we still have the motions of sin in our bodies,—the tendencies toward sin, which have become almost second nature to us, through the long period of nearly six thousand years of slavery. So that while we are now free, and with the mind are serving the law of Christ, and are accepted into his army as soldiers of the cross, to battle for righteousness and truth and goodness and purity, we nevertheless find our new selves harassed by the old perverted tastes and inclinations of our own flesh, toward the service of the old taskmaster. Not the least of our fightings, therefore, as new creatures in Christ Jesus, is against these perverted tendencies of our flesh, and the battle with these is a daily battle. With the Apostle Paul, one of the great soldiers in our war, we should be able to say, "I keep my body [my flesh and its desires] under [in subjection to my new will, my new self] lest after having preached to others I myself should be a castaway."—1 Cor. 9:27.

From the time that we enlist under the banner of our Captain, that is, from the time that we make a full consecration to him, to fight the good fight, and to lay down our lives in his service—from that moment on he, under the terms of the New Covenant, reckons our flesh as dead: because our minds are renewed—alive toward God with a newness of life, and hence those motions of sin which we are seeking to bring into absolute subjection to the will of God in Christ, are not recognized by the Lord as the will or motions of the new creature, enlisted in his service, but merely recognized as a part of the general enemy, Sin, pursuing after and battling with us, which we are pledged to resist and to war against, and which he promises grace and help to overcome.

It is these enemies in our own flesh which cause us the greatest difficulties. It is these that Satan appeals to: these he seeks to encourage in their warfare against the new spirit of our minds; it is through these that the spirit of the world gains closest approach to us, and seeks to capture us, and lead us back as slaves of Sin. So to speak, the "new creature in Christ is beset, surrounded on every hand with enemies, seeking our disaster and enslavement. We must battle—battle for ourselves, battle for our own liberty, battle for victory over our own weaknesses, battle against the spirit of the world, battle against delusions and snares of the adversary, by which he would seek to make the evil things appear good, and right to appear undesirable. No wonder, then, that the Christian soldier is urged to be continually watchful; no wonder that he is urged to "put on the whole armor of God;" no wonder that he is cautioned in respect to his various and wily foes, and especially against those of his own flesh.

Thanks be to God for the great Captain of our salvation. Thanks be to God for the great armory of his Word, from which we obtain the helmet of salvation, the intellectual knowledge to protect us from the delusions of our own perverted sense and ignorance, and from the wiles of the adversary. Thanks be to God also for the breastplate of righteousness, the merit of Christ and his great sacrifice, compensating for our imperfections, and covering our vitals, and securing thereby our life—eternal life. Thanks be to God also for the shield of faith, of trust, of confidence in him who has bought us, in realization that he who has begun the good work in us is able and willing also to complete it; for the realization that since God so loved us while we were yet the slaves of Sin, and redeemed us from his bondage with the precious blood of Christ, much more does he now love us and much more is he prepared to aid us now that we have, by his grace, become free from sin, and become the servant of righteousness. Thanks be to God also for the sandals, the *preparation* to endure hardness patiently, which the truth gives, protecting us for the walks of life from the sharp animosities of the world in our pilgrim journey. Thanks be to God also for the sword of the spirit, the Word of his truth, as a defense by which we can resist the adversary, and come off conquerors through him who loved us and bought us.

BENEFACTORS ALSO—FIGHTING FOR OTHERS.

We have seen that our fighting is on our own behalf, and on behalf of each other. We are fighting to the death in self-defense, to maintain our own liberty, and that of each other. As the Apostle says, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood [death], fighting against Sin"—we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren." And we might add that, while the King does not need our fighting on his behalf, nevertheless we sometimes have great pleasure and profit in defending the honor of his name and the majesty of his righteous government from the assaults of those who wickedly or blindly misrepresent the same. But there is another feature of our warfare aside from all these. To observe this feature with clearness and distinctness, we must take an elevated position and note the entire trend of the conflict now in progress for over eighteen centuries, and the great object which the King himself has declared shall be the result of this battle. It is this:—

Not only we, but the whole world were "sold under Sin" by father Adam—the whole world, as well as we, are slaves of Sin. Not only so, but our great Redeemer who bought us with his precious blood gave it as the propitiation price also "for the sins of the whole world." Thus he bought the right, not only to release us (his Church, his army) but the right also to release from the power of Sin, the great taskmaster, *all* the slaves of Sin. And altho he has not been prosecuting the work of releasing all the slaves at the present time, but has been confining his work to the releasing of a few, a little flock, who are now of his army, nevertheless he informs us that this present election of the little flock is merely with the intention of using these as his associates and joint-heirs in his Kingdom which he will establish at the time he is ready to take his great power and reign, for the utter overthrow of Sin, and the complete release of all from its bondage.

The Apostle Paul, one of the lieutenants under our great Captain, speaks of this coming deliverance of the world, saying, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now [under the relentless slavery of Sin, and its yoke of death], *waiting for* the manifestation of the sons of God. Because the creature itself also [the world of mankind, or as many of them as will accept the liberty] shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption [the bondage of death, with all its incidentals of pain, sorrow and trouble] into the glorious liberty of the children of God [the perfection of life, and all the glorious privileges which belong to the perfect sons of God on every plane—the divine, the angelic, and the human]."—Rom. 8:19, 21, 22.

We see then, that the poor world, groaning in its slavery, has been waiting for this grand event of which the Apostle spoke, saying, "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." The interim between the redemption and the deliverance is only a little while, from the standpoint of divine reckoning, in which a thousand years are as one day; but as yesterday, as a watch in the night. From this standpoint, the nearly nineteen centuries for the selection of the King's Own are but "a little while"—less than two days "with the Lord,"—and soon will be past. Then, glorified with their Master and Captain, they will be liberators with him of the world of mankind, from the yoke of sin and the prison of death. (This period of two days (2000 years) seems to be hinted also in the type of Rebecca's call to be the bride of the typical Isaac, where only two days are mentioned.—Gen. 24.)

What a glorious prospect, what a benevolent ambition is thus set before us in the Gospel, in respect to the future work of all who are now called to be the sons of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and good soldiers in his cause,—the cause of righteousness and truth. O, how anxious we are that we shall be "overcomers," that we may inherit these blessed privileges—secure this great boon of association with our Redeemer in his work of blessing all the families of the earth.

It was respecting this great work of delivering the world from the slavery of Sin, from the weaknesses and imperfections of the fallen nature, and from the prisonhouse of the tomb, that our Master referred, when quoting the prophecy relative to himself, which says, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor [meek, he hath sent me] to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives [of Sin], and recovering of sight to the blind [whose minds the God of this world hath blinded], and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18.) The little work that was done by our Lord at his first advent, in the way of healing the naturally blind and sick and lame, and setting at liberty a few from the prison of death, was merely a foretaste of the greater and grander work which is to be accomplished by him and his glorified soldiers of the cross, at his second advent.

If the physical and temporary releases from sickness and death at our Lord's first advent were grand blessings, how much more grand and how much more blessed will be the "greater works than these," which we, as his glorified Church, in association with him, shall be privileged to perform during the Millennial age. How much greater is the work of opening the eyes of the understanding than of opening the physical eyes; how

much greater the work of healing the lameness of character than of healing the lameness physical; how much grander the giving of an ear to hear the truth and to understand and to appreciate it, than the opening of the natural ear, to natural sounds; how much greater the work of loosing the tongue of the world, to speak forth the praises of him who has delivered them, than of merely loosing the tongue of the dumb to speak of natural things; how much more stupendous the work of giving eternal life to as many of the world of mankind as will accept it under the terms of the New Covenant than was the work of giving for a few years the lives of Lazarus and the son of the widow of Nain, and the daughter of Jairus. O, we praise the Lord for this glorious prospect of being associated with him in these "greater works" of the future, and we see it all comprehended in his statement that "the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth." All the deaf ears of understanding shall be unstopped; they shall hear, in the sense that the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth. And the Master's assurance is, further, that they who hear properly, obediently, shall live—not "live at this poor dying rate," of the present time, but live in the grandly superlative sense of life—in perfection of being, with the power of life eternal, lifted completely out of sin and out of death, back to the fulness and perfection of life which God gave originally, and which was lost in Eden.

NONE BUT FIGHTERS WANTED IN THE LORD'S ARMY.

In the armies of the earth the chances are that many of the soldiers will never see a battle, that the majority of them will never lose a drop of blood; but in our army all this is reversed. All men know at the time of enlistment that they are sure to see service, and that not only in one battle, but in many battles; and that, altho there may be times of special fightings without and within, there never will be a time when there will be such a cessation of hostilities as that we may consider our enemies utterly routed, and ourselves at liberty to retire for repose. Furthermore, we are distinctly informed at the time of enlistment that there is no discharge in this warfare. We may desert, however, and indeed are at liberty to do so, since none are held in bondage in this army.

All who desire to go back to the service of sin, have full opportunity at any time and in any place. Our Captain wants those, and those only, who serve the truth with the spirit of truth; with a desire for the service; with a love for it; all others are in the wrong ranks. The end of our service, we were informed at the time of enlistment, would be the end of the war; and further we were informed that the end of the war, so far as we were concerned, would mean faithfulness until death. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Only by death can we finish our course, and only by faithfulness to the last can we be acceptable as amongst the conquerors—the overcomers.

There are many other battles than ours in progress; and many different army corps fighting on every hand; but ours is different from them all. We may be interested in some of these battles more than in others. Some of them may appeal to us much more closely than others, as being along lines considerably in harmony with the "good fight" which we are waging, and to that extent we may heartily sympathize with them; but we can do no more than this: because our covenant, our engagement, our battle, is the most important

of all, and to it we have covenanted our every moment and our every talent. For instance, we may sympathize with those who are fighting against alcohol, and in favor of temperance; we may sympathize with others who are fighting for a general social uplift for the civilized world; we may sympathize with those who are laying down their lives for a social uplift in heathen lands, as missionaries; we may sympathize with those who are risking their lives in the cause of liberty from oppression, as in the war in Cuba.

But while our sympathies must always be on the side of everything which is making toward righteousness, goodness, truth, purity—everything either closely or remotely related to our cause of righteousness, we cannot turn aside to render aid to these other warfares. Ours is the most important, ours is the battle which the Lord God Almighty has planned, and which the Lord Jesus, as his Captain General, is carrying forward and will soon bring to glorious success; and which will secure better results, better conditions, than the various battlers for temperance and order and liberty have ever dreamed of.

But we are to beware of certain deceptions which our great Adversary brings forward, by which he would seduce us and get us into the *wrong army*: appearing as an angel of light, as a servant of righteousness, as a fighter in the Lord's cause. He has organized numerous false army corps, into which he endeavors to attract all who learn something of the liberty of Christ and desire to become soldiers of the cross. In order to make the matter more seductive and deceptive, the Adversary carefully guards against any intimation of his relationship with these. Indeed, he puts forward as leaders and under-officers in these various armies as many of the soldiers of the cross as he can get into a thoroughly deluded condition, in order that these armies may be the more attractive to those who are seeking the Lord's service. These armies are not as select as the Lord's army, and they offer very many inducements to soldiers, and attract very many who are really servants of the adversary; because they promise great rewards and little or no fighting, and a generally pleasant social camp life. These conditions of enlistment seem so much more favorable than those which the Lord holds out, and on the whole these army corps are so large, so fine and so attractive, that many soldiers of the cross make the mistake of enlisting under wrong banners.

The banner of the King's Own is emblazoned with a cross and a crown, and on the reverse side the names of the King and the Captain, and the law of this army, briefly comprehended in one word, "Love." The other deceptive corps, which are not the King's Own, but which contain many who deludedly think that they are in the King's battalion, have various banners, with various names; and their soldiers are generally enlisted under false conceptions of the object of the warfare, as well as respecting the results of it. They are advised that by joining this army they will get to heaven and escape a hell of eternal torment. And the results of the warfare are represented in one of two lights—either that the whole number who will get to heaven will be very small, and the whole number who will go to eternal torment immensely large; or that few of the intelligent will get to heaven, and the majority of the intelligent go to eternal torment, while many of the ignorant and savages will go to heaven, and few of them to eternal torment.

Under these untrue representations these armies are immense in numbers, containing many who have comparatively little interest in righteousness or in the King's cause, but great interest in endeavoring to escape the awful reward which is represented as attaching to a neglect to enlist in these armies. And, be it noted, that these various armies are greatly in accord with each other: while maintaining a certain amount of rivalry, they nevertheless maintain a large degree of fellowship; because their hopes and aims are practically one. But for similar reasons they are greatly out of harmony with the King's Own. Its hopes, its aims, its methods, its banner, and everything pertaining to it, differ so radically from theirs that they cannot fellowship the soldiers of our army, and in order to keep the *best* of their soldiers from deserting and going to it, they are prone to say all manner of evil against the Lord's army, falsely; to misrepresent its hopes, aims, ambitions and efforts, even calling it the devil's army.

It is not difficult to recognize these large numerous armies, organized under the supervision of the great Adversary. Their names are prominent upon their banners in every direction; and their soldiers are taught that the chief battling is to battle for their respective armies and their claims and names. The banner over one of these is Presbyterianism, over another Methodism, over another Roman Catholicism, over another Lutheranism, etc., etc. The Lord's army is a "little flock," while these armies boast their millions. The Lord's statement respecting his army is that "not many great, not many wise, not many learned, hath he chosen, but the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the Kingdom." These other armies all boast to the contrary, of how much wealth they have accumulated; of how wise they are; of how learned; of how rich their people; of how influential in the world's affairs. There is so wide a difference along all these lines, that it is remarkable that any who desire to find the "King's Own" should be deceived. Yet, the King himself acknowledges, that some of those who are truly his, and who desire to be found in his army are in these counterfeit armies, which he calls "Babylon." He therefore calls to them, saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Nor is it sufficient that we should have the right spirit of loyalty to righteousness, and opposition to sin, in ourselves and everywhere: it is proper that our warfare against sin should be carried on in a systematic and intelligent manner. To this end it behooves every soldier of the cross to remember that he is not the director of the fight, not the commander, but is to fight strictly according to the directions of the Captain. Many, getting the idea that they are simply to fight against Sin, battle wildly and at random, and accomplish little. The Apostle spoke against this sort of thing, when he said, "So fight I; not as one that beateth the air." Beating the air, either with our fists or with our tongues, our words, is of very little avail. Our energies are to be directed of the Lord along the lines which he has marked out, and not along the lines of our own unwisdom and choice. It is one of the Apostle's admonitions to us that we should be "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." We should hear the Lord's direction as to the place to put in our best efforts for the fight, and according to his direction this can best be done, not in fighting others, not in stirring up strife, not in words of anger and passion, but in fighting such a disposition in ourselves, in conquering our natural tendencies, in mortifying the flesh, with its affections and its desires, and its combativeness, and in cultivating in our

own hearts the "meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great value."—1 Pet. 3:4.

We are to fight the good fight in the putting away and utterly routing from our own hearts and dispositions "all anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, bitterness—all works of the flesh and of the devil—"perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord;" and to help all our fellow-soldiers to do the same. And we are to lift high the royal banner of our Lord, bearing his name and his law, and not a banner of our own, or of some other men's device. And we are to help to lift up this standard of the Lord in the sight of all those who are sincerely desiring to be his, and who through mistake have gotten into the wrong army corps. We are to be valiant in seeking to release them from the delusions of the great enemy, who is thus seeking to reensnare them and to deprive them of the liberty wherewith Christ made them free; and to bring them under a yoke of sectarian bondage, as being next best, for his purposes, to the yoke of sin and gross superstition. Thus doing we are not beating the air; we are not merely hammering pulpit tops nor shouting ourselves hoarse on street corners to no avail; but, like the Apostle, we are seeking to be crafty, that we may thus bring the truth to the attention of those whom our crafty enemy, Satan, seeks to ensnare. Our craftiness will be with a view to their liberty, while his craftiness is with a view to their enslavement. It is along this line that our Master has counseled his soldiers, "Be ye wise as serpents, harmless as doves."

A FIGHT OF FAITH.

Our text calls this good fight a fight of *faith*, and very properly; it is a fight of faith in every respect.

(1) It is a fight under an *unseen* leader, and against an *unseen* foe: only by the eye of faith do we recognize the Captain of our salvation, and only by his Word do we recognize the wily leader who opposes us.

(2) Sin is recognized by our moral sense; likewise righteousness. By faith we accept the Word of God, and under the instructions of that Word we learn that certain courses of thought and word and deed are right in his sight, according to his standard, and that other courses of thought, word and action are therefore wrong; henceforth we accept these conclusions by *faith* in the Word,—the revelation which God has given us.

(3) We fight for a liberty and a glory of the verity of which we have no knowledge, except as we accept it by *faith*.

(4) God hath promised exceeding great and precious things to them that love him—that so love him as to lay down their lives in his service. We see the crown of life and we see the Lord of glory, and with the *eye of faith*, and not otherwise.

(5) The things that are seen with the natural eye, are seeking to influence us to the contrary of our course, seeking to influence us not to lay down our lives, not to cultivate the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, love; but on the contrary, to cultivate the

spirit of selfishness, ambition, pride and greed, the spirit of the world. Only, therefore, as we are able to have the faith which God inspires shall we be able to fight the good fight.

In this view of matters we see how important an item faith is. If we have it not, we can never come off conquerors. And faith means some knowledge upon which faith may rest, some promises out of which faith may be constructed. These we have in the great and wonderful divine revelation. It follows, therefore, that it is not enough for us to enlist in the Lord's army; but it is needful that we should go to his armory—the Word—and there painstakingly put on the whole armor which he has provided. And whoever does not follow this course is not following the course directed of the Captain, and will be sure to fail in the battle. We are not, however, to think of the armor as being all that is necessary. True, the doctrinal truths respecting the various features of the divine plan and the divine will concerning us are necessary, are absolutely essential to our victory: but the putting on of the armor is not all, and does not secure victory. It is necessary that with the armor on we should fight, along the lines which we have just examined, even unto death. Let us, therefore, not make either the mistake of attempting to fight without the armor, nor the equally serious mistake of putting on the armor and neglecting to fight.

Our Captain in encouraging us to have faith in him, and in his promises of succor, assuring us that he will not leave us nor forsake us; that he will be with us in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake us; and that he is abundantly able and willing to make all things work together for good to them that love God—the called ones according to his purpose. He declares, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Beloved, let us make sure of these things:—

(1) That we have enlisted—that we have fully consecrated ourselves to obey the Captain of our salvation.

(2) That we are seeking to obey his instructions, and to put on the armor which he has supplied.

(3) That we are fighting—resisting unto blood, striving against sin in all its various forms.

(4) That we are so loyal to the Lord and to all that are his, wherever they may be, that we are willing and ready "to lay down our lives for the brethren"—to assist them, to encourage them, to help them, in little acts of service as well as in larger matters.

(5) That we remember that there can be no victory except as we keep the faith—our trust in the Lord as our Redeemer, in his care over us, and in his willingness to help us, and in his ability to help. Thus, and thus only, shall we come off conquerors and more than conquerors through him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood; to whom, with God our Father, be praise and thanksgiving everlasting.

"Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord!"—1 Cor. 15:57.

APRIL 1

Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation—Mark 14:38.

What may be the character of the temptations, we may not clearly discern until they are upon us; for if we knew all about them in advance, they would be but slight temptations. Watch, therefore, and pray always; for the only safe way is to be prepared; because your adversary, the devil, is seeking whom he may devour. He knows your weak points, and is ready to take advantage of them. We shall each need the graces of the Spirit in our hearts, as well as the Lord's "grace to help in time of need," if we would overcome.

*My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise,
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize.*

—Z '03, 119 (R 3178)

As long as we are in the flesh, temptations beset us on all sides. These will be powerless to allure us, if we heed the admonition, "watch and pray." Scrutinizing our dispositions, thoughts, motives, words, doings, surroundings and the influences operating upon us, in the light of the Word, will manifest the real nature of these suggestions; and heartfelt reliance on the power of God to deliver us, expressed in petitions for help in the name of Christ, will secure grace whereby a way of escape will be found—P '20, 32.

Parallel passages: Ex. 23:13; 34:12; Deut. 4:9; Psa. 119:9; Prov. 4:23-26; Matt. 26:38-46; Acts 20:28-30; 1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:18; Matt. 6:5-13; 7:7, 8; Luke 11:11-13; 18:1; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:8; Heb. 4:16.

Hymns: 13, 130, 136, 183, 35, 71, 239.

Poems of Dawn, 109: *My Prayer*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 311 (R 5331).

Questions: What have my experiences this week been along the lines of the text? What helped or hindered me therein? What were the results?

MY PRAYER

BEING perplexed, I say,
Lord, make it right!
Night is as day to Thee,
Darkness is light.
I am afraid to touch
Things that involve so much.
My trembling hand may shake,
Mine unskilled hand may break;

Thine can make no mistake.

Being in doubt, I say,
Lord, make it plain!
Which is the true, safe way,
Which would be vain?
I am not wise to know,
Nor sure of foot to go;
My poor eyes cannot see
What is so clear to Thee—
Lord, make it clear to me.

R5331: TEST OF THE APOSTLES AND ITS LESSON

"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."—Mark 14:38.

WE RECOGNIZE these as words spoken by the Master in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night in which He was betrayed. They were addressed especially, and with much force, to the eleven Apostles who were with Him, and more particularly to the three whom He had called apart to be a little nearer to Him, as He went a little further on in the Garden to pray. The Master seemed to realize that wonderful events were to take place that night. But the Apostles did not grasp the situation. Their ears were dull of hearing. They were not without *loyalty*—it was not a matter of *indifference* with them, but they did not *comprehend*.

We are to remember that at this time the Apostles were not begotten of the Holy Spirit, and could not, therefore, so fully watch with the Lord and pray with Him as if they had been spiritually enlightened. Jesus had told them that He would be crucified, but they had taken this statement as one of His dark sayings. They had heard very many of the parables which He had given to the people, which they were not able to understand. He had told them that when the Holy Spirit should come it would guide them into all Truth and show them things to come.

Amongst those dark sayings Jesus had told them that He was the Bread that come down from Heaven. This they did not understand, nor how He was like unto the Manna of olden times; neither did they understand how the eating of this Bread would give them life. These things had been so mysterious that they could not accept them, and, as a result, many of those once interested fell away from Him. They said, How *could* the whole world eat His flesh or drink His blood?—it is ridiculous! So they walked no more with Him. But the Apostles and a few hundred brethren continued to have faith in Him. They said, There is some deep meaning in His words, and some hidden reason for His strange course; perhaps, as Jesus says, we shall in time understand. We see so many evidences that He is the Son of God that we must not stumble over these things. Thus they continued to believe in Him, and to hold these obscure statements in abeyance in their minds.

IMPULSIVE PETER'S MISTAKE

So, when Jesus told them that the Son of Man must go up to Jerusalem, and that the Jews would crucify Him, and that the third day He would rise again from the dead, they could not understand. He had already intimated that all the glorious promises referring to Messiah were applicable to Him. How, then, *could* He be crucified? Accordingly Peter began to upbraid Him, saying, What strange things you speak! It shall not thus be done unto Thee. But Jesus said unto him, "Get thee behind Me, adversary; thou art an offense unto Me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."—Matt. 16:23.

Peter, of course, recognized the rebuke and knew that he had made a mistake. He had thought that some evil might happen to the Master, but no such thing as that He would be *crucified*. A few days before a multitude of people had cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" (Matt. 21:9.) There were a million or more Jews in Jerusalem who had hailed Him as King. Therefore the Apostles thought that the chief priests would not *dare* to do anything against Him. And now they had partaken of the Passover Supper, and Jesus had said to them that He desired to eat the Passover with them before He should suffer. Peter had declared that, though all should deny him, yet would he never deny his Master. Evidently Peter said to himself, What would there be to make me deny Him? I could not think of doing such a thing!

The disciples had thought that everything was propitious—so much so that Jesus found them disputing amongst themselves as to who would be the greatest in the Kingdom. And they had been so engrossed with these things they were discussing that they could not think of washing each other's feet. Then the Master and the Apostles had walked across the brook Kidron and to the Mt. of Olives. After they had entered the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus took Peter and James and John with Him and said, "Tarry ye here, while I go and pray yonder." Then He had returned to them, and finding them asleep had said, "Watch, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." But they could not think of any temptation into which they *could* enter in that peaceful spot.

TRIAL AND VICTORY IN GETHSEMANE

Jesus had agonizing experiences in the Garden. He was fearful lest in some way He might have violated the Law. He feared lest He had made some mistake and had not come up to the standard—the full requirements of the Father, in respect to the new life which He had begun. In such case His whole human life would be a failure, not for Himself only, but for the world of mankind whom He had come into the world to save from sin and death. After the Lord had passed through His trial-experiences in the Garden, God sent Him special help. An angel came and ministered unto Him. We do not know the nature of this help; but if we can read between the lines, the angel gave Him the assurance that He had fulfilled His part—He had rendered *full obedience* to the Father's will.

Just as soon as Jesus received this assurance, He became very calm. If He had the *Father's* favor, the *Father's* blessing, He could pass through *any experience*, no matter what it might be! Then he returned to His disciples intimating that He had gotten the victory. He was no longer in trouble. He *had* said, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." But *now* confidence had come, in the assurance God had given Him. No longer would it be necessary to watch and pray, so far as He was concerned.

RESISTING TEMPTATION AUGMENTS STRENGTH

We note that to the disciples this exhortation was specially needful at that time. With such peculiar trials and testings before them, if they had been watching and praying to God for wisdom and grace, lest they should *fall* in their temptations—*enter into* them—they would have had help to resist them. They would have fallen into temptation the same, but they would not have *entered* into it. Temptations may be presented to us many times a day, and when they come we may be deceived and misled. But a temptation *resisted* makes us so much the *stronger* to resist the next. And so the Apostle James says that we are to "count it all joy when we fall *into* divers temptations." (James 1:2.) But no one could count a *temptation* a *joy* if, when it should come upon him, he would *fall* in it—*enter into* it.

St. Peter could never look back without regret to the moment when he denied his Master. If he had been watching and praying for guidance, he would have come off conqueror when Jesus was arraigned before the tribunal; he would not have thought of denying his Lord. He would have been stronger when the temptation came, and would have said, No, I will never deny the Lord! I will cast in my lot with Him! Afterward he might have said, I tell you, brethren, it was a *tight place!* But I am rejoicing that I fell into that temptation and was yet able to come off conqueror in that terrible hour!

But Satan was desiring to have him, to sift him out, as it were. If, after he had denied the Lord, Peter had said, I will not back down now, I will give the Lord up entirely, and pass right out! then he would indeed have lost *everything*. But, although he was caught in the temptation, he ultimately gained the victory. It was cock-crowing time, and Peter, hearing the cock crow, said to himself, There, that is just what Jesus said—that before the cock should crow I would deny Him thrice. So St. Peter went out and wept bitterly; and, after he had it out with God in tears and prayers, he started again in the good way. And so *our* entering into temptation may not mean our utter rout. But the more we *resist* temptation, not allowing it to overcome us, the stronger characters we will become.

TEXT NOW APPLICABLE IN A SPECIAL SENSE

The experiences of the disciples in connection with this text have been, in the broad sense of the word, applicable to all of God's people throughout this Gospel Age, but they are particularly so today. Now is the time for the Church to be specially on the alert, to be attentive, to fortify themselves against the wiles of the world, the flesh and the Adversary. As the poet Longfellow has expressed it,

"Be not like dumb, driven cattle;
Be a hero in the strife!"

We might be in the Lord's army and yet be *like* driven cattle. But we are to be intelligent. The Lord has given us an understanding of His Plan. In this we have at the present time an advantage over the Apostles, for they had not yet seen the great Divine Plan of the Ages and the significance of the sufferings of the Church. We have much advantage in this way. Jesus had explained to them about Himself: "Thus it behooveth the Son of Man to suffer and to enter into His glory." And He had opened the Scriptures to them as far as they were able to understand, and had indicated the *necessity* of His suffering. Still they could not clearly understand. But we have an advantage in that we know what the Lord's Plan is; and so the words of our Lord are more forceful in their application to *us* than to the early Church.

Let us be watchful, active, alert, and co-labor with God and with the Lord Jesus Christ. We are to consider the offer made to us—the great High calling—the most wonderful thing ever known in all creation! We shall never have another opportunity of showing God and our Lord Jesus our zeal for righteousness and our earnestness of spirit. The present opportunity is a special one. God has made it possible for all of us, who are in harmony with Him, to grow in grace and in knowledge, and thus to be more intelligent in our service. And we are to pray in harmony with that intelligence.

What may be the character of the temptations which shall come upon us, we may not clearly discern in advance; for if we knew all about them beforehand, they would be but slight temptations and easily overcome. Watch, therefore, and pray always. The only safe way is to be *always prepared*; for our Adversary, the Devil, is seeking whom he may devour. He knows our weak points better even than we do, and is ever ready to take advantage of them. Each of us needs the Spirit of the Lord in his heart, as well as His "grace to help in time of need," if we would be overcomers. Our daily exhortation to self should be,

"My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of Sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize."

APRIL 2

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith—Gal. 6:10.

The Christian is to be ready to do good at the expense of his own time and convenience to all men, but he is to be ready to lay down his life for the brethren—he is to seek opportunities for laying down his life day after day, in the sense of giving his time to the communication of the Truth, or helping the Lord's brethren in any manner, to put on the whole armor of God, and to stand in the evil day—Z '03, 121 (R 3180).

Opportunities for well-doing present themselves on every hand. They should be seized and utilized at first sight, even as the miner seizes the diamond or ruby at first sight. God's children should develop a positive Christianity, seeking to do good to anyone and to all. Our well-doing should be regulated by a sound mind, which will direct us to serve the brethren especially, but not to the exclusion of others, on the principle of our Lord's words, "This ought ye to do, and not to leave the other undone"—P '36, 48.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Thes. 3:13; 2 Cor. 4:1; Heb. 10:36; Eccles.3:12; 9:10; Matt. 5:43, 44; John 9:4; 12:35; Psa.37:3, 27; Mark 3:4; Luke 6:35; 1 Thes.5:15; 1 Tim. 6:17, 18; Titus 2:14; 3:8.

Hymns: 309, 70, 116, 210, 267, 275, 280.

Poems of Dawn, 169: *Go Labor On*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 357 (R 5357).

Questions: Have I this week used opportunities for doing good? To whom? What were the circumstances? What was helpful or hindersome? What were the results?

GO, LABOR ON

GO, labor on; spend and be spent,—
Thy joy to do thy Father's will;
It is the way the Master went;
Should not the servant tread it still?

Go, labor on; 'tis not for naught;
Thine earthly loss is heavenly gain;
Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee not;
The Master praises—what are men?

Go, labor on; enough, while here,
If He shall praise thee—if He design
Thy willing heart to mark and cheer;
No toil for Him shall be in vain.

Men sit in darkness at thy side,
Without a hope beyond the tomb;
Take up the torch and wave it wide,
The torch that lights the thickest gloom.

Go, labor on; thy hands are weak,
Thy knees are faint, thy soul cast down,
Yet falter not; the prize we seek,
Is near—a Kingdom and a crown!

R5357: LITTLE WAYS OF DOING GOOD TO OTHERS

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the Household of Faith."—Gal. 6:10.

THE Apostle's exhortation here is very comprehensive—to *do good* without limitation, whether it be in word or deed. Some can be more benefited by words than by any other service we could render them. One of the great needs of the world is *more knowledge*. And if any one can dispel the darkness of this ignorance and let in light, he will surely do great good. The implied thought of the Apostle, however, seems to be that the principles of right and wrong—good and evil—are to be discerned by the Lord's people. From our standpoint we should recognize what would be a good work and what would be an evil work. Many are not able to discern between what is good and what is evil. Those who do evil are, with very few exceptions, in more or less ignorance and blindness.

Saul of Tarsus, for instance, was doing an evil work when he was persecuting the Church. But he did not realize this. Hence, the best service to Saul of Tarsus, or any one else under like conditions, would be to open the eyes of his understanding.

SOME GOOD WORKS ENUMERATED

Clothing the needy, feeding the hungry, taking care of the imbecile, are all good works—doing good to the world of mankind. As we look out into the world, we see many efforts being made to do good. Some of these efforts are wisely directed, and some unwisely. But we are not commissioned to set the world straight. We are not to interfere with anybody. Others have a right to their judgment, as we have a right to ours. But if any one were doing an *evil* work, thinking it to be a good work, we would be quite right to endeavor to stop him, using such means as might seem appropriate and wise—the law, or our own words, or the words of others. But even here we are to take heed lest we should be busybodying in other men's matters.

If we were to further enumerate some of the good works which ought to be done, we would say, to care for the blind, to organize or put into operation a method by which they

might be enabled to read, or to get happiness; to care for the deaf and dumb would also be a very good work. As for slum work, we would not have much sympathy with a good deal of this, as reported. We should, however, be very much in sympathy with everything that aims for good—physical good, mental good, social good, good of any kind. There are, besides the foregoing, good arrangements provided for the sick, the incurable; such as hospitals, sanitariums, etc.

All who love their fellow men and have sympathy for those in distress should be in sympathy with efforts for the betterment of their condition, and neither manifest nor feel opposition to them. No child of God could feel in sympathy with anything *evil*. God is the Representative of everything that is *good*. Satan is the representative of everything that is evil and injurious. If we would be children of God we must be out of harmony with everything not in line with His original provision for man, and out of harmony with everything that is in support of Satan.

Some of the efforts along the line of social uplift are not at all bad. Their promoters may be working in an illogical way, a way that we feel sure is not in harmony with the Bible way; but nevertheless we have sympathy with the Socialists. They are trying to do *good*. But we have no sympathy with those who are trying to do *evil*, injury. We have faith in God—that He purposes to bring about a great change shortly; but we believe that no efforts of humanity can bring about this change. Then there is a way of doing good along intellectual lines, the lines of instruction. It is a good thing to teach children how to sew, how to cook, how to learn the mechanical arts that will make them useful. Our public school teachers are doing a good work, as they give instruction to the youth, and especially if they give the right understanding in regard to that which they teach, that which is in harmony with God's Word—the proper instruction.

SPECIAL WORK OF THE LORD'S PEOPLE

But there is a higher work than all these. And we are to give our life and time to this, which we see is the most valuable of all. This is the instruction given for all who have the ear to hear, respecting the Almighty, His will, His purposes, His plan; for these are associated with every affair of life. This instruction, to those who receive it, becomes the best aid to proper thinking, proper living, proper acting, for this is *God's* way. And this way becomes the way of all who are consecrated to do His will, to walk in Jesus' footsteps.

As, therefore, we come more and more in harmony with God's Plan, we perceive that no other work could be so grand as to make known to others God's character, God's Plan and God's will concerning us. As this has brought great blessing and sanctification to us, we should have the desire to take the Good Tidings to others, refreshing them as we have been refreshed, comforting them as we have been comforted.

In doing this work we resort to every lawful means. And this is called in the Scriptures, preaching the Gospel—whether it is done by the printed page or orally or by pictorial representations, it is proclaiming the Gospel—that which will do the most good

to all mankind. We labor under one difficulty in this respect; namely, that the world is not able to appreciate the Good Tidings, Satan having blinded their eyes, so that they cannot see the philosophy of God's Plan—it does not seem reasonable to them. Those in this condition are trying, as it were, to *look around* a corner, instead of *coming to* the corner and getting the right angle of vision. But whether people believe it or not, we believe preaching the Gospel to be the *Lord's* work and therefore the best. This does not hinder us, however, from having sympathy with others who are doing what they consider to be the best work, so long as the result is good. We should be in sympathy with everything that is in harmony with the Truth—in sympathy with everything the influence of which is beneficial to mankind.

So then the Apostle is calling to our minds in a general way the opportunity of doing good to all men. But some may require assistance which we cannot give. For instance, we could not give up preaching the Gospel and go into the slum work, for the slum work is not preaching the Gospel. A godly physician might, however, in connection with his practise do good, not only along lines physical and mental, but also along spiritual lines. So we have opportunities every day with the butcher, the baker, the ice man, etc., all of whom are fellow creatures; for God made all mankind of one blood. As the Apostle enjoins, we should seek to do them good, seek to make them better, happier, more comfortable.

KIND WORDS AND SMILES POTENT FOR GOOD

It might be argued that in order to do good most widely, one's efforts should be associated with using money for the purpose. It is true that money represents an accumulation of time. It takes time to produce money; therefore whoever gives a dollar to any cause, gives what represents so much time; whoever donates one thousand dollars gives that which represents so much time, for the money will purchase time, comforts, etc. But not many of the Lord's people have much money to use. And if they had much money, they would feel that this is a talent, and that it should be used chiefly for the Household of Faith, for the Lord's brethren.

Since, then, we cannot do much in a material way for men as we meet them in the walks of life, day by day, how can we do them good? One of the easiest ways is to look happy ourselves and thus inspire happiness in others. A person who goes about looking miserable is not likely to make others feel happy. But if we cannot always look *very* happy, let us look as happy as we can, and thus we will be doing good to a great many people whom we meet throughout the day. This we can do even if we have no money with which to help others. Look happy, and try thus to make *them* happy. And secondly, if we have no money, we can give a kind word, a smile, a pleasant tone, a little civility, wherever proper.

All such little courtesies of life are means of doing good, and may bring a ray of sunshine into the lives of a great many people, the majority of whom are unfavorably situated. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God does not yet shine into their hearts. They are dark within, gloomy, foreboding, fearful. They know not God! and what

they know of their fellow men is a knowledge of selfishness. They feel that they must be on their guard lest every one cheat them and get the better of them. Now, if our look, our manner, our tone, would be helpful, comforting, assuring, to these, then we would be doing them good—more good than if we should scatter dollar bills all along our pathway. "Kind words shall never die"; and the expressions that go with them are some of the ways of doing good unto all men as we have opportunity.

We have a *special* work and therefore have not the opportunity to walk the streets and smile all the time. Our life-work is for the great King. But as we go about our work, we should drop a smile or a kind word—something along the line of doing "good unto *all* men." Our work is to be especially for the Household of Faith in the sense that while we may be doing missionary work, and going among those who are *not* of the Household of Faith, yet our motive in doing thus is the hope that there may be some of these who are already of the Faith Household, or some who will be amenable to the Message, and will wish to serve the Lord when they learn the way. And if we would desire to do good to them, how much more would we wish to encourage those who belong to the Lord, who have become members of His spiritual family!

THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH

These words—Household of Faith—are broad enough to include not only those who are fully in the way, but also those who have made more or less of an approach unto the Lord and the Truth. The very fact that any one is drawing near to the antitypical Tabernacle is a strong reason why we should wish to encourage him to press on. He has come a part of the way, even if he has not made a consecration.

In a strict sense, the Household of Faith, of course, includes only those who are consecrated. But the words of the Apostle justify us in believing that those who are considering the matter, counting the cost, would in a broad sense be counted as of the Household of Faith. And we are to give these special assistance—all in whom we see any prospect of consecration. Our constant desire and effort should be to point men directly or indirectly to the Lord. Thus we shall be showing "forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light."

We are to do these things as we have opportunity. This would include the thought of times and seasons and ways and means of doing good. So far as we are concerned we are to "be instant in season, out of season." We are not to consider our own inclinations, tastes, etc., but we would be obliged to consider the interests of others. A husband must specially regard the interests of his wife, and the wife the interests of her husband and children.

SPIRIT OF A SOUND MIND NECESSARY

We should be willing to serve anybody in any way as we have opportunity. And if there are many opportunities for service, we must choose between them, exercising the spirit of a sound mind, as to which would be the will of the Lord for us. The Lord's

people should so order their lives as to get the best results—get the most good possible out of them. In choosing a means of livelihood, if there is a choice of five trades, one would study as to which would be the most lucrative, which would be the cleanest, which the most honorable, which require the most labor, etc. This would be from the *natural* standpoint. But from the Divine standpoint, the *Christian's* standpoint, the decisive question would be, In which of these avocations can I best serve the Lord? And this would mean, In which can I find the best opportunity for carrying out the good intentions of my heart as to the Lord's will respecting me?

If we have made some mistake in this respect and the Lord opens wide the door for us to enter in elsewhere, or if He makes our present place so tight that we cannot stay there, then let us arrange our affairs accordingly, in such a manner that we may have the most opportunities for doing "good unto all, especially to the Household of Faith."

There are some occupations which take us away from men, where we would have less opportunity of meeting people. No doubt it was the Lord's arrangement that Moses for a time should be away off in the land of Midian, keeping sheep for his father-in-law, Jethro. But as soon as the Lord was ready, He called Moses out and gave him a place of great opportunity and responsibility. No doubt that work in the wilderness was a place of great opportunity also; and doubtless before that, while in the schools of Egypt, he had great opportunity for learning lessons of experience.

So the Lord's people are to watch for their opportunities. And day by day they are to seek, so far as possible, to be doing good to others, and especially to those of the Lord's Household—giving these always the preference.

The Christian is to be ready to do good to all men at the expense of his own time and convenience, but he is to be ready to *lay down his life for the brethren*. He is to seek opportunities for laying down his life day after day, in the sense of giving his time to the communication of the Truth, or helping the Lord's brethren in any manner to put on the "whole armor of God," that they may *stand* in the evil day.

"The world would be a desolate place,
But for one here and there,
Whose heart with self hath not been filled,
Whose love for God hath not been killed,
Whose thankful praise hath not been stilled—
There's one such here and there.

"But oh! the grandeur of the work,
For this one here and there,
To join in lifting up our race,
To wipe away of sin each trace,
To make of earth a perfect place,
Put glory everywhere!"

APRIL 3

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light—Rom. 13:12.

The works of darkness would be any works whatever that would not stand the fullest investigation, that would not stand approval in the light of the new dispensation, if it were fully ushered in. Let us remember that we belong to the new dispensation, and not to the old, and should, therefore, live in accordance with our citizenship and our responsibility toward the Prince of Light and in opposition to the prince of darkness, his works and his ways—Z '03, 122 (R 3181).

The night of Satan's dark reign over the earth is almost ended. The day of Christ's joyous reign is at hand. As God's people we should cast off any and every work or quality imbued with the Adversary's spirit, and arm ourselves with every truth and grace of the Lord's Spirit. Thus our citizenship in the Kingdom of God will be properly attested, and our patriotism will be splendidly manifested, and that to the Divine pleasing—P '30, 31.

Parallel passages: Gen. 6:5, 11; 8:21; Psa. 51:5; Prov. 20:9; Eccles. 7:20; Isa. 1:5, 6; 51:1; 64:6; Jer. 17:9; Matt. 7:17; 15:19; John 3:19; Rom. 1:21-32; 3:9-19, 23; 6:6, 19, 20; Gal. 5:17, 19-21; Eph. 4:17-22; 5:11; Col. 3:8; Eph. 6:12-18; 1 Thes. 5:8; John 3:21; 15:2-8; 2 Cor. 9:8; Gal. 6:4, 7-9.

Hymns: 192, 266, 82, 130, 13, 200, 272.

Poems of Dawn, 241: *The Field of Battle*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 280 (R 5768).

Questions: Have I this week put off evil and put on good? How? What helped or hindered? With what results?

THE FIELD OF BATTLE

To grasp the two-edged sword, and forward rush
upon the foe,
To hear the Captain's cry, to see the flash of answer-
ing eyes,
To feel the throbbing hearts of battling comrades in
the ranks,—
That rapturous inspiration know, of warring for the
Right,
The holy joy of following Him who points and
leads the way!

Ah! yes, 'tis glorious *thus* to fight the goodly fight,
and yet,
Methinks, beyond the firing line, beneath those snowy

tents,
A fiercer conflict rages night and day, where trembling
hands,
Wan lips and fever-lighted eyes do battle with a host
Of deadly foes,—grim giants, Doubt and Disappoint-
ment, fierce
Despair,—before whose fiery darts the bravest well
might quail!

They *also* hear the call, and hoarsely cry, "*Lord,*
here am I!"
They strive to reach their swords, to struggle to their
feet, but back
In helpless agony of weakness on their pallets fall,
With brain afire, and reason tottering on its throne,
their tears
Of anguish flow! Sometimes the noise of battle
sweeps beyond
The range of those poor, straining ears, and then the
spectre Fear
Stalks through the room, and lays an icy hand upon
each heart:
The awful thought, *Our captain hath forsaken and*
forgot,
Our comrades forge ahead, they leave us here alone
to die!

But no! the Lord of Battles is most merciful, He
sends
A swift-winged messenger: "Yea, though a mother
may forget
Her sucking child, *yet will I not forget!*" Then,
like the calm
That cometh after storm, sweet peace and quiet reign
within
Those troubled breasts, and so He giveth His beloved
sleep.

Ah! then, true-hearted comrades in the forefront of
the fight,
Remember that *the wounded* to God's *army still*
belong,
And send betimes to them a white-winged messenger
of cheer.
Oh, give Love's roses *now*, nor keep them for the
coffin's lid,

(A single flower is sweeter far than thousands by
and by);
Take time to speak a tender word, to shed a pitying
tear,
Or breathe, at least, a prayer throughout the watches
of the night,
And thus prove *more than conquerors* through the
power of *deathless love!*

R5768: APOSTOLIC INJUNCTION NEVER SO SIGNIFICANT

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."—Romans 13:12.

FROM a careful study of Bible chronology it seems very evident that each of the six great Days in which Jehovah prepared the earth for man, ending with man's own creation, was a period of seven thousand years. After man was created, God "rested from all His work"—as related to the earth. His rest period began with the commencement of the great Seventh Day, and has continued ever since. This Seventh Day is also to be a period of seven thousand years, ushering in at its close the glorious Jubilee of Earth, 49,000 years after the beginning of the ordering of Earth.

This great Rest Day of Jehovah has been man's Work Week, each Day of which has been a thousand years long. When the Apostle Paul wrote the words of our text, more than four of these thousand-year Days were in the past; they were then in the Fifth Day. Practically all of this time had been a reign of sin, darkness and death, due to man's fall. So St. Paul could truly say, as he looked back, that this great night of darkness was then far spent and the day was at hand. From the Old Testament prophecies and from the wonderful revelations which he himself had received from the Lord he was assured that, through the sacrifice for man which had been made by the Lord Jesus Christ, a glorious Day of emancipation from the bondage of Sin and Death was to come—the Seventh Day of man's great Week. It is of this glorious Sabbath Day that the Apostle here speaks.

For one-half of the long period since the fall of our first parents, there had been but a very obscure light as regarded any deliverance of man from the curse of death pronounced upon the father of the race for his disobedience. There was the mere glimmer of a promise that God would at some future time do something for mankind. First there had been a declaration to the serpent who had brought about man's downfall, that the Seed of the woman should bruise, or crush, his *head*, while he would but bruise the *heel* of this Seed. Then the clothing by the Lord of the nakedness of Adam and Eve with the skins of slain animals suggested a future covering provided by the death of some unknown Redeemer—the Seed of the Woman. Later, God manifested His acceptance of the animal-sacrifice of Abel. A little later came a suggestion to Enoch (Jude 14-16), and still later, a promise to Abraham, that God would yet bless all the families of the earth through his Seed.

Then came a gradual working out of a feature of that Promise to Abraham, through the Hebrew people, to make of them, if they would prove worthy, a nation who would be light-bearers to all other nations and peoples. Still with all the disciplinary experiences which Israel received, when our Lord Jesus came, those who had been under such special Divine instruction were, as a nation, totally unready to receive Him as the Messiah of God. And they crucified Him. Yet they were in advance of other nations. God had not given instructions to other nations, but had given Prophets, Laws, etc., to the people of Israel. (Amos 3:2.) But while this especially favored nation was quite unready for the light, as represented in the Lord Jesus and His teachings, there were some among them who were ready to receive Him as the Sent of God, Israel's long-looked-for Messiah. These were the "Israelites indeed."

THE CALL OF THE "BRIDE" CLASS

"He came unto His own [nation], and His own received Him not." At the time of the crucifixion of Christ, after John the Baptist had done his work and after our Lord's three and a half years of ministry among them, only a little more than five hundred had become Jesus' disciples and had remained true. Yet at Pentecost and onward a considerable number were awakened, and came into the light of Truth and accepted the Gospel Message and received the Holy Spirit. About twenty-five thousand, so far as we are able to estimate, received this transformation of heart. It is a wonderful thing that so many of that little nation were found to accept Messiah! No other nation would have made so good a showing. As history has proven, more than 1800 years have been required to select the remainder of the 144,000 Elect from among the Gentiles.

At that time the Message was given forth that the Gospel Call was designed to select a "Bride" class, to be associated with the Messiah in His glorious Kingdom. *It was not designed for all*, but only for those who had the ears to hear and the heart to respond. If we place ourselves back in the days of the Apostles, we can think of them as preparing themselves for their great, coming glory and as thinking that the foreordained number to constitute this honored company would soon be completed. They probably thought that these thousands gathered from all the Jews in Palestine and other countries, and especially when augmented by some from the Gentiles whom they perceived were later received, would make up the "little flock" which would compose the "Bride" of Christ. Hence the Apostles were continually speaking as if the Kingdom was at hand. They thought it imminent—were expecting it every day.

NO CLEAR CHRONOLOGY UNTIL OUR DAY

But the Apostle Paul pointed out that certain Scriptures had not yet been fulfilled, and that there must be a great falling away in the Church before the great Day of the Lord could come. The early Church probably had no particular method in which they could have reckoned definitely the number of years since Adam. The matter of counting years, as we have it, is comparatively a modern affair. In olden times each nation had its own chronology. They merely reckoned that it was so many years since this dynasty or that

dynasty began; so many years from a certain notable event to the first year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, of Cyrus, etc.

And so with the Israelites. They would say, In such a year of the reign of David, or of Hezekiah, etc., such and such an event took place. But it was not easy to get these things connected up so as to have any accurate chain of chronology. There were certain broken links, which our Lord has since supplied for us in the New Testament, to be noted and connected up "in due time." Today we have more advantage every way than they had. The Hebrew Scriptures were written on parchment and kept in certain places. And it was difficult to handle them because they were written on great rolls. One had to roll the parchment this way and that way to get to the place where he wished to read certain prophecies, etc. Today, not only have we Bibles neatly printed, but many of them have convenient marks of reference by which we can turn from page to page. We have suggestions, also, as to chronology which enable us to get a clear, connected chain from the creation of Adam to the present year.

It is true also that the Jews have a chronology that is called Anno Mundi—the year of the world. But it was not arranged until long after the days of the Apostles. They thought it was a long, long way back to the time of Adam. The Apostle Peter declares that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Jews had no means by which they could accurately reckon chronology from the beginning; no means for availing themselves of information on the subject. It is not surprising, then, that they were not clearly informed. The Lord, undoubtedly by design, left matters in this uncertain condition until His own "due time" for their revelation.

THE DAY OF CHRIST NOW ON HAND

In the days of the Apostles it was truly declared by them that the Day of the Lord was "at hand." The Apostles perceived that a great Light had come into the world, that a turning-point in the history of the world had arrived. But it was not the shining of the Sunlight of the great Millennial Day. St. Paul declared that the darkness still covered the earth and gross darkness the people. The Lord Jesus Himself had explained that the light that then shone from Him was not the great "Sun of Righteousness," which would later shine out upon the whole world. Neither did the disciples of Christ shed a light as the light of the sun upon the world of mankind. Our Lord told His disciples that they should put their light upon a candlestick, that it might give light to those in the House.—Matthew 5:14-16.

But it would require the light of the "Sun of Righteousness" to enlighten the whole world—Christ and His Church in glory. Our Lord pointed out that this would come at the conclusion of the Age then just begun—the Gospel Age, as it is generally called, the Christian Dispensation. At the beginning of this Age He sowed the seed which would produce the "Bride" class, the class which was to reign with Him over the world in the Age to follow. But He forewarned that the enemy, Satan, would sow the seeds of error in the Lord's wheat-field, and that he would be successful in producing a large crop of tares. Our Lord also declared that at the end of this Gospel Age He would Himself be present

and would, as the great Chief Reaper, gather the tares in bundles to be burned, and would gather the wheat into the garner. Speaking of that time the Master says, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."—Matthew 13:43.

That time has not yet fully come. But this glorious Day is now breaking. The majority of the members of Christ are now with their Lord on the other side of the veil, and the dawning light is increasing, and the Day will soon be here in all its glorious effulgence. This dawning light draws our attention more particularly to the chronology, and helps us to see mistakes that were made in the past by those who attempted to arrange a chronology before the time was ripe for it to be seen clearly. It shows us that a mistake of a hundred and twenty years was made, and still later lesser mistakes.

Tracing the Scriptural chronology down to our day, we find that we are now living in the very dawn of the great Seventh Day of man's great Week. This is abundantly corroborated by the events now taking place about us on every hand. The Millennial Age has already begun, the Day of the Lord is now on hand—now present. So we should not sleep, but should be wide awake. Some terrible things were to occur as the Day of Christ drew on, before the full shining forth of the Sun. For instance, this present mighty war, which is truly a terrible thing, was long ago foretold. (Jeremiah 25:15-38; Joel 3:2, 9-16.) Daily is it increasing in volume and intensity, and will soon merge into revolution, to be swiftly followed by the chaos of anarchy. The great Adversary is able to put darkness for light—and these warring nations verily think they are doing God service by killing one another.

Now the question is, Will the United States become involved? This may come, or this country may receive its share of retribution in the coming revolution and anarchy. We attribute all this terrible condition to the darkness that is upon the world through the Adversary's blinding delusions. But God will overrule human affairs to His own glory and to the ultimate good of man in the overthrow of the Rule of Selfishness and the establishment of His glorious Kingdom of Righteousness and Love.

"Cast off the works of darkness," urges the Apostle. This injunction was appropriate in St. Paul's day. Those who saw Jesus to be the Light of the world, those who became enlightened with His Light, and themselves became burning and shining lights, were able to realize that the great darkness prevailing around them was largely the result of ignorance, superstition, misunderstanding. The whole heathen world were in gross darkness. The Jewish nation were in darkness, except the minority who received the light. What darkness were the Jews in? They were in darkness in respect to God's Plan and the meaning of the Promise to Abraham and his Seed respecting the blessing of the world.

"THE WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN THE WICKED ONE"

All those who became children of the light, who received the light from the Master's teachings or from His chosen Apostles and came into Covenant relationship with God through the begetting of the Holy Spirit, became members of the special Seed of Abraham, who are to bless the world during the incoming Age. But the nation of Israel

was set aside, as respects the chief favor. In the year 70 A.D., their national polity was entirely destroyed, and the Jews were scattered far and wide. What was the condition of other nations at that time? We perceive that while Israel had been in darkness, the other nations were in still deeper darkness, though many of them were "feeling after God, if haply they might find Him." The god of this world has blinded the minds of those who see not. Consequently he has blinded the minds of the majority of all nations with ignorance, superstition and "doctrines of devils."

The Devil has men in such a condition that they cannot think of God as being *good*. "The whole world lieth in the Wicked One." The only ones who are not in the Wicked One are the true Church of God, the Church of Christ. The children of the light are the only exceptions. It is from the Word of God that His true people get their light. They are to have oil in themselves—the oil of the Holy Spirit. But many of these have not been faithful to the light and are in confusion; some are merely babes in Christ; some are weak in various ways for lack of the spiritual food which the Lord has provided.

It is God's people who have been addressed in the Scriptures all the way down these nineteen hundred years. We come down to our day and see that the light of the Word is fully corroborated by the work of the New Dispensation now beginning. The light of the Dawn is fully corroborating the Bible. St. Paul says that we should "cast off the works of darkness" and "put on the armor of light." The works of darkness are those things which are done in the dark. The works of darkness are the works of sin. These works are not done out in the open, as a rule. They generally hide away from the revealment which the light brings. If they are done in the open, it is when they are posing as works of light. Wherever the true light of Jesus Christ comes it reproves these works of darkness.

The Scribes and the Pharisees of Jesus' day were money-lovers. Jesus condemned their works because these were mere pretense. While they prayed in street corners, etc., they privately devoured widows' houses—took advantage of widows and swallowed up their property. But it was true of the public in general—of the Gentiles as well as the Jews. The Apostles enumerated a number of the evils that were generally practised in his day—adultery, lasciviousness, covetousness, witchcraft, hatred, wrath, strife, heresies, evil-speaking, idolatry, etc. All these things are works of darkness, works of the flesh and of the Devil; and they are still practised everywhere today.

THE ARMOR OVER THE ROBE

We are to put on the "armor of light." Consider the light you have now received—the light of the knowledge of God, of His will, of what to live for, and of what kind of characters they are to whom the Lord will be pleased to grant the reward of eternal life, even the highest form of life. Having all this knowledge, put it on as an armor to protect you. Knowing what God requires, put all this on, not as a robe, but as an armor over the robe. Put on the breastplate of righteousness covering the heart. Realize that nothing but heart-purity and absolute loyalty to God may be considered. Realize that God is *for* us. Take the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and all the various pieces enumerated by

the Apostle. These constitute the "armor of light," so called because it is obtained from the light of Truth.

In this our day it is surely as important that we should put on this armor and should put off the works of darkness as for the Church of the Apostle's day. Surely if ever the whole armor was needed, it is needed now. The Lord's dealing with us is individual—both as to the putting off of the works of darkness and as to the putting on of the armor of light. All who put on this armor will find themselves in accord with the Lord and with those who are truly His. As God's faithful children get farther and farther into this Day of the Lord, more and more will they see eye to eye. We believe there never was a time when so many of the Lord's people have seen eye to eye regarding the things to put off and the things to put on. We believe there never was a time when so many of the children of the light were wearing the whole Armor of Light. Therefore we have so much the more responsibility to "walk as children of light" and not as of the night.

DANGER TO EVEN THE FULLY CONSECRATED

It is possible that some, even of the fully consecrated children of God, surrounded with the cares of this life, or weary of the struggle against sin and evil, or somewhat beguiled by the present things of time and sense, may have become more or less drowsy, and so stand in special need of the stirring exhortation which the Apostle in this connection gives to the Church—particularly appropriate today: "It is now high time to awake out of sleep!" It is time for earnest, searching self-examination, for a more diligent watching to see that we do not allow the things of this "present evil world" to absorb our thoughts and energies to the imperiling of our Heavenly hopes, so soon to be realized if we remain wholly faithful to the end. It is highly important that we seek for a still closer walk with God, a more intimate fellowship with Him, a more thorough self-abnegation, a more diligent cross-bearing, a more faithful conformity in every respect to the whole will of the Lord concerning us. And this will of the Lord, we know, is not unreasonable, and His grace sufficient is promised for every day, every hour, every moment!

A careful, prayerful searching of our hearts will make plain wherein we lack in conformity to the perfect will of God. And if we discover in ourselves any perverse way, we shall correct it. Thus we more and more "put on the Lord Jesus Christ"—the mind or disposition of Christ, the spirit of love and loyalty which characterized Him. How important it is, in the very short time which yet remains to us, that we fully awake and apply ourselves most diligently to the cultivation of the Godlike, Christlike disposition of Love, the love which seeks above all else the glory of God, which is kindly-affectioned toward the brethren, which rests in the precious promises, which trusts fully in the dark as well as in the light, and which has no shadow of doubt that all the good things promised in God's Word shall be fulfilled!

LET US "WALK AS BECOMETH SAINTS"

In the context St. Paul urges, "Let us walk honestly, as in the day." He was speaking of certain vile practises then common—drunkenness, rioting, chambering, wantonness. We

are not necessarily to suppose that he meant this as a reproof to the Christian believers at Rome, but as a pastoral exhortation that they should be on guard against these sins, and as a reminder that the principles which they had adopted as Christians were in direct contrast to those which generally prevailed. Very different standards of morality were current among the heathen. Quite a large number of the believers at Rome had been heathen and accustomed to immoralities. Hence the Apostle's words were words of caution; for we would not suppose that *saints* would be guilty of these things.

The Apostle's words above shed a warning light in saying, "Let us walk honestly, as in the day." Most of the rioting and drunkenness is done at night—such is the custom even to this day. Works of darkness and sin thrive best at night, for some reason. People have other things to attend to in the day-time, and evil-doers take the night for frivolity or carousing or crime. Vice then stalks abroad. Darkness seems to favor such works, by hiding them more or less. The Apostle points out that this is the great night of darkness, sin, but that those in Christ are not in darkness; for they have been brought into the light of God. We are looking for the full dawning of the Morning of the New Dispensation—we are seeking to live in harmony with it. So here he says, Let us walk honestly, above-board, so that everybody will see and know our lives—let us be honest in every way, not be preaching one thing and practising another.

Considering the day here mentioned to be the Millennial Day, we may well say that nothing in the nature of sin will then be allowed. "For out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Micah 4:2.) "Judgment also will I lay to the line," says Jehovah, "and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the water shall overflow the hiding-place." (Isaiah 28:17.) Whoever in that Day shall attempt to live riotously and in drunkenness or in any sin will be promptly punished. The Apostle's exhortation is that we, as saints of the Lord, should live as those will be living when the Day shall have fully come—when the Sun of Righteousness will be shedding its beams over the whole earth.

It is a part of our overcoming to live as though the Day were fully ushered in, as though everything had been fully *manifested*. Whoever will take the Apostle's advice in this matter will certainly have a rich blessing. In fact any other course would be sure to be disastrous to us as New Creatures in Christ!

ONLY A LITTLE WHILE

"Only a little while to walk with weary feet,
Only a little while the storms of life to meet,
Only a little while to tread the thorny way,
Only a little while, then comes the perfect Day.

"Only a little while to spread the truth abroad.
Only a little while to testify for God,
Only a little while, the time is fleeting fast,
Only a little while, earth's sorrows all are past.

"Only a little while, then let us do our best,
Only a little while, then comes the promised rest.
Only a little while, oh, what a word is this!
Only a little while, then comes the perfect bliss."

APRIL 4

Let us walk honestly, as in the day—Rom. 13:13.

Each one should see to it that he is honest, not only in matters of dollars and cents, but honest in his treatment of his neighbors, in his treatment of the brethren, and above all, honest in his confessions respecting his God and his faith. The test is being made along this line, and those who love the favor of men rather than the favor of God, and who dishonestly are willing to confess and profess a lie, will be given up to their lie, will be permitted to blight their eternal interests, will be proving themselves unfit for the Kingdom—whatever else they may ultimately become fit for—Z '03, 122 (R 3181).

God's people should live aboveboard. Their conduct should be a living expression and illustration of justice. With uprightness of heart should they give to all their dues. So should their conduct be, that at any time, and at all times, if seen by others, it should cause them no shame. They should walk honestly, as in the Millennial day, and as though seen by God and by all men—P '35, 61.

Parallel passages: Phil. 4:8; Col. 1:12, 13; Cant. 2:7, 17; 1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 22:5; 1 Pet. 2:12; 2 Pet. 3:11, 12; 2 Cor. 6:7; Eph. 6:13-18; 1 Pet. 4:7, 8; 1 Thes. 5:4-8; John 9:4.

Hymns: 164, 307, 13, 192, 114, 277, 58.

Poems of Dawn, 118: *Thy Will Be Done*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 287 (R 5097).

Questions: Have I this week walked as though in the Kingdom? Under what circumstances? What was helpful or hindering therein? What resulted therefrom?

THY WILL BE DONE

MY Lord, Thy will not mine be done:
Whatever path Thy love shall choose for me,
Through desert sands, or if beside the sea,—
Thy will be done!

Oh, may Thy will in me be done:
Should "harvest" labor be for me Thy will,
Or if I may but suffer and be still,—
Thy will be done!

My Father, let Thy will be done:
If *sweet* the cup Thou pourest for me to drink,
I'll praise Thee, but if *bitter*, I'll not shrink,—
Thy will be done!

Forever may Thy will be done:
I would not choose, I leave it all with Thee,—
The pilgrimage, if short or long it be,—
Thy will be done!

R5097: RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying."—Romans 13:12, 13.

THE SCRIPTURES call attention to the fact that there is a night of weeping in contrast with a day of joy. (Psa. 30:5.) The "night" is that period of darkness which set in after Adam fell. By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as the result of sin. (Romans 5:12, 19.) Evil has brought sorrow and the darkness of ignorance and superstition among mankind until human affairs have become demoralized. As the Prophet Isaiah says, "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."—Isa. 60:2.

There is however a morning promised. That morning is to be ushered in by the Sun of Righteousness, rising with healing in His beams. (Mal. 4:2.) That Sun of Righteousness is Christ and the Church with Him. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43)—Christ as the Head and the Church, which is His Body.

Another Scripture speaks of the present as daytime: "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." (John 9:4.) While for many centuries there has been a period of darkness, nevertheless since the First Advent of our Lord the glorious light of Truth has had more effect upon the world than at any previous time; for with the coming of our Lord Jesus a blessing came upon the world. At that time so much light came in, that the Gospel Age may be called *day* in contrast with previous experiences. This day, in turn, gave place to a long period known as the Dark Ages. Then, since the Reformation, a measure of light came in again, through certain influences which have brought blessings to the Lord's people. Now it is time for the Sun of Righteousness to rise with healing in His beams.

"THE MORNING COMETH"

We believe that the day is actually at hand; that we are living in the early dawn of a New Dispensation, and that as soon as the Harvest of the Gospel Age shall have been garnered, "the kingdoms of this world" shall, during a great time of trouble, "become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."—Rev. 11:15.

The Scriptures inform us that the period of time during which the present dominion of Satan shall become the Kingdom of God's dear Son, will be a specially evil day. It will be a season in which all the children of light shall be crucially tested; a day that will try every man's faith and work; a day of fiery trial through which only "the gold, the silver and the precious stones" will pass unharmed and in which all the "wood, hay and stubble" of error, sin and human tradition will be entirely consumed.—I Cor. 3:12, 13; I Pet. 4:12.

"AND ALSO THE NIGHT"

While we observe the glorious dawn of the New Dispensation, we notice clouds also. The Bible forewarns us that before the Kingdom of Heaven shall have been set up fully there will be a very dark hour for the world—a period in which sin will have great liberty in its operation, and during which the saints of God will suffer persecution. At the same time we can see the reflection from the "Sun," although it has not yet arisen; we are now in the early dawn. But the coming darkness will make matters appear as though the morning will not come, as though the night had again set in, as though the Divine recognition of all things had ceased.

There is, however, a silver lining to the clouds. Soon the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His beams. The Church in glory with her Lord will put down sin, will dispel the superstition and evil which now becloud the minds of men and will give clear light to the people respecting God and His Word. "I will turn a pure language [Message] to the people, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent." (Zeph. 3:9.) The Message was originally given in its purity, but this freedom from adulteration it did not retain. It has been more or less obscured by ignorance and superstition. When through Messiah's Kingdom the Lord shall make His Message pure and plain to mankind, then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. Those who refuse, however, to develop *heart-loyalty* to the Kingdom shall die the Second Death.—Isa. 45:23; Acts 3:23.

While the day has not yet come, there are those who Scripturally are called children of the light (I Thess. 5:5), and who do not belong to the realm of sin. We who are of this class have laid down our lives in consecration for the purpose of becoming servants of righteousness. We are in harmony with God and are enemies of sin. We have been begotten of the Holy Spirit to the new nature and are promised joint-heirship with our Lord in the future. Let us, then, who are of the day, cast off superstition and ignorance—the works of darkness—and put on the armor of light.—Rom. 13:12.

ARISE AND SHINE IN LIGHT ETERNAL

What, then, is the Christian's duty throughout this period of darkness? Shall we live in sin while our hearts are in harmony with righteousness? The Apostle says we must not live in sin. (Rom. 6:15.) Let us put off everything which we think will be displeasing to the Lord, everything that is contrary to the light of the New Day—the light which we have seen, but which the world has not seen. Let us put on the full "armor of light," the "whole armor of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day." And putting it on

let us remember that it is not a useless *weight*, but a necessary *protection* in *battle*.—
Rom. 13:12; Eph. 6:13.

No man ever puts on *armor* unless he expects to *fight*. If he is a soldier of the Cross, the "Sword of the Spirit" is the great weapon with which he will prove his loyalty and strength. The brethren should build each other up in the most holy faith, fighting the good fight and showing their loyalty to the Lord and to the Truth. (Jude 20; I Tim. 6:12.) Those who succumb to the influences of darkness show themselves unworthy of the new order of things, and they may not expect to be sharers with Christ in His Kingdom, but to be amongst those rejected of the Lord as unworthy.

Let us remember that we are well along in *the hour of temptation* which was promised to come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. (Rev. 3:10.) Higher Criticism, Evolution, Christian Science, Hypnotism, New Thought, Mind Cures and other works of darkness are casting a deep shadow over all who are not fully consecrated to the Lord and who therefore are not kept by His power, through His Word and His providences.

"WALK HONESTLY AS IN THE DAY"

While we are not yet fully in the Day, yet we belong to the New Dispensation, and therefore should live as nearly as possible in accordance with the *perfect standard* of the future. So to live will imply that we shall be misunderstood by the world; that we shall be thought foolish; and that we shall be considered enemies, not only by those in gross darkness, but particularly by those who, professing to be the Lord's people, really prefer darkness to light, error to truth.

We are inclined to lay special stress upon the word *honestly*, for we believe that the Apostle used it advisedly and in a special sense. As we look about us we find that dishonesty is very prevalent, not only in the world, where we expect a certain amount of duplicity, misrepresentation, deception and hypocrisy, but even among professing Christians.

Every true child of God should see to it that he is honest, not only in money matters, but in his treatment of his neighbors and his brethren in the Church, and above all, in his confessions respecting his faith. The test is being made along this line, and those who love the favor of men rather than the favor of God will be given opportunity to prove that they are unfit for the Kingdom, whatever else they may be fit for. The Apostle tells us (2 Thess. 2:11) when speaking of this evil day, that God will send strong delusions that a certain class may believe a lie, because they were not honest, but acted deceptively, hypocritically.

HONESTY THE BASIS OF CHARACTER

Probably the most valuable trait of character is *honesty*. Where there is little honesty, there is little character; where there is great honesty, there is great character. We mean

not merely honesty as to dollars and cents, pounds and shillings, but as to the very thoughts and intents of our hearts, as well as to our words.

We should always endeavor to do to others as we would that they should do to us, and not to retaliate. At the First Advent the principal charge which our Lord made against the religious teachers of His day was that they made great professions of holiness, when, as a matter of fact, they were not holy. He said that they devoured widows' houses—not that they literally ate the houses, but that they tried to get possession of the property because of the more or less defenseless position of widows. At that time widows and orphans were not protected as in our day. Consequently they fell an easy prey to the greed of those whose professions of godliness should have protected the weak and helpless.

Probably our Lord would denounce a great deal of the wisdom of today as He did of that day. But we have not the ability to read the heart and therefore cannot speak as positively as He did. In respect to the great ministers of today, however, we readily see that some of them hold their positions under false pretenses. They profess to receive their salaries as ministers of Christ, when they do not believe in the Bible at all. Some of them have written to us that they are in great trouble; that, realizing their position, they would like to get out of it, but they cannot easily get another position as desirable as their present one; and so they are dishonest enough to keep their charges.

The Apostle says, "Let us walk honestly." Let us take our proper stand for the Truth. While we should always speak the Truth in love, whether to our enemies or to our friends, while we should always have consideration for the opinion of others, yet we should take our stand firmly. We doubt that the Lord would care to take into the Kingdom any who are not honest. We fear, therefore, that those who have high positions are "deceiving and being deceived." (2 Tim. 3:13.) There is such a thing as deceiving one's self by repeating a sentiment until one believes it.

The lesson to us is that, however others may walk, we must see to it that we "walk honestly as in the day" (Rom. 13:13), as though we were living in the broad daylight, so that if the world understood all about any transaction of ours they would realize that we are honest—even as the Lord understands all about it. Any other course is dangerous and is not "walking as in the day."—John 11:9.

QUALITIES INJURIOUS TO THE BODY OF CHRIST

The translators of the Bible seemed to forget that the Epistles were written "to the saints" (see dedication of the various Epistles), and not to the world; hence when mentioning certain sins they used English words which are applicable to the crimes of the most depraved class of people, instead of using such language as would properly represent the misdemeanors that might be expected amongst saints. In urging the Lord's people to avoid chambering and wantonness, etc., we are not to understand the Apostle to mean the wickedness practised by the most depraved and benighted of the children of the world. Rather, we understand him to address the words to saints, urging them to

continence in their social relations, that the thoughts of the Kingdom should lift their minds to a large extent from the earthly affections.

By the general rules of language St. Paul would not *begin* his argument with the grosser sins and end with the less, but reversely he would *conclude* with the stronger, as evidently he does in enumerating the list of sins given in verse 13 of our text. Here he concludes with the exhortation that the saints, in walking as in the day, should avoid *strife* and *envy*. The other difficulties would be comparatively their own affair and might do no injury to others. But strife and envy are two qualities that indicate a wrong condition of heart on the part of the transgressor that would eventually bar him from the Kingdom.

Be it noted carefully that the various dispositions mentioned in verse 13—rioting, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, strife and envy—result from being intoxicated with the spirit of the world. Carelessness of life in any of the earthly affairs, and lack of self-restraint in the connubial relationship are very liable to go hand in hand with a wrong spirit in the Church—a spirit of strife, contention, wilfulness, not submitting to the Divine Word and providence, but on the contrary, arousing jealousy and ambition on behalf of self or others, for prominence in the Body.

SOBRIETY COMMENDABLE

We yield to none in our opposition to intoxicating beverages and in abhorrence of the terrible results which they entail. No saint should ever be intoxicated. The Word of God says that no drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of God. (I Cor. 6:10.) The Scriptures do not say that a moderate use of liquor brings woe, sorrow, redness of eyes, etc., and we are not to add to their words. But we do well to remember that "They that tarry long at the wine" probably reached that condition through *habit*, and that most of such began the use of liquor with the intention of becoming moderate drinkers only.—Prov. 23:30.

Beware of the slavery of habit! Even the force of the "exceeding great and precious promises" is not sufficient to hold in check our fallen appetites when they are constantly being fed and the chains of habit are being forged. Surely the new nature cannot thrive under conditions which deprave even the old nature! Let every New Creature resist faithfully the seductive influences of evil, if he would make his calling and election sure to the Kingdom.

There is a marked contrast between the spirit and sentiment of the world and that of a true Christian. With the world there is a general tendency to indulge at times in a little revelry, and with many of them there is a decided inclination toward drunkenness. Even among the abstemious there is a feeling that an occasional drink is not only permissible, but quite necessary.

The Christian, however, has set before him the high standard of a sound mind, with meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love. The more a Christian possesses the spirit of righteousness, the Holy Spirit, the more he realizes that he has passed from

darkness into light. The Divine standard is to be his viewpoint always. Instead of looking forward to revelry, he is rather to turn away with regret that any such conditions prevail among mankind. The world considers the use of liquor to be proper if not too frequently indulged in. The Christian, on the contrary, considers drunkenness and revelry to be improper and to be resisted so far as he and his influence are concerned.

The Christian is to display increasingly the spirit of true holiness. The Apostle says, "Let your moderation be known of all men." (Phil. 4:5.) The very promises made to us in the Scriptures tend to make us sober. Our God is most gracious!

"What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Hence anything that might lead our steps away from the spirit of holiness is to be regarded as something pernicious, for it might cost us Divine favor, our eternal life and a share in the Kingdom.

The world, on the contrary, have no such incentive to influence them. It is their custom to indulge in just as much revelry as would not be too seriously disapproved by society. Banquets are given for the very purpose of having a so-called "good time." When worldly people get together there is a general tendency to revelry and a certain amount of looseness. All this has a demoralizing effect upon society.

THE TRUTH A RESTRAINING INFLUENCE

The Christian has a restraining influence which is unknown to the world. Not only does he wish to have the approval of his neighbors, but more than all he desires the still higher standard of Divine approval; for he is on trial before the Lord Himself as to his manner of life. Hence, with him there is a principle to help him to shun rioting, drunkenness, reveling or similar conditions. The Apostle Paul admonishes the Christian to make straight paths for his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. (Heb. 12:13.) For instance, if a man have an appetite for liquor, he should avoid everything that would tend to arouse that appetite. Thus he would make "straight paths for his feet," that he might walk pleasing to the Lord.

The Lord does not deal with His people along the lines of commands. In His Word He sets the standard of a sound mind, not only in respect to revelry and the use of liquor, but to all manner of conduct. Those who love Him will strive to attain that standard. Whether therefore we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we should do all to the glory of God. (I Cor. 10:31.) But we find that Christians called out from the world need to learn and to develop true character. At *first* they think nothing of what *subsequently* they would consider grievous error. As the Christian grows in knowledge and in love toward his fellow-men, he learns to measure things more carefully by the Divine standard. So we find that those who have been Christians for a long time show good judgment in respect to everything in life. They use the spirit of a sound mind, which is the most desirable thing in the world.—2 Tim. 1:7.

The Christian has before him high standards and the hope of the high reward of association with Christ in the Kingdom. We are glad to note that with the centuries there has developed a tendency toward morality and all the good things of life. And although there is much corruption below the surface of society, yet there is something which keeps that surface comparatively smooth, whatever may be below it.

When we compare civilization with heathendom, we do not find much more evidence of self-control in the former than in the latter. The heathen live as have their ancestors for centuries, with very little rioting and drunkenness of any kind. In a journey around the world we saw only two intoxicated men, except in what we call civilized, or Christian lands. The vast majority of heathen are temperate. Mohammedanism has done a great deal for mankind in respect to temperance. So has Buddhism. In one city we met a Christian brother who told us that he was a *temperance* missionary. When questioned as to his mission, he replied, "Oh, amongst those who accept Christianity there is much more need for temperance work than amongst others! I am spending my life in this way."

PLAIN LIVING AND HIGH THINKING

In all parts of the world it is customary to use liquor in the so-called "upper strata" of society. At hotels abroad nearly every person at the table is supplied with liquor. On the steamers the use of liquor is so customary that to ask for water is enough to create a sensation among the waiters. We are greatly blessed in America in that alcoholic beverages are held in disapprobation, although a great deal is used here in social circles. Liquor is justly regarded with opprobrium, for it is doing a great deal of harm and should be frowned down.

Christians are not to walk in reveling, nor in drunkenness, nor in rioting, but are to live on a high intellectual and moral plane. We are not to take pleasure merely in the animal appetites—in food, drink, etc.—but we are to live the higher life from our knowledge of God and His Plan and of all things that pertain to our welfare. This course should include also a sanity and sobriety of mind in regard to religious matters.

The great "harlot" pictured in the Revelation (17:4, 5), has in her hand a cup, in which there is the wine of false doctrine, intoxicating the people who drink it. This drunkenness is upon all; but we are gradually emerging from its intoxicating effects. The hobgoblins that we saw when we were under its influence are disappearing, and sanity is returning to us. Now we have more pleasure in the Lord, more of the spirit of a sound mind. The Lord's people should be moderate, not only in respect to the temporal food and drink, but also the spiritual. Whoever finds it wise to be careful in the one, finds it best to be careful in the other. Whatever doctrine is not based upon the Word of God is to be rejected. "To the Law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isa. 8:20.

WORLDLY WISDOM NOT LIGHT

From the Divine standpoint there are two great principles in operation—right and wrong, light and darkness. All the children of God, so far as they have received the Holy Spirit of begetting, are children of light. The world's condition is not that of light, but of darkness. (Eph. 5:8; I Thess. 5:5.) There are different shades of darkness, however. The Scriptures declare that "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people"; "The darkness hateth the light"; "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own"; "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."—Isa. 60:2; John 15:19; Matt. 5:16.

Neither the philosophies of men nor their moral sentiments are light. The true light cometh down from above; and only those who are begotten of the Spirit of the Lord have that light. To these, old things have passed away and all things have become new. (2 Cor. 5:17.) The elements of darkness that reign in our mortal bodies are to be discouraged and to be expelled therefrom. The clause, "If the light that is in thee become darkness," refers only to the Church class and means, If the light of the Holy Spirit of our begetting become extinguished, how great will be that darkness!—Matt. 6:23.

When the Apostle says, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30), he evidently is warning us against losing the light that has illumined us—the Spirit of our adoption. The caution, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit," implies that it will not leave suddenly without being grieved. We can readily see that little things may be the entering wedge in the displacement of the Spirit.

SELFISHNESS LEADS INTO DARKNESS

"Love is the fulfilling of the Law." (Rom. 13:10.) We who are in Christ Jesus have the righteousness of the Law fulfilled in us, because we are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. 8:4.) The fulfilment of the Law is love supreme for God and love for our neighbor as for ourselves. Everything in the nature of selfishness tends to displace love. Selfishness in its various forms is the work of the Devil. Selfish ambitions have a distracting influence and in time will remove us from the Lord. The Apostle mentions as branches coming out of this root of selfishness, anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife—all of which are works of the flesh and the Devil, in contrast to the fruits of the Spirit, which are meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, and love.—Gal. 5:22, 23.

To whatever extent those begotten of the Holy Spirit as dear children of God allow that Spirit to be displaced in their hearts by an evil spirit, to that extent darkness comes in. A little anger dispossesses a proportionate amount of love; a little envy, jealousy or contention is very injurious. Love cannot dwell where strife is found. Whoever, therefore, having received the Spirit of the Lord, allows a wrong spirit of the flesh to return and to displace the Spirit of the New Creature, will in that proportion go into darkness.

This darkness will not only cause the person to become more quarrelsome in disposition, but will affect him also in respect to his spiritual vision. As the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit gives him a better knowledge of the deep things of God, so, in proportion as this Spirit is lost, the knowledge of the deep things will vanish, until there

will be gross darkness. The individual will then be in the same condition as the world in respect to spiritual things. No matter what he once knew and saw, he will not henceforth be able to understand these things; for "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him."—reverence Him. (Psa. 25:14.) To whatever extent we lose the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of love, loyalty and obedience, to that extent we lose its illumination.

The Apostle Paul speaks of the "Mystery," which is explained as the peculiar relationship existing between Christ and the Church. (Eph. 3:3-6.) No one can appreciate this Mystery unless he is begotten of the Holy Spirit. If one loses the Spirit of his begetting and goes into darkness, how great is that darkness! He loses all knowledge of that Mystery.—Matt. 6:23.

Perhaps all have noticed that we may sit in a room dimly lighted and not particularly heed the darkness. But if we go to an adjoining room which is brilliantly lighted, and then re-enter the dimly lighted room, it will seem darker than when we left it. For a time at least we cannot see anything. The eye must become accustomed to darkness gradually. So it is with those who receive the light of Truth and afterwards lose it. They seem to go into grosser darkness than before they had the light.

CHRISTIAN STANDARD VERY HIGH

In the heathen world there is gross darkness. With every step of civilization comes a clearer view of the difference between right and wrong, and a general progress toward the right. Sometimes we find people in the world who have not been begotten of the Holy Spirit and who, not having the light in them, are still in darkness, but who try to regulate their conduct by certain principles. They say, "This is right and that is wrong. We will do this, but not that." They make rules of righteousness for themselves, although they are not willing to live up to the drastic laws which the Lord has established as His standard. They say, "We will do what the majority of people think is right." These people form a moral code of their own, based upon what others think. They have no standard other than public opinion. Wherever they go they practise what the majority of their neighbors think to be right.

But the Christian takes the extreme view which God sets before him—full consecration unto death. He is considered an extremist, a fanatic, by the world who hate his course and think it foolish. They say, "You Christians raise the standard too high. We are willing to live up to the standard of the majority in our community, but not to yours. You have such peculiar views."

The Lord's people gauge their views, not by what others think, but by what the Word of God teaches. They say, "To my Lord I must be true." To everything else they decline to conform. Thus they are led by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Love, which actuates them. But if this Spirit be extinguished, a mind once under its control will be in a worse condition than that of a worldly mind; for the latter, not having the special direction of the Lord's Spirit, has for its standard the opinion of others. The Lord's people have lost the fear of man, and if they lose also the mind of the Lord, they have no fixed

principle to govern their course. Then their natural disposition will assert itself; and the light in them having become darkness, "how great is that darkness!"

St. Paul tells us (Heb. 6:4-6), that "It is impossible ... to renew again to repentance" any who are wilful sinners against full light and knowledge. These have committed the "sin unto death"—the Second Death—from which there will be no recovery.—I John 5:16.

Let us then, while rejoicing in Divine favor, see to it that we act circumspectly. Our walk in life is not to be "after the flesh," which leads more or less directly to death, but "after the Spirit," which leads to everlasting life with our Great Redeemer. "This is the will of God, even *your* sanctification."—I Thess. 4:3.

APRIL 5

My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches—Psa. 63:5, 6.

Prayer is not a privilege merely, but also a necessity—commanded as indispensable to our Christian growth. Whoever loses the desire to thank and worship and commune with the Father of mercies, may rest assured that he is losing the very spirit of sonship, and should promptly seek and remove the barrier—the world, the flesh or the devil. Every additional evidence of the Lord's confidence in us by the revealing to us of His character and Plan, so far from diminishing our worship and prayers, should multiply them. If our hearts are good soil, they will bring forth the more abundantly—Z '96, 161 (R 2004).

Whoever acts as a mouthpiece of Christ proclaims joyful doctrines; for God's eternal purpose is replete with blessing for all, reflects credit upon the Father and displays His wisdom, justice, love and power. Resting upon the Truth, as a bed, and contemplating the mercies of God in seasons of distress, the Christian may proclaim the Lord's Plan and thereby praise the Father's character. Our chief object in proclaiming the Lord's Word should be to manifest to others how praiseworthy, appreciable and adorable Jehovah our God and Father is!—P '34, 36.

Parallel passages: Lev. 7:12; Psa. 34:1; 50:14, 23; 69:30, 31; 107:22; 116:17; 119:97; Isa. 63:7; Hos. 14:2; Eph. 5:19, 20; Col. 3:17; Phil. 4:6; 1 Thes. 5:18; 2 Thes. 1:3; 1 Pet. 2:5; 4:11.

Hymns: 238, 23, 49, 296, 116, 44, 260.

Poems of Dawn, 268: *My Psalm*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 311 (R 5785).

Questions: Have my meditations and speech this week been on the Lord's Word and Character? Under what circumstances? With what results?

MY PSALM

I MOURN no more my vanished years:
 Beneath a tender rain,
 An April rain of smiles and tears,
 My heart is young again.

The west winds blow, and, singing low,
 I hear the glad streams run;
 The windows of my soul I throw
 Wide open to the sun.

No longer forward nor behind

I look in hope or fear,
But, grateful, take the good I find,
The best of now and here.

I break my pilgrim staff, I lay
Aside the toiling oar,
The angel sought so far away
I welcome at my door.

The woods shall wear their robes of praise,
The south winds softly sigh,
And sweet, calm days, in golden haze,
Melt down the amber sky.

Not less shall manly deed and word
Rebuke an age of wrong;
The graven flowers that wreath the sword
Make not the blade less strong.

But smiting hands shall learn to heal,—
To build as to destroy;
Nor less my heart for others feel,
That I the more enjoy.

All as God wills, who wisely heeds
To give or to withhold,
And knoweth more of all my needs
Than all my prayers have told.

Enough that blessings underserved
Have marked mine erring track;—
That whensoever my feet have swerved,
His chastening turned me back;—

That more and more a Providence
Of love is understood,
Making the springs of time and sense
Sweet with eternal good;—

And death seems but a covered way
Which opens into light,
Wherein no blinded child can stray
Beyond the Father's sight;—

That care and trial seem at last,
Through memory's sunset air,

Like mountain ranges overpast,—
The purple distance fair;

That all the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm,
And all the angles of the strife
Now rounding into calm.

And so the shadows fall apart,
And so the west winds play;
And all the windows of my heart
I open to the day.

R5785: MEDITATIONS IN THE NIGHT

"My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips, when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches."—Psalm 63:5, 6.

BY THE expression as to satisfying his soul with marrow and fatness, the Prophet David evidently referred to the abundance of God's favor and blessing which had come to him. He had a large portion, a fat portion, and appreciated God's goodness, God's favor toward him, taking him as a shepherd boy from among the flocks, and privileging him to engage in His service and finally bringing him to the throne as the king of Israel. For all this he was very grateful to the Lord. He appreciated all of God's blessings. It was appropriate that his mouth should give praise, that he should be joyful, that he should speak of the Lord's loving-kindness. So we find in the Psalms of David many beautiful expressions in which he gives great praise and thanksgiving to the Almighty. He speaks also of God's majesty, of His wondrous power and might, and refers to the heavens as His handiwork.

The Prophet certainly used his tongue to praise the Lord. When we consider that he lived in a time when schooling was limited and that he got very little of it, we realize that he certainly made good use of what he obtained. The fruit of his labor has come down to bless the world all through the centuries. He intimates that he did this singing or praising God to some extent in the night—"when I remember Thee upon my bed and meditate upon Thee in the night watches." In ancient times the people were more dependent upon the moon and stars for light at night, not having as we have today full provision for illumination by means of refined oil, gas, electricity, etc. Mr. Rockefeller had not yet been born, nor modern inventions dreamed of. They were dependent for artificial light upon olive oil, and that was not very plentiful. As a consequence, the people went to bed early. So King David was thinking upon the Almighty as he lay upon his bed, meditating upon God—he was not thinking foolish thoughts, not planning foolish doings. When we think of this, we are not surprised that his mind was full of beautiful thoughts.

NOBLEST SUBJECT FOR MEDITATION

Whoever has time for meditation, will receive a great blessing if his thoughts shall turn toward the Almighty, acknowledging His goodness, seeking to give praise to God for all His manifold mercies, meditating upon God in the night watches. As far as this verse is concerned, we see no reason for thinking it prophetic; yet it represents any who are seeking to be in harmony with God. There are millions of people in the world who have never heard of God's wonderful Plan; therefore our mouths should be used in praising God. We should be continually remembering the Lord in all of our moments of rest, whether upon a bed, or wherever it may be. We should cultivate the habit of meditating upon Him. We think very few people meditate upon the Lord; and it is to their disadvantage that they do not.

The great and holy Laws of God find expression in Him. We should think of God as the personification of all that is just, loving, kind, wise, in character and principle. This should stimulate us to be like Him. The more we appreciate a noble character the more we desire to emulate it. The more we see of God's mighty works in nature and His mercies toward us, in that same proportion our hearts and lips will praise Him. If there is a prophetic thought connected with this passage, it is that all through the Dark Ages, all through the night time of this Age, God's faithful people have been praising Him. All of His true people have been praising Him and have done so with joyful lips. Those who have not been doing this are not of this class. We should, therefore, render praise to our God. We should meditate more and more upon His Holy will and ways, and strive to conform ourselves thereto. Thus shall we become more and more like unto our Father in Heaven.

APRIL 6

If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf—1 Pet. 4:16.

Sickness and discomfort of any sort, incurred by our energy in the service of the Truth, are permitted by our Father as evidences of our fidelity and love; because if not liable to such tribulations, or if relieved of them instantly by a miracle, the Lord's service would cost us no sacrifice and the test of our willingness to endure for the Truth's sake would be wanting. As it is, however, every ache or pain or wound of person or of feelings, and beheading socially or literally *for the Truth's sake*, becomes a witness of the Spirit, testifying to our faithfulness. And in all such tribulations we should rejoice greatly—as say our Lord and the Apostle Peter—Z '96, 166 (R 2004).

To suffer as a Christian means to suffer from the same causes, in the same forms, in the same spirit, for the same purposes, and with similar results as Jesus. Whoever is so highly favored, far from being ashamed, should count it the greatest privilege and cause for rejoicing and thanksgiving possible for a human being to have. It gives him fellowship with the Father, the Son and the saints, appreciation of their characters, great peace and joy in this life, preparation for the Kingdom, and eventually the prize of our calling—P '33, 63.

Parallel passages: Matt. 5:10-12; Rom. 8:35, 36; 1 Cor. 15:31, 32; 2 Cor. 1:5, 9; 12:10; Gal. 2:20; 6:17; Phil. 1:29; 3:10; Heb. 10:32-34; Jas. 1:2, 12; 1 Pet. 1:6, 7; 2:19-24; 4:12-14; 5:1, 10.

Hymns: 134, 47, 114, 208, 302, 325, 326.

Poems of Dawn, 287: *And Sitting Down, They Watched Him There*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 297 (R 5778).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they borne? What were the results?

"AND SITTING DOWN, THEY WATCHED HIM THERE"

MATTHEW 27:36

SITTING down, they watched Him there,
Watched Him, fairest of the fair,
Gazed with cold, unpitying eye,
While the jeering crowd passed by;
For His vesture cast a lot
(Seamless robe, without a spot)—
Watched the "Man of Sorrows" there,
Who the world's great sin must bear,

Watched while darkness veiled the sun,
Watched until He cried, " 'Tis done!"

God of Heaven, forbid that I
Thus should gaze with pitiless eye
On a suffering child of Thine,
Watch him while his foes malign,
Watch him while his life-blood flows,
Watch until the dark day's close;
Grant me, Lord, a heart of love,
Make me like a tender dove,
Let me bring him strength and peace,
Until death shall send release!

R5778: THE CHRIST PERFECTED BY SUFFERING

"Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."—1 Pet. 4:13.

IT MIGHT at first seem strange to God's people that they should suffer special trials and difficulties as a result of becoming children of God and doers of that which is good. The natural expectation would be that he who *sins* shall suffer, and he who seeks to *avoid sin* shall be blessed. This is a natural law, and it will operate in due time—during the Millennial reign of our Lord. Evil-doers shall suffer stripes, and if found *persistent*, shall be cut off in the Second Death. But all well-doers shall be rewarded with everlasting life and blessing forever.

This is not true now, however, for the reign of the Prince of Righteousness has not yet begun. We are under the reign of the Prince of Darkness. And the evil-doers often have great success, while the right-doers suffer. David says of the wicked, "Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish." (Psa. 73:7.) Nevertheless he took his stand with those who would please God—and so also do we.

GOD'S PURPOSE IN TESTING US

St. Paul, speaking concerning the Church of the Gospel Age, says, "*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.*" (2 Tim. 3:12.) There is *no exception* to this rule; and the knowledge and expectation of this should make us stand *fast*, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and having our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace.

God allows His people to have these experiences and to suffer for right-doing. In the present time He is calling out a saintly company. This company will be the Royal Priesthood of the future, to bless all the world during Messiah's Reign. And the Bible explains to us that these need trials to prove and test their characters.

God wishes to see how loyal we are to the principles of righteousness. How much are we willing to suffer? It is a saying with the world, "Every man has his price." And so in the Church there are some who would endure a certain amount, and then back down. Others will endure a little more, and others still a little more. The Lord declares that He is seeking those who will give up everything in order to prove faithful to their Covenant with Him. This faithfulness means entire loyalty to God, to His laws, which are the laws of righteousness.

THE FIRE TO BURN AMONGST YOU

The intimation that these fiery trials will try the Church, will burn amongst God's people, does not necessarily mean that *all* the fiery trials will come from the *Church*; but that these trials constitute a fire that is to do a purifying work amongst them, burning in their midst. It is an experience that must be endured by each one individually. It will be a general experience, because each one must have a share in this matter. It is not merely that the company as a whole will have opposition against them, but that each individual will be personally exposed to the fiery trials. Therefore this fire burns in our midst and will burn to the end.

It is a different kind of trial from what could come to any other body of people. The explanation of this difference is in our text—"inasmuch as we are made partakers of Christ's sufferings." When we know that each member of the Body of Christ must be tried, we can rejoice when some of this fire touches us. We say, "I am having a share in the sufferings of Christ. I am glad that in God's providence I have a share in these trials; for if I had no share in them, how could I know that I am one of the Body members?"

THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF TROUBLE

So we all rejoice, knowing that these fiery trials are of the Lord. Not that the Lord is the *cause* of these fiery trials; for usually it is the Adversary. But we have put ourselves into the Lord's hands, and He has promised to supervise all that concerns us. Therefore, whatever comes to us, we may be sure that it is of the Father's purpose, or permission for our good. If, therefore, we recognize that this is something that the Lord's providence has arranged for us, it is all right, no matter how frequently we have to go to the Throne of Grace for help in time of need.

God has revealed to us that He purposes to give to The Christ very great exaltation, great glory, honor and immortality. Therefore we are looking forward to the time when this Body shall be perfected, and we shall share in the glory of our Head. When the glory shall be revealed, we shall be glad with a great joy! These trials that come to us are from a variety of sources. In our context they are spoken of as the *one* trial of the Church, but that one trial is made up of a variety of experiences. If these difficulties and trials came all at once, they might be too severe for us. Therefore the Lord permits us to be taken out of the fire for a little while. "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust."—Psa. 103:14.

TORTURES OF TODAY MORE REFINED

And so the Father has arranged that we shall have little seasons of refreshment between times, so that when the next trying experience comes, it will find us a little stronger and more ready to profit by it. Some of these trials come from the Adversary himself. Apparently the things that have been done to the Church could come from none other. Think of the devilish disposition manifested toward our Lord, and reflect upon His sufferings. We cannot think that mankind under any ordinary conditions could ever have had so malicious a spirit as that manifested against Him. The Devil had to do with all the wicked persecutions of the saints—the cutting out of tongues, the racking of their poor bodies, and the shooting out of *bitter words* from the *tongue*.

We are more used to this latter form of persecution today than in olden times; for the world—the average man—would not permit the things done in the Dark Ages. But the wicked feelings are still there—the animosity, the gall. As the Apostle James says, the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, and it sets on fire the course of nature. (James 3:6.) And so in our day the tongue and the pen are often used as weapons of evil.

We have all noticed, perhaps, how willing the world is to *speak* evil and to *believe* evil—how willing to say that which they do not know. This is all because they are obsessed, besieged by the Adversary. But we are living in a more civilized day than were our brethren of the past. We think the individual who does these wicked things today—who slanders and vilifies God's people—is under some malevolent influence. And then the temptation comes to us to speak evil of them in return—to do all the harm we can against them. If we find this disposition to speak evil arising within us, we are to resist it, to allow the fire of this time to burn up these elements of our old nature. And the fire will have this purifying effect upon us, if we receive it aright, making us meet for the Heavenly Kingdom.

SECONDARY SOURCE OF TRIAL

Not only from the Adversary do these trials come, but they come from the weaknesses and the imperfections of others. And perhaps those that come from the brethren are the most difficult to bear. We know that "the god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not." But when it comes to those who have made a profession of loyalty to God, and who have named the name of Christ, whether they be Presbyterians or Episcopalians, Baptists or Congregationalists, or those who are Bible Students—if in any of these we find the persecuting spirit, we are more discouraged and less likely to have the proper sympathy for them.

We are to remember, however, that nothing can happen to us unless the Father permits it. If we did not get the trials from Methodists or Presbyterians or Bible Students, we would get them from somewhere else, in order to burn up our dross and strengthen the elements of our character which need development. We are to take all of these things patiently, knowing that they are working out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal

weight of glory." We are to look away from these things and to recognize the grand purpose of God. We are to reflect that this is the way in which God is chiseling us and polishing us to make us ready for the grand Temple of Glory. And when we think of this, we can look with fortitude and patience on these fiery trials, recognizing that we shall get a blessing out of them.

"Through many a thorny path He leads
My tired feet;
Through many a path of tears I go,
But it is sweet
To know that He is close to me—
My God, my Guide;
He leadeth me, and so I walk
Quite satisfied."

Thus we learn as people of God to *glory*. We may glory in all the things which He has done *for* us and *in* us. The things that naturally would be least likely to be gloried in are tribulations, persecutions. But we may glory also in these. We may rejoice in them—not that we enjoy the tribulations, the persecutions, but we realize that these are working for us characters pleasing to God. The Lord will see to it that we get enough, and not too much, tribulation.

The word *tribulation* has the thought of serious trouble—a combination of troubles that makes the experiences serious. It would not mean that we would fall into some difficulty and soon get out of it again, but it would mean severe and continued trouble. Sometimes we cannot see why we have the troubles that come to us. They may come in the form of sickness, or death, or financial trouble, or humiliation of our unrecognized pride and self-love; or we may have a combination of trouble. There is no difference whether it is one kind or another kind—they are *tribulations*. But it is for us to recognize that in all these trials the Lord supervises and makes them work for our good.

The *world* has persecutions of a certain sort. People in business will sometimes persecute one another. Sometimes persecutions are in a political way. The Lord indicates to the Church that we may rejoice in any persecution, especially if we are in no way *blame-worthy*. "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed [feel disgraced]," said the Apostle. (1 Pet. 4:14-16.) He is suffering because the "darkness hateth the light," and slanders the Truth. This has been so from Jesus' time all the way down.

BLESSING RESULTING FROM PERSECUTION

Shall we say that we will not be reconciled to any certain experience? No; we have committed all to the Lord, and it is for us to bow in full submission, knowing by faith and from the assurance of God's Word that all things are working together for good to us. No matter what the trouble may be, it will bring patience if we are rightly exercised. Some of the Lord's people may have patience well developed, and thus not need so many of these experiences. But whatever we *need*, we should desire.

We remind you again of the story of a certain brother who took account of his qualities, and decided that he was most lacking in *patience*. Then he prayed most earnestly to the Lord to give him more patience. He kept on praying; and the more he prayed, the more difficulties he seemed to have, the greater trials of patience. Then it occurred to him that this was the answer to his prayer; for that was the way to get patience. And when he began to see the matter aright, it encouraged him and made a great change. He saw that the Lord was answering his prayer by giving him the very experiences he needed to develop in his character this grace of the Spirit.

"Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." This does not mean that we get all of our patience first, then all of our experience, and then all of our hope; but that they are all developing together. We have a good courage and are desirous of pleasing the Lord; we are not ashamed to be His children. And the reason why we are not ashamed is that with this hope, we have the realization of God's love; and we are able to say, "If I had *tribulation*, I now have more *hope* and more *patience*. I am getting the results in these tribulations, in the fruits of the Spirit." Whoever escapes experiences that would develop the fruits of the Holy Spirit will never gain a place in the Kingdom.

Patience can be gained *only by trials*. Faith can be developed *only by necessities*. We have need of preparation for our future work. This can be gained only by those experiences which will touch us with a feeling of the infirmities and difficulties and trials of the groaning creation to whom we shall be ministers and representatives when we reach the Throne. For us, then, the lesson of present experiences is to resist evil; not with evil, but with *good*. "Be not overcome of evil; but resist evil with good."—Romans 12:21.

APRIL 7

My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus—Phil. 4:19.

If you have no burning zeal to preach the good tidings of great joy, pray earnestly and faithfully and persistently for it, and strive for it, and you will soon have it. If you have a zeal and love for the Gospel, and lack ability to present it, pray for the ability, while you make full use of what you have. If you have the zeal and ability, and lack an opportunity, take it to the Lord in prayer as soon as you can, telling Him that you are faithfully using all the opportunities you have. Then watch for more opportunities, without slackening your hand to use the very humblest and smallest within your reach—Z '96, 163 (R 2004).

All Christians need wisdom, justice, love and power, which God has pledged Himself to develop in the faithful. Jehovah has in His unfathomable resources of Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power a plentitude of riches to supply all their needs. Generously indeed does He supply these to all who ask for them in and through His Son, whom He has made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Deliverance—P '27, 55.

Parallel passages: Psa. 23; 34:7-10; 50:10; 65:9-13; Prov. 8:21; Isa. 25:4; Mal. 3:10; Matt. 6:26-33; Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 9:8, 9; Heb. 13:5, 6; 1 Pet. 5:7; Eph. 1:7; 3:16.

Hymns: 67, 110, 63, 119, 121, 293, 301.

Poems of Dawn, 210: *Take Heart*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 230 (R 5508).

Questions: Has God this week supplied my need? Under what circumstances? How did it affect me?

TAKE HEART

LET me take heart! The present scene shall soon
be o'er;
The clustering clouds shall hide the sun at noon no
more.
The tears now dropping from mine eyes shall be forgot;
And joys, undimmed by sin and misery, my lot.

The storm now sweeping through the troubled sky
be past;
The longed-for morning without clouds arise at last.
The hindmost shadow soon shall utterly depart;
Then let me watch and wait, and hopefully take heart.

R5508: OUR GREAT BURDEN-BEARER

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

THESE COMFORTING words of the Apostle Peter are addressed to the Church of Christ; and all who are of the Lord's people surely realize that there are cares and difficulties of life which are our portion and which are perplexing. These cares of life come also to those who are of the world—to some more and to some less. But they *surely* come to all who are the Lord's children.

The word *care* is used in two different ways. Thinking of the word in the sense of exercising proper thought and giving proper attention to that which is entrusted to us, or concerning which we are responsible, we might be in danger of misunderstanding our text. The word *care*, however, very often has in it the thought of *worry*, *trouble of mind*; and this is its use by the Apostle in this place. The Apostle Paul also says, "Be careful for nothing"—be worried about nothing, have anxiety about nothing. So we might render the words of St. Peter, "Casting all your *anxiety* upon Him; for He is taking thought for you."

IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS

The Apostle's advice is not that we shall throw off all sense of responsibility, and cease to exercise care in what we do and in respect to our duties and obligations. Surely we all agree that the man or the woman without care for anything, in this proper sense, would be totally unfit for any position in life. We often notice evidences of some one's not having been sufficiently careful. Perhaps the wall paper has been carelessly marred or the furniture scratched; doors are slammed or left swinging when they should be closed for warmth, etc. Some might say, Oh, these are very small matters! But one who is careless, thoughtless, and inattentive to these matters is very likely to be untrustworthy in larger matters.

Personally, it is painful to us to see these things; and undoubtedly it is so to all who exercise proper care. The children of God, His representatives before men, should not go blundering along through the world or needlessly annoying others, whether it be the brethren or people of the world. Our influence for good may be greatly marred by inattention to what might be called little things, but what in reality are not so. There is a trite saying which is full of meaning: "Trifles make perfection; and perfection is no trifle." The Lord's people should be the most careful people in the world.

Our Lord said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much"; and the reverse of the statement would be equally true—that he that is *unfaithful* in that which is least is *unfaithful* also in much. (Luke 16:10.) These little things of every-day life may prove to be more crucial tests of real character than will seemingly larger matters. Little courtesies, little acts of thoughtful consideration for others, how much they mean! How greatly they often affect the happiness of those around us and our own influence as ambassadors of Christ! So we need to exercise much care and thoughtfulness in regard to

our words, our actions and everything with which we have to do. This is not the care that we are to cast upon the Lord for Him to bear. This we are properly to bear ourselves.

OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED BY THE LORD

God is the most *careful* Being in the Universe, we may be sure. He is not *careful*, in the sense in which the word is used in our text—in the sense of worry and unrest of mind—but He is care-full in the right and proper sense. There are cares that come to the Lord's people because they are harassed by the Adversary. These experiences the Lord permits for the very purpose of leading His people to cast their care upon Him, of bringing them closer to Himself, of teaching them patient endurance, of showing them more fully their need of Him, their utter helplessness and wretchedness without Him.

But worries and frettings—anxieties that would hinder us in the Lord's service, that would rob us of our peace in the Lord—should be dropped, not carelessly, however, but intelligently, with the thought that Jesus, our great Burden-bearer, has invited us, yea, urged us, to cast all our care—all that would disturb our peace—upon Him. He will make our burden light and ease our tribulations. This is a rest of faith, and cannot be attained otherwise than through faith in His love, faith in His promises.

OUR FATHER'S CARE FOR HIS CHILDREN

Each day that a Christian lives he should be more reliant upon the Lord. He should realize more fully than before that our Heavenly Father, who has provided for the grass of the field and for the birds of the air, cares far more for His children than for the flowers or for many sparrows, and that He has a Plan also for the world—an arrangement for their blessing, in due time. But *we* have already entered into the blessing of the Lord; we have already become His children, and are His especial care. And "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him"—those that reverence Him.

We cannot be faithful children of God if we are full of worry. Worry is one thing, but proper carefulness is another. We should be more careful every day, and thus be able to fulfil our obligations to the world in general, to our families, to ourselves, to the brethren, and to the Lord—to render our God more effective service.

We are not to be troubled and anxious as to where we are to get our next suit of clothes. We have a suit of clothing for the present, such as the Lord has seen fit to give; and we are to do our best to provide the things needful. If the Lord should never give us apparel as good as many others have, or as rich or dainty food, we should not worry, but be content with whatever His providence arranges for us, and accept it thankfully. He will give what is best—what is for our good as New Creatures. We should not doubt, nor fear that He will not provide for our needs. He knows all about our affairs, and is not unmindful of our welfare. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."

How needful this humility before God, and how consoling and precious this loving assurance! As we go on in this blessed way marked out by our Lord, let us learn more and more fully that we are not to ask anything according to *our* wills, but only that His will may be done in us and for us. His Wisdom is unerring. Let us tell the Lord all about our burdens, great and small, and let us appropriate to ourselves His love and sympathy, applying to our hearts the balm of His Word, of the precious promises which are the heritage of His own, trusting Him that He is both able and willing to supply our every need—yea, that He delights thus to bless us, if we abide in His Love.

"How strong and sweet my Father's care!
The words like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—
'He cares for thee!'

"Then naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me or mine,
Since Thou with tenderness Divine
Dost care for me!"

APRIL 8

If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him—Heb. 10:38.

The drawing back may at first be a very slight departure from the narrow way of sacrifice—only a looking back perhaps, with a sigh for the things behind; a little slowing up of speed in the race set before us; then a little disposition to compromise the Truth in favor of the cravings of the fallen nature. Thus the way is prepared for the arts of the Tempter, who is quick to note our weak points, and to take advantage of them in a manner best suited to our case. Subtle errors are brought to bear against the judgment; pleasing allurements, with a show of righteousness, are presented to the fleshly mind; and, almost imperceptibly, the soul forgets its "first love" for the Lord, and its first zeal for His service, and drifts away from the Truth and the spirit of it, being no longer led of the holy Spirit of God—Z '95, 93 (R 1798).

To draw back signifies to withdraw one's consecration, and to return to a life of sin, error, selfishness and worldliness. One's leaving an evil life and consecrating himself to God cause Jehovah much pleasure, as it is written, "The Lord taketh pleasure in all his saints." Accordingly God is more displeased with those who have known the way of life and have forsaken it than with those who never knew it. They are in the hands of the living God for destruction—P '20, 71.

Parallel passages: Gen. 19:26; Psa. 85:10; 125:5; Hos. 11:7; Luke 9:62; 17:32; Matt. 5:13; 6:23; John 17:12; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 6:4-9; 10:26-31; 2 Pet. 2; 3:17; 1 John 5:16.

Hymns: 13, 130, 136, 20, 95, 196, 198.

Poems of Dawn, 130: *Be Vigilant*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 278 (R 5093).

Questions: What have been my temptations along the lines of this text? How did I overcome therein? What are my resolutions as to these experiences?

BE VIGILANT

UP then, and linger not, thou saint of God,
Fling from thy shoulders each impending load;
Be brave and wise, shake off earth's soil and sin,
That with the Bridegroom thou mayst enter in.
O watch and pray!

Clear hath the voice been heard, Behold I've come—
That voice that calls thee to thy glorious home,
That bids thee leave these vales and take swift wing,
To meet the hosts of thy descending King;—
And thou mayst rise!

Here's a thick throng of foes, afar and near;
The grave in front, a hating world in rear;
Yet flee thou canst not, victory must be won,
Ere fall the shadows of thy setting sun:—
And thou must fight.

Gird on thine armor; face each weaponed foe;
Deal with the Sword of heaven the deadly blow;
Forward, still forward, till the prize Divine
Rewards thy zeal, and victory is thine;
Win thou the crown.

R5093: WHO MAY FALL FROM GRACE

ONE WHO is *down* cannot *fall*. Originally Father Adam was up; that is to say, he was perfect, created in God's likeness, free from sin. He was in God's favor, and while in that condition, he was on trial for life or death. He sinned and fell from favor into disfavor—condemnation, death. His posterity, the whole human race, have been born in God's disfavor. They are fallen. As we read, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psa. 51:5.) By nature mankind are all children of wrath. They cannot fall any further down; for as it is written, "The whole world lieth in the Evil One."—I John 5:19.—Diaglott.

But something occurred which has raised a portion of the race of mankind from the fallen condition. Christ came into the world, gave His life a Ransom-price, and ascended into heaven "to appear in the presence of God." (Heb. 9:24.) Thus far, however, He has appeared only for *us*, not for *the world*, but for all those who have trusted in the precious blood of Christ. His appearance for these enables them to approach God, to become disciples of Christ and to receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

This is the attitude in which we stand: we have accepted the Redeemer, we are seeking to walk in His steps, we are lifted up out of condemnation, we are no longer dead in Adam. "You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1, 2.) Once we were strangers and foreigners, but having been "made nigh by the blood of Christ" we are now members of the Body of Christ. (Eph. 2:12, 13.) So, then, we are children of God by adoption.

After Adam had fallen, he was regarded as an enemy of God. But we have come near to God *through Christ*. We are "accepted in the Beloved," accounted worthy of life everlasting, if we are faithful; for eternal life is the gift of God. (Eph. 1:6; Rom. 6:23.) The Church, then, have *come back* from the fallen state; but the world *remains in that condition* and, therefore, *cannot fall*. The only ones who can do so are those who are the recipients of the Holy Spirit.

The manner of life here during the present existence may indeed affect the opportunity and future destiny of the world. If they knowingly violate obligations, they sin against light and they injure their characters; but they cannot sin away their share of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, for they have not yet received that share. Only the consecrated children of God are in the position to do so; as the Apostle points out, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance."—Heb. 6:4-6.

This thought will well bear repetition: The only class that can fall away are those who have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit; but if any of those who have been brought into full harmony with God, through the begetting of the Holy Spirit, neglect or misuse their blessed privilege, there remains for them no more an interest in the great Atonement; *because they have received their portion* in Christ's redemptive work.

KNOWLEDGE BRINGS RESPONSIBILITY

The only evidence there is at the present time that we are begotten of the Holy Spirit is the fact that we have "received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Rom. 8:15.) The world, having had no life in them, cannot lose what they never possessed. But as for us, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden the Son of God under foot and hath counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?"—Heb. 10:26-29.

Only those who have been sanctified through the blood of the Covenant can do despite to it. Only those who have a knowledge of the Son of God can "trample Him under foot." The world in its ignorance cannot do these things. So, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth" (not if *the world* sin wilfully, but if *we* sin wilfully), there remaineth no longer a share for *us* in the sacrifice of Christ.

For the others, there would still remain their share in the sacrifice of Christ, and their responsibility will be in proportion to their knowledge. We have large responsibility, because we have large knowledge. We have tasted of the Holy Spirit, we have been made partakers of it. The Apostle says that "those who despised Moses' Law died without mercy." There was nothing more for them then. They did not get eternal torment for disobedience to Moses, but theirs was the death penalty. Those who thus died will, nevertheless, have their share in the redemptive work of Christ.

Those who died under the Law will eventually have an opportunity to receive God's grace in Christ Jesus. But if *they* were cut off from life under the *typical* penalty of death, how much more severe would the penalty be upon those who have the understanding and enlightenment through the antitypical Moses—Christ! The intimation of the Scriptures is

that such will die the Second Death for wilful disobedience. For such there is no hope of recovery whatever. Let this solemn thought be made emphatic. There will be a recovery from the death by Moses' Law. But for those who die the Second Death, there will be nothing further. They have had their share in the Atonement. They have counted the blood of the Covenant with which they were sealed an unholy thing. "*Christ ... dieth no more!*"—Rom. 6:9.

APRIL 9

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain—1 Cor. 9:24.

To gain the victory we must not only put on the armor of God, but we must also be heroes in the strife, and wage an *aggressive* warfare upon the lusts of the eye and flesh and pride of life and all the foes of righteousness and purity. *Love*—love for the Lord, for the Truth and for righteousness—must inspire us, or we shall never be victors. Love alone will keep us faithful even unto death, and make us meet for the inheritance of the saints. Where fervent love rules the heart, it implies that the heart is *fully submitted* to the Lord, and that means that nine tenths of the battle is already won. But, even then, as the Apostle says (Jude 21), we must *keep* ourselves in the love of God, in watchfulness and prayer and zeal; and grace will abound where love abounds—Z '95, 93 (R 1798).

The Christian life is compared to a race. To win the race, careful preparation, great exertion, undiminished perseverance, undeviating endeavor, and the closest possible adherence to regulations are required. He who neglects these will fail to win, while he who persists in these to the end will surely win. Our endeavor should be so to run as to win—P '36, 48.

Parallel passages: Psa. 19:5; Eccles. 9:11; Jer. 12:5; Phil. 3:14; Heb. 12:1; 1 Cor. 9:25-27; Gal. 2:2; 5:7; Phil. 2:16; 2 Tim. 2:5; 4:7, 8; Eph. 6:12; 1 Tim. 6:12; 1 Pet. 1:4; 5:4; Jas. 1:12; Rev. 3:11.

Hymns: 20, 1, 44, 71, 78, 130, 183.
Poems of Dawn, 288: *He Leads Us On*.
Tower Reading: Z '07, 260 (R 4050).

Questions: How have I run this week? What was my motive therein? What hindered or helped therein? What resulted therefrom?

HE LEADS US ON

HE leads us on, by paths we did not know,
Upward He leads us, though our steps be slow,
Though oft we faint and falter on the way,
Though storms and darkness oft obscure the day,
Yet when the clouds are gone
We know He leads us on.

He leads us on through all the trialsome years;
Past all our dreamland hopes, and doubts, and fears
He guides our steps. Through all the tangled maze
Of sin, of sorrow, and o'erclouded days

We know His will is done;
And still He leads us on.

And then, at last, after the weary strife,
After the restless fever we call life,
After the dreariness, the aching pain,
The wayward struggles which have proved in vain,
After our toils are past—
He'll give us rest at last.

R4050: THE RACE, THE PRIZE, THE COURSE

UNDOUBTEDLY the Apostle does in two of his epistles more or less clearly represent the Christian as running a race to win a prize. But as is usual with all figures and parables there seems to be room for slightly divergent views of his meaning, or rather of how to apply his figure of speech to the recognized facts. Let us be glad that the *facts* are generally very clearly seen. This is the important matter anyway.

Shortly before St. Paul was executed he wrote, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." (2 Tim. 4:7, 8.) If this was written six months before he died or even one month or only six days should we understand it to mean that the day before he wrote or the year before it would not have been true? We think not. We must believe also, that when, some time before, the same Apostle wrote, "I am in a strait betwixt two" as to choice between living and dying, he must have felt equally sure that he was at the mark which would win for him the great prize.

But we cannot assume that the Apostle was *always* at that *mark* which would win for him the prize. Surely he, like all of us, was first *begotten* of the Spirit and subsequently *quickened* of the Spirit. Surely during the period between the begetting and the quickening neither he nor we could be at the "*mark*" for the prize.

There must, therefore, be recognized *a mark* or standard of character necessary to the overcomers, which is not possessed at the beginning of the course nor usually for a considerable time thereafter—and a mark or character development which may be possessed a considerable time before death. Since "*love* is the fulfilling of the law of God" is it not proper that we consider it to be the mark or standard? We have, therefore, assumed that PERFECT LOVE is the standard of our acceptance with God to life eternal: and that to die before attaining it would insure our losing the prize, as death at any time after reaching this mark would insure us the crown of life.

Perfect love includes love for God, for the brethren, for our own, for our neighbors and for our enemies; and much of the teaching of the Scriptures is devoted to the outlining of this perfect love and to encouraging God's people to strive for it; for it represents the fruits of the Spirit which must be grown or developed as the fruits of the

vine. The pruning of the branches is to bring this fruitage to perfection, for without it the branch will be cut off from the Vine.

True, some things are *imputed* to us from the time we become members of Christ; purity is imputed, but not the fruit of the Vine—Love. That must be developed. Hence it behooves every Christian to run, to strive, to attain this acceptable standard or mark. All of this is surely true whether the Apostle had in his mind a race illustration or not.

When the Apostle exhorts, "Having done all, *stand!*" it implies that the race has been run, the acceptable mark of character attained before death. And is it not thus with all the "overcomers?" Did we not begin our Christian experience with a mere duty-love toward God and the brethren? Did we not "go on unto perfection"—progressing toward perfect love? True, the Apostle says, "Not as though I were already perfect"—and we with him may well disclaim *actual* perfection. But from the time he *in heart* reached the mark of perfect love, the righteousness or perfection of the Law was reckoned or accounted to him. Hence he adds, "Let as many [of you] as be perfect be thus minded."

But what, if anything, is expected of those who reach this mark of perfect love? Ah! very much! Only after they reach it do they begin to tread in the footsteps of Jesus around and around that mark on its every side. Being actually perfect our Lord needed not to run to get to the mark, for he was actually there, even as the perfect man. It was for him to "stand" firmly and uncompromisingly at this "mark" as it is exhorted of us that after "having done all" we should stand complete in him. This *standing* at the mark is the real trial, the real test. To stand is to be an "overcomer" of the world, the flesh and the devil. The *attainment* of the mark is often tedious and slow, but it should not be. Since it is merely a state of the mind it surely might be attained speedily, whereas from lack of zeal many are long years about it and some never gain it,—are never quickened, and will never, therefore, be born of the Spirit.

It is after we have reached the mark of perfect love that we, like our Lord, must endure hardness and fight the good fight. The encouragement held out is the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" promised to those who display special valor in the King's service.

When the Apostle says, "A man is not crowned except he strive lawfully," he in other words is saying that a man must be at the mark of perfect love (the fulfilling of the law) ere his strivings would be meritorious or acceptable in God's sight.

Another possible view of the race is to suppose a line marked out and that line to represent perfect love, each runner being expected to keep as close to that line as possible to the end of life. But this view does not allow for or explain St. Paul's having finished his course weeks or months before he died, nor his "strait betwixt two," years before that.

So then whatever view illustrates the facts best to our minds let us enjoy it, and meantime rejoice that the facts are so clear and plain as to be beyond dispute.

APRIL 10

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time—1 Pet. 5:6.

It is indeed no easy matter to tread the pathway of humility, to check continually the human aspirations and to keep the sacrifice on the altar until it is fully consumed. But thus it is that we are to work out our own salvation as Christians with fear and trembling, lest we come short of worthiness for the reward that God has promised to the faithful overcomers who tread closely in the footsteps of our blessed Forerunner ... who was meek and lowly of heart. It is when we are thus humble and faithful that the Lord makes us His chosen vessels to bear His name to others. Thus emptied of self, He can fill us with His Spirit and with His Truth, and we can go forth strong in the Lord of hosts and in His mighty power, to do valiant service as soldiers of the cross—Z '93, 7 (R 1486).

Christ is the mighty hand of God, under whom we are. To humble ourselves under Him would mean to empty ourselves of self-appreciation, whether it be along physical, mental, moral or religious lines, and to maintain that estimate of ourselves that the Spirit, Word and providences of God warrant us in having. Whoever, amid the varying scenes of life so humbles himself under Christ, will in due time be exalted by God under Christ—P '30, 31.

Parallel passages: Jas. 1:9, 10; 4:6; Isa. 57:15; 66:2; Job 22:29; Prov. 15:33; 29:23; Dan. 4:37; Luke 1:52; 10:21; 14:10, 11; 18:14; 1 Pet. 5:3, 5; Matt. 5:3; 11:29; 18:2-4; 20:26, 27; 23:12; Rom. 12:3, 10, 16; 1 Cor. 13:4; 2 Cor. 12:5-12; Eph. 4:2; 5:21; Phil. 2:3-11.

Hymns: 95, 21, 6, 1, 58, 105, 216.

Poems of Dawn, 51: *Right Was The Pathway*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 56 (R 5185).

Questions: What were this week's experiences as to this text? How were they met? What was helpful or hindering therein? In what did they result?

RIGHT WAS THE PATHWAY

LIGHT after darkness,
Gain after loss,
Strength after suffering,
Crown after cross.
Sweet after bitter,
Song after sigh,
Home after wandering,
Praise after cry.

Sheaves after sowing,
Sun after rain,
Sight after mystery,
Peace after pain.
Joy after sorrow,
Calm after blast,
Rest after weariness,
Sweet rest at last.

Near after distant,
Gleam after gloom,
Love after loneliness,
Life after tomb.
After long agony
Rapture of bliss!
Right was the pathway
Leading to this!

R5185: ST. PETER'S EXHORTATION TO THE ELDERS

"Humble yourselves ... under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—1 Peter 5:6.

AS THOSE who have received Divine grace and the knowledge of the Divine purpose, the Lord's people have certain ambitions which are right and proper, and which should be rightly exercised, regulated and governed. No one should be without a laudable ambition. We cannot imagine God to be without ambition. Those who have little or none pass through life in a kind of maze, accomplishing very little for themselves or others, and usually fail in all they undertake.

There are, however, noble and ignoble ambitions. Some people are ambitious to become great, renowned; others are ambitious to rule; still others are ambitious for wealth, for social distinction, or for titles and honor amongst men. These are all selfish ambitions, yet they are the power that moves the world today—in business, social, political and even religious circles. These are all wrong ambitions; and though they may not all result in evil, yet they are all selfish, and tend toward evil. Many are seduced by selfish ambitions into doing those things of which their consciences do not approve.

The Christian has set before him the most noble ambition possible. God is calling from the world a people for His Name. Before these He sets the loftiest ambition. These are invited to become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. This is an ambition which inspires them to develop all the higher qualities of mind and character, in order to prepare themselves for the society, friendship and fellowship of the Heavenly Father and the Lord. Let us have this high ambition ever before us, as an incentive to the most earnest endeavor to heed the Word of the Lord.

Those who take this course are very pleasing to the Father. He has a great work to be done, and is seeking a people who will do it. Christ Jesus is the Head of this great work, and His Kingdom is to rule and bless the world, that in the ages to come, God may show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us. (Eph. 2:7.) Those who appreciate this high calling wish to be where God has invited them to be. Those who do not care for what God has offered or who do not wish to conform to the terms should not enter the race for the prize.

Those who have the heavenly ambition should not forget that they have the treasure of the new nature in earthen vessels. To this class it becomes a laudable ambition to serve one another and to build one another up in the most holy faith. The Bride is to make herself ready. (Rev. 19:7.) So these should seek to get ready themselves and to help others of the dear family of God.

DANGER INVOLVED IN THE ELDERSHIP

To desire the office of a bishop, a shepherd, is a good ambition. (I Tim. 3:1.) If one properly attends to the shepherding of the flock, he will not have time for other interests. Those who have been called to the position of Eldership amongst the Lord's people should consider this an honor and a privilege from the Lord; and they should be very careful to seek it, not for filthy lucre's sake, but with a ready mind. (I Peter 5:1-4.) But in seeking this position let each one remember that there is danger of the development of pride and the assumption of power.

Those who have the high privilege of serving as an Elder Brother should watch themselves to see that they do not lord it over God's heritage. They should remember that they are not the Chief Shepherd, but only under-shepherds. If any should lord it over the flock, he would bring injury to himself as well as to the Church; for in thus doing he would be cultivating a spirit of pride.

St. Peter tells us that "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." (I Peter 5:5.) Therefore if in the Lord's service one is humble, his course not only inures to the benefit of the Class, but it is the only way by which anyone will gain a position in the Kingdom. The Eldership is an honorable office which not only has great privileges attached to it, but has also great temptation and great danger. St. James says, "My brethren, be not many [of you] masters [teachers], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation."—James 3:1.

The Apostle exhorts those that are Elders doing a work that is necessary to be done, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God." Everything is being done by the mighty power of God, by which He is causing all things to work together for good. We cannot interfere with the Divine will. We might permit pride or fond desire to hinder our own progress, but we cannot hinder the Plan of God.

We all desire to seek the best way to serve others and yet to gain the great reward. St. Peter shows us that way—"Humble yourselves." As the poet has expressed it,

"I am afraid to touch
Things that involve so much."

This spirit will make us very fearful of developing any pride or bombast or desire of lording it over others. So, then, we humble ourselves and remember that God will especially bless those who are more lowly, more trustful in the Lord, and in due time will exalt them—at the Second Coming of our Lord.

Sometimes, indeed, the humble-minded of the Lord's people may be less esteemed in the Church than are some who lack this important quality of character. There is in mankind a general tendency toward brow-beating. They would rather have some one who will ride rough-shod over them than one who is gentle and moderate. Therefore they may not like us. But we are not to seek what they would like best in us. Rather we are to remember that we are to serve the Lord in His way, and that our chief responsibility in the Lord's sight is for *ourselves*. We are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt us in due time.

PRIDE IN KNOWLEDGE OF TRUTH INJURIOUS

All these matters show us that our proper attitude is that of humility. The sentiment of our hearts should not be that of pride, but of meekness, humility, faithfulness.

Pride is selfishness gone to seed. The selfish spirit greedily gathers to itself as much as possible of all that it esteems good and valuable—wealth, learning, honor, fame and distinction among men. A measure of success in the acquisition of these treasures leads the selfish soul to a feeling of complacency, independence and indifference to the well-being of others. This spirit, gradually, but rapidly developing into arrogance, self-assertive pride, will continue to ripen with every gleam of the sunlight of temporal prosperity. As selfishness continues to ripen, it swells itself to ridiculous proportions and delights to vaunt itself, and gloats over its imagined importance and worthiness of honor and praise.

How much easier and how much wiser is the course of humility! The humble spirit seeketh not its own, is not puffed up, does not attempt to speculate upon inflated values, does not think of itself more highly than it ought to think, but thinks soberly—neither overrating nor underrating its own acquirements or achievements. Humility strives always to do business on a solid basis, though it contends lawfully to acquire a real worthiness and to achieve the true glory of the Divine commendation and favor.

There is a disposition on the part of many to be rather boastful on account of the Truth, as though we had originated the Truth. How foolish this is! We have made no truth. We have merely gotten rid of some of the errors that formerly blinded our eyes. *The Truth is God's*. He has allowed us to see out of the darkness of ignorance and superstition

into the Truth of His Plan. If a man who had seen a beautiful picture should then boast as though he had painted it, we would say, "Foolish man! You did not *make* that picture. You merely *looked at it*. You have nothing to boast of concerning it."

We did not make any part of God's Plan of the Ages. If we had attempted to do so, we would have made a failure of it. Our attitude of mind, then, should be, "Come, we will show you what God has arranged, what God has pictured." Thus we would glorify God and be helpful to others; for to whatever extent we manifest pride or self-consciousness in the Truth, to that extent we do injury to ourselves and to others. The world would say, "We have just as able Doctors of Divinity in our denominations as you have—just as wise to teach us the Truth."

Our proper course, therefore, is to make it plain at the very beginning that we are of the right spirit—the meek, humble spirit of the Master. God is permitting us to see things in His Word, concerning which it is His due time to turn on the light. The picture was there all along, but the clouds and darkness made it so dim that we were not able to discern its beauties. Now the light is being turned on, and, as the poet has expressed it,

"Wonderful things in the Bible we see."

Instead of self-confidence, wisdom dictates a distrustfulness of self, remembering its weaknesses and imperfections, and correspondingly the greater reverence for God and reliance upon Him, which more than anything else will strengthen us and enable us to depart from the evil of our fallen estate.

It is indeed no easy matter to tread the pathway of humility, to continually check the human aspirations, and to keep the sacrifice on the altar until it is fully consumed. But thus it is that we are to work out our own salvation to the Divine nature with fear and trembling, lest we come short of worthiness for the prize promised to the faithful overcomers who tread closely in the footsteps of our blessed Forerunner, who was meek and lowly of heart.—Phil. 2:8, 12.

It is when we are thus humble and faithful that the Lord makes us His chosen vessels to bear His name to others. Thus, emptied of self and filled with His Spirit, and with His Truth, we can go forth, strong in the Lord of Hosts and in His mighty Power do valiant service as soldiers of the Cross.

APRIL 11

Let us walk ... not in rioting and drunkenness—Rom. 13:13.

Some have an intoxication for money, wealth; others an intoxication for business; others for dress; others for music; others for art; but as the Lord's people, who have gotten a glimpse of the new day, and the great work of God which is to be accomplished in that day, our hearts should be so absorbed in the work of God that these matters, which would be thought proper enough and right enough in others, worldly people—because they are not awake as we are, and because they see not the future as we see it—should be far from our conception and course—Z '03, 123 (R 3179).

Unless the Christian takes heed to his ways, he will become intoxicated with error, sin, selfishness and worldliness. Such intoxication inevitably leads him into spiritual rioting in which all law and order are forgotten, and violence to spiritual life and limb are inflicted upon those in his way. Destruction frequently marks his course, and the strong arm of the Divine law must put down this rioting in the Second Death—P '35, 61.

Parallel passages: Prov. 23:20; Luke 21:34; 1 Pet. 4:3; Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Pet. 2:11, 21, 22; Gal. 5:16-26; 6:18; Eph. 5:5, 11, 14, 16; Col. 3:8-10, 12.

Hymns: 130, 315, 71, 78, 83, 136, 1.
Poems of Dawn, 46: *The Narrow Way*.
Tower Reading: Z '13, 323 (R 5338).

Questions: What were this week's experiences connected with this text? How were they met? What was their outcome?

THE NARROW WAY

MATT. 7:14.

"DEAR Lord, the way seems very *dark*,
I cannot see."

"Yes, child, I know, but I will be thy Light—
Come, follow Me!"

"Dear Lord, so *lonely* is this way—
Where are my friends?"

"My child, dost thou forget how far from Me
Their pathway tends?"

"Dear Master, I am growing *weak*,
I scarce can stand."

"O, foolish child, trust not in thine own strength,

Come, take My hand;

"For *I* have trod this way before,
So dark to thee.
I know each step, its weariness and pain,
Wilt trust in Me?"

"Yea, Lord, though *friendless, lonely, dark*,
This way may be,
I will be strong. Beloved Guide, lead on,
I follow Thee!"

R5338: THE DAWN OF THE MORNING

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness."—Romans 13:12, 13.

FOR A long time the world had been more or less in darkness, in sin, in ignorance, in superstition. By one man's disobedience sin entered the world. This darkness still continues. "Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." The Bible accounts for this condition of things by explaining that man by heredity is born in sin, and that additionally Satan takes advantage of the situation, with a view to further alienating mankind from the great Creator, and thus, if possible, preventing any reconciliation that might ever be undertaken.

Satan is called the Prince of Darkness, and he is working in the children of disobedience. The children of disobedience being far more numerous than the children of *obedience*, it follows that the present is a dark time. The Bible tells us that God will not leave mankind always in this darkness; but that the curse shall be rolled away and all the darkness shall be dissipated, and instead, shall come His blessing, His light. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the great deep. (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14.) Provision for this recovery was made in the Divine Purpose, before the foundation of the world.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

About nineteen hundred years ago God began to take steps to bring to pass the things which He had promised. The first step was the sending of His Son, that He might be the Redeemer of man. Our Lord is spoken of as being a great Light, in the same sense that the Heavenly Father is called the Father of Lights. Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world." Mankind, under the influence of Satan and their own imperfect judgments, became twisted in their minds, and are in a state of darkness, so that they cannot reason correctly. The majority are not able to see the desirability of the Truth, and so they live in darkness—"darkness covers the earth."

However, we have every reason to believe that there are a choice few in the world, who love righteousness and hate iniquity. And this class God desires to *take out* first. The selection of this class has been going on throughout the Gospel Age. The majority of the world would doubtless prefer *right* rather than *wrong* if all the conditions were favorable. If they could be as comfortable financially, as popular socially, etc., by serving the right as by serving the wrong, they would much prefer to serve the right.

These are really good people. They have a preference for the right. They are very moral, very just. And yet their preference for the right is not so strong that they would be willing to lay down their lives for the right. It is one thing to say, I love the cause of God; and it is another thing to say, I will devote my time, strength, fortune, *all*, to it.

But it is only the latter kind that God is calling now—those who are willing to take up the cross in the interest of Truth and righteousness. And to these God gives encouragement, assuring them that He appreciates their love of righteousness: and that if they persist in the course of faithfulness they will be made associates with Christ in His Kingdom. He tells them that He is seeking just such a class. And these are encouraged and inspired to keep on, as God sets before them the glorious hope of the Gospel—the Divine nature and glory.

RESPONSIBILITY PROPORTIONATE TO LIGHT

But all this is going on in the night time; for, although Jesus came into the world, and is to be the Light of the world, this Light has not yet illumined mankind, nor scattered the darkness. The Jewish people had the light of the *moon*, in the sense that the Law Covenant and its promises were like the moon, which shines with a light reflected from the sun, a light not its own. They had the light of the moon, if they wished to walk in its light. But they often went from the light of their Law and walked in the shadows. The Jews also had *stars*—Abraham, David and the Prophets. These were luminaries that shed more or less light upon their pathway.

But when Jesus came, He was the great Light of the world; i. e., He was the one chosen of God to be the Light of the world. But Jesus as a man was not this light to *all*. The Light that shone from Him while He was in the flesh was very local. And even to many of those upon whom it shone, His light was obscure, because of their ignorance, blindness. Jesus intimated that some could see the light and others could not: "Blessed are *your eyes, for they see!*" (Matt. 13:16.) He also intimated that some of the Jewish leaders saw to some extent, and were responsible for what they saw.

Our Lord presented to them the true light. They had been hoping to attain the blessing God promised in His Covenant with Abraham. They knew from the teachings of the Law that they must be holy. But they did not realize how high is the true standard. Consequently they thought they could keep up a certain standard of outward conduct, and thus become the Seed of Abraham. And when Jesus said to them. You are so careful to keep the letter of the Law that you would strain out a gnat from your drink, and swallow

a camel, He intimated that they were very careful about the small things, and would let great matters, important things, pass by!

Jesus told them they would devour widows' houses; that is, that they would take advantage of this or that technicality of the Law to take possession of a widow's substance. And in thus doing, they were violating God's Law, which is a law of justice and love and mercy. It was only the few, therefore, who were *Israelites indeed*. And these would be the true Seed of Abraham—the select few of that nation.—Rom. 9:6; Gal. 3:16, 29.

THE TRUE LIGHT-BEARERS

So the selection went on, and the faithful ones, having the right spirit, the same spirit that Christ had—love for justice, love for God and God's Law—these were selected—the Elect of that people. These not being a sufficiency, God continued to select others from different nations. To His disciples Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men"; and again, Put not your light under a bushel; but put it on a candlestick, that it may be seen of others. And so all of God's people have been lights. Those who have the Holy Spirit are the only true light-bearers in the world. Others may have various lights—science, geology, chemistry—but much of their light is darkness. Our Lord, however, was referring only to the light on God's Plan.

Some who have light on morality, say that they will not become intoxicated, will not use profanity, etc. They may have light in those directions, but this is not the true light. Much of the true light has been lost on the whole world, though they have still some of the original light remaining, as is evidenced in man's conscience and moral sense. Saul of Tarsus had some of this light, and yet persecuted the Church. Conscience is not a sufficient guide. We need the light of God's Word.

The Holy Spirit is the light of the *Church*, by which we are being specially guided into the Truth. St. Peter tells us that we have a more sure Word of prophecy, whereunto we do well that we take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. (2 Peter 1:19.) The light on the path of the just "shineth more and more unto the perfect Day." We are still in the dark place, and shall be until the darkness gives way and the Day is here. And so, as St. Peter says, we have need of this Word of prophecy "until the Day dawn." Thus we find that one Scripture helps to elucidate another.

Apparently many of our Christian friends have the thought that the Apostle meant that the Lord might come at any hour, on any day. But when we come to understand the Scriptures, and know that God has fixed times and seasons, and when we learn more about God's Plan, we see what He has revealed respecting the length of the night and the time for the dawning of the morning. The Apostle had sufficient knowledge to realize that the morning was coming and that the night would then have an end. He knew that Christ at His Second Coming would be the Sun of Righteousness. We also know this. He knew that Christ would be the Light of the world. We likewise know this; and that the

glorified Church will be, with Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, which will arise with healing in its beams, and will enlighten the world, and lift it up and bless it.

SIGNS OF THE DAWNING

We know something of God's times and seasons. There is a great difference, however, between knowing the *day* and the *hour* and knowing the times and the seasons. You might know that your Pastor intended to go sometimes this season to Great Britain. When the season arrives you might say, Well, this is the season. Yes, but you would not know what steamer he would take. You say, We know the time he will reach London, but do not know just the day the boat sails. And thus the Lord has guaranteed that His people shall not be left in darkness—that we shall have light and knowledge sufficient—that we shall not be in darkness with the world.

Just so surely as we are of the Brethren, just so surely that Day will not come upon us as a thief. We shall know how to expect it. We shall know about the time. Those who think that the Apostles had no knowledge of the matter have, we think, taken a superficial view of some of the Scriptures. Take, for example, the text under discussion. "The night is far spent, the Day is at hand." They have thought this meant that this Day might dawn that very year, or the following year.

ST. PAUL HAD SPECIAL INFORMATION

The Apostle evidently had no such idea; for he goes on to explain, in one of his Epistles, *how* that Day would come, and that there would be a time of trouble, and that the Lord would permit a strong delusion; that the man of Sin must first be revealed. He assured the Church that the Day would not come until first there was a great falling away. He reminded them: You have been told about an evil system arising. Know now that this Day of the Lord absolutely *cannot* come, until the Abomination of Desolation has been set up, as noted in the prophecy of Daniel. And he warned, "Let no man deceive you by any means."—2 Thess. 2—entire chapter.

In one of his Epistles to the Church at Corinth, St. Paul said, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (I Cor. 15:51, 52.) The early Church thought that St. Paul meant that *they* would not sleep. But St. Paul was referring to the Church as a whole—instructing them that some of the Church would remain until the Day of Christ. St. Paul and St. Peter both intimated that they were not of those who would remain to be changed in a moment from the earthly body to the Heavenly.

So, coming back to our text, we are to recognize that the Apostle Paul had special information from the Lord. He tells us so. He says he had visions and revelations more than all the other Apostles. And he declares that the Lord revealed to him things not proper to be uttered at that time. He must not explain these visions; their meaning was a secret intrusted to him. (2 Cor. 12:4.) The Apostle's mind being thus illuminated, he was able to write with great intelligence, clearness and power, so that we, with the increasing light upon the Holy Scriptures now due, might be able to see a depth to his writings, and

get a grasp on the Truth, not otherwise possible. And we do. Nearly all of our knowledge of the deep things comes from St. Paul's Epistles, because he had this light and it permeated all that he wrote. So we today are able to explore and to understand many things which were secrets, known only to the Apostle Paul in his day.

"THE LAST DAY"

The Day spoken of in our text is the Last Day. Martha said of Lazarus, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." (John 11:24.) Which is the Last Day? It is the great Seventh Day. This Day will not be a time of darkness, but a time of *daylight*. That being so, the other six Days represent the night of darkness and sin. In the morning of the new Day, the reign of the Prince of Darkness is to be overthrown by the Prince of Light; and thus the Day will be ushered in. From this standpoint of the six great Days of a thousand years each, we are to remember that the Apostles and the early Church were living in the Fifth Day—there was only one more Day to intervene before the Seventh Day, and then would be due the great shining forth of the glory of the Lord. From this standpoint the Apostle's words are clear.

During the Dark Ages God's people were permitted to have only a measure of light, a measure of knowledge. Yet they had certain great landmarks. And so when the Papacy was developed, God's people said, This is that Man of Sin—this is that *falling away* which was predicted. Thus they could locate themselves. We see that in the Dark Ages there was quite a clear understanding that the Papacy was the Man of Sin. Still it was not God's intention to guide the Church into the fulness of Truth until the *due time*. And we are not claiming now that *we* know the day (the day in the shorter sense) and the hour of the setting up of the Kingdom. But we are not ignorant of the times and seasons.

"PUT OFF THE WORKS OF DARKNESS"

In view of this knowledge of the wonderful Day about to dawn, how shall we who are hoping to be of the Kingdom class of that Day deport ourselves *now*? How shall we live? Ah! says the Apostle, if we are "children of the Day," we are to show it. We are God's representatives and ambassadors. We are to tell the people about the light and knowledge and glory of God that is to come so soon, that will fill the whole earth, by and by. We are to help them to contrast the present with the glorious conditions that will then exist, so that all who love the light may take heed to the Word of God and get ready to be members of that Kingdom class.

What must we do? We must put off the works of darkness, everything that is selfish and sinful—for that which is selfish is sinful, and that which is sinful is selfish. We are to put these off because we belong to the new order of things. The works of darkness would be any works whatsoever that would not stand the fullest investigation; that would not stand approved in the light of the New Dispensation, if it were fully ushered in. Let us remember that we belong to the New Dispensation, and not to the old, and should, therefore, live in accordance with our citizenship and our responsibilities toward the Prince of Light and in opposition to the Prince of Darkness, his works and his ways.

"PUT ON THE ARMOR OF LIGHT"

We have enlisted with Christ, and we will fight against the enemies of our new nature. We will be worthy children of God and strive earnestly, that we may be associated with the Lord in His Kingdom of Righteousness. And when we have *put off* the darkness, what must we do? We must *put on* the armor of light. What is the armor of light? It is the armor which protects from the darts of the Adversary, and includes the helmet of salvation—the protection of our intellects through a knowledge of the Truth, from the attacks of our great foe.

As the Apostle urges, let us "Stand therefore, having our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." (Eph. 6:14-17.) This is the armor with which we are to withstand the attacks which appeal to the evil tendencies of the fallen nature, that we may come off "more than conquerors" through Christ, that we may be of that glorious band of overcomers who will be made kings and priests of God in that glorious Day—in the dawning of the Morning.

LIGHT MANIFEST IN PURITY OF INTENTION

The Apostle continues the figure of speech which refers to the on-coming Day, in contrast with the night time of sorrow, sin and death, during which evil and sin have prevailed. The Scriptures declare that evil-doers prefer that it be dark, in order that their real aims and objects be not known; for they do that in secret which they would not wish to have known in the light and open to the public in general.

Then the Apostle discusses what should be the attitude of the Church. "Let us walk honestly, as in the Day"—honestly, in the sense of conscientiously, openly—having nothing that we would need to secrete from the whole world, if they were able to understand our motives. They would know we had no evil purposes, but only pure, honest, good intentions. Our Lord was the great Light of the world. But He was misunderstood and misrepresented. So all of His followers, in proportion as they are light-bearers, will be subject to attacks from Satan, who seeks to perpetuate his hold upon mankind.

Nevertheless, whether it cost us much or little, our whole course of life is to be honest, upright. Our lives are to be devoted to the cause of righteousness—we are to see to it that we do nothing contrary to the principles of righteousness. Sincerity, honesty of purpose, should make all our life as open as the Day when everything wicked is to be disclosed. By showing the right and exposing the wrong deeds, thus making known the character of these, the Lord will put men on test as to which they love.

For those who love evil, wickedness, after they see it in its true colors, after they see where it leads and all its consequences, and shall have had full opportunity to know and to choose between right and wrong, light and darkness—for such God's portion will be death—Second Death. The only final reward and punishment for evil is *destruction*. "All the wicked will God destroy."

So during the Millennial Day, the Day of Christ, the Day of the Lord in the largest sense, the light will prevail, and all the hidden things of darkness will be exposed. Those who love these things are the ones who will suffer disadvantage; while all who love the light will be blessed and will make progress toward human perfection.

HOW TO OVERCOME FLESHLY WEAKNESSES

Those of the Church—those who are hoping to be kings and priests and to reign with Christ and to be judges of the world—their conduct should be as far as possible in accord with God's standard. Everything should be open, honest, subject to the investigation of the Lord or of anybody. In thus living we shall be proving our faithfulness to the Lord. We must demonstrate our loyalty to Him by being willing to suffer rebuffs and adversity. We must strive most earnestly to overcome our human weaknesses and imperfections, and thus manifest our love for righteousness and for God. We see that our Lord Jesus is the embodiment of these glorious principles for which God stands; and we are to be like Him, our Pattern.

We are to be so in love with God's gracious character and God's methods that we shall greatly prefer to be on His side, under the banner of light, rather than to be children of darkness, whatever its present reward. So let us walk as the children of the light—the children of the Day, and thus we shall be laying up treasures above, and shall prepare ourselves for the glorious things which the Lord has in reservation for those that love Him—for those who are seeking to walk in the Master's footsteps.

"He will never fail us, He will not forsake;
His eternal Covenant He will never break;
Resting on His Promise, what have we to fear?
God is all sufficient for the coming year.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the Day,
For His Word shall never, never pass away."

GROSS FORMS OF RIOTING AND DRUNKENNESS

The Apostle's use of the first person—we, our, us—in the verses preceding our text, would seem to indicate very clearly that he is speaking to the Church, including himself. Indeed, the introduction to the Epistle shows this to be the case. St. Paul is here showing what should be the course of the Church, as in contrast with the attitude of the world. When he says, "Let us walk," he means, Let us daily progress—walk not along the lines of rioting and drunkenness. He does not say that the Lord's people may not occasionally be *overtaken in a fault*. But if they are thus overtaken, they are to know that they are not

then walking in the footsteps of Jesus, but are for the time being walking in the opposite direction.

We are to remember that the Church are at this time imperfect, in an embryotic state—not fully developed. The New Creature has as yet no body of its own, but is merely given possession of this earthly body, which is an enemy of God. The New Creature is obliged to use this instrumentality. As a New Creature, he will ultimately be judged, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, for the Lord will make up for unintentional blemishes. But these bodies which have been the instruments of sin, are to be put into the service of righteousness. All of our present experiences must be in the flesh, because we have no other instrument of service.

Now, the Apostle says, we are to beware of rioting and drunkenness, for all *excesses* are of the *world*. We are living in a time when the bacchanalian orgies of the past are disapproved by the community in general. Many may continue to practise some of these in secret, but they think that it is not wise to let it in any way be public. And those who sympathize with liquor interests, brewers, saloon-keepers, etc., realize that they can no longer do as formerly—they can no longer continue to sell liquor to a person until he has reached the condition of beastly intoxication. All of these evils will be banished when the new Kingdom shall have sway.

THE LORD'S SPIRIT A SPIRIT OF SOBRIETY

The true Christian has the mind of the Lord, and the Lord's mind is thoroughly in opposition to anything in the nature of drunkenness of any kind. The Spirit of the Lord gives a sober mind, a thoughtful mind, a reasonable mind. All rioting and drunkenness are the result of inebriation, befuddling the mind. We are not to suppose that any New Creature would have any sympathy with anything of the kind. The Apostle's suggestion is not that some New Creatures may *think* this the *proper course*, but that some New Creatures may become *careless* in their walk. As the New Creature grows and has more experience, he should learn that the only proper course is to avoid all places and conditions tending to excess and to worldliness. He should study to have new entertainments for his mind, study how to turn his mind in a new direction, toward Heavenly things.

While it is true that we have comparatively few of the orgies of olden times, it is also true that the world today has a more refined kind of rioting and drunkenness. There are social functions that might be called riotous, in the sense that they are unreasonable and disorderly. We might apply this criticism even to nominal Christianity. There is a certain kind of rioting mentioned in Revelation. We read that great Babylon made drunk the inhabitants of the earth with her wine. This might, in some cases, be a stupefaction of the mind; in other cases, a crazed condition.

We once believed many things without any real ground at all for believing. For example, we have believed in fire-proof devils, eternal flames, the roasting of humanity, etc. Now we find that we were merely having the hobgoblins of nightmare. God is not

using His mighty power for the injury and useless torture of His creatures. We find that we were very seriously intoxicated with the wine of false doctrine. We are now becoming sober. The people are beginning to wink and blink, and to try to overcome the effects of the stupefying drafts of error.

Some have gotten out of these errors. But there are some who still have a kind of frenzy of mind, and some of these are attacking us. They launch forth as though they would demolish us, and they battle for the error as though it were the Truth. In their warfare they use the weapons of slander, malice, hatred, strife, and various other works of the flesh and of the Devil. Their choice of weapons is a proof that they are under a delusion, blinding them through false doctrine.

RELIGIOUS INTOXICATION

Sometimes there is rioting, even to the extent of hilarious conduct in meetings. We were once present at a religious meeting where there were all sorts of rioting, evil spirits and demonism. Yet the people were apparently sincere and honest. This occurred some years ago. The preacher hammered the pulpit, while two or three men tried to pray, etc. It was a regular pandemonium. The young people would go there and eat peanuts and snicker and giggle, seeming to consider the service a kind of circus. These people were evidently "drunk"—it was from a bad kind of "liquor," too.

This principle might apply to some of those who have gotten free from the errors of the past. There is a spirit of anarchy, a lack of orderly behavior with some who have come into the Truth. Sometimes it will manifest itself in one of a Bible-Class, who will try to have his own way and to override the rest. He is simply rioting; he has not gotten rid of the wrong spirit; he has not applied the principle of righteousness—the Lord's Spirit, the spirit of a sound mind—to his conduct.

Then sometimes it is the leader of the Class who shows a riotous spirit. The Scriptures very clearly set forth what would be proper in such a case. Each has a perfect right to his own opinion on any subject, but no one has a right to override others and try to force his opinions on them. To do so is contrary to the Lord's Spirit. We should not walk that way. We should walk prayerfully and carefully along the lines of the Golden Rule, doing unto others as we would that they should do unto us.

Let us walk as becometh saints, showing forth more and more "the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous Light."

"Watchman, tell me, does the morning
Of fair Zion's glory dawn?
Have the signs that mark its coming
Yet upon thy pathway shone?
Pilgrim, yes! arise! look 'round thee!
Light is breaking in the skies!
Gird thy bridal robes around thee;

Morning dawns! arise! arise!"

APRIL 12

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the participation of the body of Christ? For we being many are one loaf—1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

It is one cup, though it be the juice of many grapes, even as it is one loaf, though it be from many grains. The grains cannot maintain their individuality and their own life, if they would become bread for others; the grapes cannot maintain themselves as grapes, if they would constitute the life-giving spirit; and thus we see the beauty of the Apostle's statement that the Lord's people are participants in the one loaf and cup. There is no other way that we can attain the new nature than by accepting the Lord's invitation to drink of His cup, and be broken with Him as members of the one loaf, and to be buried with Him in baptism into His death, and thus to attain with Him resurrection glory, honor and immortality—Z '01, 76 (R 2771).

While the primary thought symbolized in the Memorial Supper is that of justification, its secondary thought is consecration. From this standpoint the cup symbolizes the sufferings incident to the sacrificial dying process, poured out by the Father for us to endure, and the bread represents the humanity of the Church given over unto death sacrificially. Thus in the Memorial the death of the Church as well as that of Jesus is pictured forth—P '34, 46.

Parallel passages: Ex. 12:3-14, 18, 21-28; Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-25; 10:35-39; Luke 12:50; John 18:11; 1 Cor. 11:23-34; Luke 22:19, 20; Rom. 6:1-11; 8:10, 17; 12:1; 1 Cor. 15:29-34; 2 Cor. 1:5; 4:8; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:24; 2 Tim. 2:10-12; 1 Pet. 2:19-24; 3:17, 18; 4:13-19; Col. 1:27; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13; Heb. 3:1; 7:26, 27; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Heb. 10:4-10; 13:10-14; 9:13-23.

Hymns: 122, 276, 160, 191, 281, 31, 322.
Poems of Dawn, 54: *The One Loaf*.
Tower Reading: Z '13, 327 (R 5341).

Questions: Have I this week fellowshiped with the Lord and the brethren in suffering? In what ways? Under what circumstances? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

THE ONE LOAF

1 COR. 10:17.

THE twilight hour, when all the world doth dream,
I stand amid
The ripening grain, the ripples, like the bosom of
a lake

Beneath the evening breeze. I pluck, and idly hold
within
My hand, one golden ear, the while in swift succession
pass
Strange visions of the olden time: I see a threshing-
floor,—
The wheat by wooden flail bereft of chaff and shining
husk.
The scene is changed: I see a woman grinding at
a mill,—
Between the upper and the nether stones the grain is
crushed
Until no semblance of its former state remains, but
each
Is merged into one common whole,—a coarse and
homely meal.
Another picture,—mixed with water and with salt
a loaf,
Or flattened cake, is formed and laid upon the glow-
ing coals.

And as I gaze my thoughts are lifted to a higher
plane;
I see "the members of His body," like the golden
grain,
Denuded of their glittering robes of earthly pride and
fame;
The upper and the nether stones of life's vicissitudes
Are slowly, surely, grinding rich and poor, the high,
the low,
Into one common-union,—heart and mind, and zeal
and love;
With purifying salt, life-giving water of the Word,
The mass is being drawn and held and moulded in
"one loaf."

Ah, then, beloved, when we drink of that memorial
cup,
And eat the symbol of His flesh, let us partake with
joy,
Nor *marvel* if we need that strange, transforming
power of *fire*,
Ere we are counted worthy to be like our Lord and
Head,
And "broken" that a hungry, fainting, dying world
be fed!

R5341: OUR "CUP OF BLESSING"

"The cup of blessing, for which we bless God, is it not a participation of the blood of the Anointed One? The loaf which we break, is it not a participation of the Body of the Anointed One? Because there is one loaf, we, the many, are one Body."

—1 Cor. 10:16, 17.—Diaglott.

THE CUP of blessing, for which we bless God," is indeed a cup of blessing in many respects. It represents the blessed privilege of suffering with Christ, and the blessed things which will come as a reward of those sufferings. The Lord declares that the promise will have fulfilment in the Kingdom, when we shall share the Kingdom joys.

The Church is represented as being a part of the great Vine which God has planted; as Jesus says, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." (John 15:5.) Our Lord tells us of the precious fruit of this Vine, the development of which represents the *sorrowful* part of our experience. There is a sense in which the *cup* represents the *joy* which we shall have when we shall have passed *beyond* the *sufferings* of this present time and shall have entered into glory. (Matt. 26:29.) The expression, "for which we bless God," may be understood to mean, for which we give thanks and praise to the Lord. Whoever receives the *cup* without thankfulness of heart, without appreciation, will not get the great reward. In order to receive the blessing *designed*, we must receive the cup with *thankfulness* for this great privilege of *suffering* with Christ.

In considering this question of the Apostle, "is it not a participation [common union] in the blood of Christ?" we should have a double thought before our minds: first, of the literal cup to which he refers, the literal fruit of the vine, which represents the blood of Christ; and second, the fact that we have the privilege of partaking of *His* cup, the *sacrificial* cup. We have the privilege of sharing in His death, sharing in His sufferings. This thought is borne out in other Scriptures—that Jesus is the Head of the Church which is His Body, etc. He is to be the great Prophet, Priest, King, Judge and Blessor of the world.

According to the Scriptures, the great Head was glorified, after having endured the sufferings even unto death, after having laid down His life for the world. And He has adopted us as His members—members *now* in the flesh, to be His members shortly in glory. We use the word *members* in the sense that we speak of members of the House of Parliament. The body of Parliament has many members, and so the Body of Christ has many members. The terms on which they may make their calling and election sure are that they shall believe in Christ and shall give themselves to God. Then our Lord will adopt them as His members, members now on earth and afterwards members of Him in glory.

"DRINK YE ALL OF IT"

On condition, then, that we drink faithfully of this cup (Matt. 26:27), we shall make our "calling and election sure." (2 Peter 1:10.) The injunction, "Drink ye *all* of it," had a double signification: first, it must *all* be drunk before the end of the Gospel Age; and secondly, *all* who would be members of His Body must drink of it. St. Peter spoke of the sufferings of The Christ, Head and Body, which have now been going on for more than eighteen centuries, and of the glory that shall follow. (I Peter 1:8-12; 4:1; 5:1.) As soon as the last member shall have passed into the Heavenly condition, all the sufferings of The Christ will be over, and none others will have the privilege of sharing in the "sufferings of Christ," even as some others will have the privilege of sharing in His glory and becoming His "Bride, the Lamb's Wife."

It is *one cup*, though it contains the juice of *many grapes*; and it is *one loaf*, though made from *many grains*. The grains cannot retain their individuality and their life if they would become bread for the world. The grapes cannot maintain themselves as grapes if they would constitute the life-giving spirit. Thus we see the beauty of the Apostle's statement that the Lord's people are participants in the one loaf and the one cup. There is no other way by which we may attain the new nature than by accepting the Lord's invitation to drink His cup, and by being broken with Him as members of the one loaf; by being buried with Him in baptism into His death, and thus attaining with Him a resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, attaining unto the First Resurrection.

THE CHURCH'S PART IN THE ONE LOAF

The loaf represents primarily the Lord Jesus' body, which is broken for us and for the world in general. In a larger sense it includes all the Body of Christ, all who become His members. Thus the breaking of the loaf, the breaking of the Body, has continued for more than eighteen centuries.

We read that in the institution of the Lord's Supper *Jesus* broke the loaf. As a matter of fact, He was the only one at that time who *could* break the loaf. All others of mankind were unjustified in God's sight until Jesus by His sacrifice and exaltation made good the deficiency of a certain class. So Jesus was the first to break the loaf. Today, as the unleavened bread at the Memorial season is passed to each of us, and as each takes a portion of it, he breaks it for himself.

The fact that our Lord first broke the bread does not mean that we should not have *our individual part*. We recall that the Heavenly Father had to do with the breaking of our Lord's body. As it is written, "It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief." (Isa. 53:10.) This was not done against our Lord's will. While the Heavenly Father had to do with His breaking, so, in harmony with the Divine arrangement, the breaking of our share of the loaf.

The Apostle's statement in the succeeding chapter, "Ye do show forth the Lord's death," applies exclusively to the death of Jesus. The setting of the words indicates that it is the Lord Jesus personally who is mentioned: "As often as ye eat this bread and drink

this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come." (V.26.) "He is *thy* Lord, and worship thou Him." (Psa. 45:11.) The Church is never spoken of as *the Lord*.

Furthermore, we are to remember that Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of *Me*." (Luke 22:19.) He did not say, This do in remembrance of *yourselves*—in remembrance of *your own* share in the sacrifice. We are to be dead *with Him*. We remember that we must share with *Him* in the sufferings of this present time if we would share in the glories to follow. The Father gave Him to be the Head—"God blessed forever."—Heb. 3:1; Rom. 8:17, 18; 9:5.

THE LIFE IS IN THE BLOOD

The Scriptures say that the *life* is in the *blood*. (Lev. 17:11.) In harmony with that statement, the Jews were bidden to always refrain from eating the blood. The animals must be bled before they were permitted to eat the flesh. Nor was any stranger sojourning with them to eat any blood. (Lev. 17:10-14.) In this way, God would seem to say that *life* is a very sacred thing. This life principle that He gave to man, seems to reside in the blood. As long as the blood is passing through the organs of circulation, there is life; but when the blood is shed, the being dies.

When our Lord laid down His earthly life, He did not retain a right to that earthly life in the sense of using it for Himself. He tells us in the parable that all who would gain "the pearl of great price" (Matt. 13:45, 46), must sell *all that they have*; that is, all that they enjoy of earthly life or privileges. Our Lord had a perfect earthly life. He gave up that life. "He poured out His soul [life] unto death." (Isa. 53:12.) On what basis? On exactly the same basis He has put before us; if we would *live*, we must *die*; if we would *reign*, we must *suffer*; we must be dead with *Him*. (2 Tim. 2:11, 12.) So we who follow in His steps do the same that He did.

If we, as His disciples, lay down our life for the brethren, we are doing what Jesus did. This is all to be applied for the world. He took that earthly life, not to keep it, but to turn it over, eventually, to all mankind. The right to human life is still *in His control*. He is the One who, as the great Mediator, will give to the world of mankind the life He poured out.

He now *imputes* His merit to the Church, that we may share with him in His suffering and in His glorious Kingdom, on the spirit plane. This cup, then, represents the full renunciation of earthly life and of all claim thereto. Our Lord's earthly life was not *forfeited*, but merely *laid down*. (John 10:17, 18.) The intention in laying it down was to abandon it, personally, forever, that humanity might get it. He has not yet accomplished this, in the sense of turning life over to them, but He gave up His life with that purpose in view.

UNFORFEITED EARTHLY LIFE-RIGHT

Our Lord undertook to accomplish the Divine will in the redemption of the world, and He has proceeded in the accomplishment of it, but has not yet completed the purpose. He

laid down His life, but did not *forfeit it*. When He was raised from the dead He still had a *right* to that earthly life, with the understanding, however, that He was not to use it for Himself, but that He would give that life to all the world who were willing to receive it, assigning it to them at the end of His Reign of a thousand years, during which His Church will Reign with Him.

So then, His life was *not taken from Him*; for His life could be taken from Him only by His *disobedience*. (Lev. 18:5; Ezek. 20:11; Luke 10:28; Rom. 10:5.) He laid it down voluntarily, in harmony with the Divine will. He laid it down that it might become an asset in the hands of Divine Justice, so that when the time should come He might use that asset for mankind.—John 6:51.

In the beginning it was the Divine purpose that our Lord's human life should be laid down forever, that He should not take it again. He consecrated His life at Jordan and finished the sacrifice at Calvary. Throughout the Gospel Age He has been sacrificing His Mystical Body. Just as soon as He shall have finished the sacrificing of all these Body members, then their life-right, which belongs to the great High Priest, will be used for the purchase, the redemption, of the world, by the sealing of the New Covenant. Immediately after this, His Kingdom will be established. This further application of His merit, His life-right, which will not be made until the whole Church has passed beyond the veil, is symbolized by the sprinkling of the Mercy Seat with the blood of the goat. The blood of our Lord and the blood of His Body, is all one blood. It is one Priest of many members. It is one Atonement for all—for the sins of the whole world.—I John 2:2.

The blood represents not only the death of Christ, but also the death of all the members of His Body, to whom merit is imputed. This the Apostle expresses in the same connection, saying, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [common union, or participation] of the blood of Christ? The bread [loaf] which we break, is it not the communion [common union, participation] of the Body of Christ?" that is to say, a union in common with Him, a *partnership*, as represented in the cup and in the bread [loaf]. The whole matter has its origin in Him. But we are celebrating also our own individual share as members of the Church in the sacrifice of the flesh, in our participation in the sufferings of Christ.

APRIL 13

Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you—John 6:53.

Gladly, dear Lord, we eat (appropriate to our necessities) the merit of Thy pure nature sacrificed for us—for our justification. Gladly, too, we will partake of the cup of suffering with Thee, realizing it to be a blessed privilege to suffer with Thee, that in due time we may also reign with Thee; to be dead with Thee, that in the everlasting future we may live with Thee, and be like Thee and share Thy love and Thy glory as Thy Bride. Oh! that we may be faithful, not only in the performance of the symbol, but also of the reality. Blessed Lord, we hear Thy Word saying, "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup and be baptized with my baptism." Lord, we are not of ourselves able thus to sacrifice; but Thy grace is sufficient for us; for we are wholly Thine, now and forever—Z '99, 51 (R 2436).

To eat the flesh of the Son of Man means in part to appropriate by faith His perfect humanity; and to drink His blood means in part to appropriate His perfect life by faith. Thus we appropriate from Christ an exact equivalent of our debt on account of Adam's sin; and this appropriated perfect humanity and life reckon us as being perfect and having perfect life. Without this appropriation we are dead in Adam and cannot have life, but with it we have life. To eat His flesh and to drink His blood, particularly the latter, also mean in part the Church sharing with Him in the sacrificial death—P '33, 63.

Parallel passages: Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-29; John 6:47-58; 1 Cor. 10:16; Rom. 6:3-10; 8:10; 1 Cor. 15:29-34; Col. 1:24; 2 Tim. 2:10-12; Heb. 13:13-16.

Hymns: 325, 123, 277, 135, 259, 132, 299.

Poems of Dawn, 55: "*Until He Come.*"

Tower Reading: Z '13, 328 (R 5342).

Questions: Did I this week eat His flesh and drink His blood? How? Why? With what results?

"UNTIL HE COME"

"TILL He come!"—Oh, let the words
Linger on the trembling chords;
Let the little while between,
In their golden light be seen;
Let us think how heaven and home
Lie beyond that "Till He come."

When the weary ones we love
Enter on their rest above,
Seems the earth so poor and vast,

All our life-joy overcast?
Hush! Be every murmur dumb;
It is only "Till He come."

Clouds and conflicts 'round us press;
Would we have one sorrow less?
All the sharpness of the cross,
All that tells the world is loss,
Death and darkness and the tomb
Only whisper, "Till He come."

See, the feast of love is spread.
Drink the wine and break the bread;
Sweet memorials!—till the Lord
Call us 'round His heavenly board;
Some from earth, from heaven some,
Severed only—till He come!

R5342: SIGNIFICANCE OF EATING OUR LORD'S FLESH AND OF DRINKING HIS BLOOD

"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."—John 6:53.

IN THIS chapter the Lord is addressing the Jews, who believed not on Him, but murmured because He told them He was the true Bread from Heaven. His expression, "eat the flesh and drink the blood," had a deep spiritual significance which none but *Israelites indeed* could receive. And this is still true today. The world, when dealt with in the next Age, by Jesus, will indeed have the opportunity to eat of His flesh—to appropriate the merits of His sacrifice; but they will have no opportunity of sharing in His Cup—of drinking His blood. Symbolically, the Cup signifies the sacrificed life. The world will have no share in the sufferings of Christ, represented in the Cup.

Our Lord's words imply, If you accept My proposition of the Gospel Age, you may have life, and have it more abundantly than man has ever had it or could have it. You may have *inherent* life—"life in you."

THE TWO SALVATIONS PICTURED

There is a difference, we believe, maintained in the Scriptures between the *bread*, which symbolizes the Lord's *flesh*, and the *wine*, which symbolizes His *blood*. The Church, in order to be accepted of the Lord as members of His glorified Body, must share in both of these by *participation*. The loaf, as the Apostle explains, not only represents to us our Lord, as the Bread of Life necessary for us, but it also represents us as His members to be broken as our Lord was broken; and the wine represents not only our

Lord's blood, but also the blood of the Church—that we are sharers with him in His sacrificial sufferings.—I Cor. 10:16, 17.

The privilege of sharing our Lord's Cup is not for the world. They will not share in the sufferings of Christ, because all opportunity to share in His sufferings and glory will have ended when the Church is glorified. The Lord said, "Drink ye all of it"—drink it *all*. There will be none for the world to drink. And we who are of the Church class "fill up that which is [left] behind of the afflictions of Christ."—Col. 1:24.

"The flesh of the Son of Man" represents Restitution to human privileges, i. e., the means to its attainment, and restores to man the life which he had forfeited—the life lost in Adam—human life, earthly life. It will be the gift of God through Christ. But the *supplying* of this Bread will not be sufficient. The world will need to *eat* of the Bread and to have the assistance the Lord will give them through His Kingdom. Jesus said (V.51), "I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven; if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever."

From one viewpoint the world may be spoken of as not dead. They have lost their right to life, but God has made arrangements through Jesus by which that life will be restored. It was lost in Adam, but will be restored through Christ, the second Adam. During these six thousand years the world has been in a starved and fallen condition. But God has provided this Bread and it will be for them in the Millennial Age.

It is not shown symbolically anywhere in the Scriptures that the world will *partake* of the blood, and thus participate in the sufferings of Christ. Only a few are represented as partaking of the blood. This is shown in Leviticus 16. The blood sprinkled the second time on the Mercy-Seat is for all the people, thus satisfying Justice. This represented the release of *all humanity* from the sentence of death, giving *all* an opportunity to eat of the Bread and not die.

In another picture, we find the blood used representing man's acceptance of the Divine arrangement. In the sealing of the Law Covenant, which is a type of the New Covenant, Moses first sprinkled the *books of the Law*, representing the *satisfaction* of Justice. Then with the same blood he afterwards sprinkled *all the people*. (Heb. 9:19; Exod. 24:8.) The sprinkling of the books of the Law required only a few seconds; but the sprinkling of the people required a *long time*.

At the beginning of the Millennial Age—as soon as the Church is joined to her Head beyond the veil—the blood will be sprinkled to satisfy Justice for the world. Then, as the Mediator, Christ will proceed to do a work for all who will receive it. And that work is symbolically represented as sprinkling the people with the blood. In other words, every member of the race will be privileged to come into Covenant relationship with God through the Mediator, by accepting the terms which He will hold forth during the Millennial Reign.

MOST VALUABLE FOOD AND DRINK KNOWN

If they meet the requirements during Messiah's Reign, by the close of that period they will be perfect; and He will present them before the Father, and all will be received into full covenant relationship with Him, who endure faithfully the test then applied.

In our context (V.54), we read, "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life." Our Lord's statements in many instances are made so broad that they cover, not only the Little Flock, but the Great Company as well, and therein show great wisdom. In this verse the Lord does not say, "hath eternal life" *in him*; for of those who now make a Covenant of sacrifice, and become sharers of the Cup as well as of the Bread, there are some who will not attain to inherence of life—immortality—but who will come through great tribulations and attain life on a lower spirit plane. They will not have *inherent* life, though it will be *everlasting* life. Those who attain immortality will have *eternal life*, on the *highest plane*. Those of the Great Company will have eternal life, but not immortality—not life *in themselves*.

When our Lord said, "For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed" (V.55), we understand Him to mean that this is the most valuable food and drink ever known. No other bread has such value, and no other drink could be so precious as this, by the partaking of which one may attain to glory, honor and immortality—the Divine nature, life in itself.

ANTITYPICAL SHOWERS OF MANNA

The Bread from Heaven was our Lord's flesh, which He was to give for the life of the world. And Jesus explains this to be what was typified by the manna that fell in the wilderness. He said, "Your fathers did eat manna [in the wilderness], and are *dead*. He that eateth of this Bread shall live forever." He also said (John 12:24), "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and *die*, it abideth alone; but if it *die*, it bringeth forth much fruit." And He did fall into the earth and die. And we become sharers with Him in His death. We participate in His sufferings and death, which the world will never do. They share in its *outcome*.

All the work of this Gospel Age, is the getting ready of the food for the world, and of the blood which will be sprinkled upon them. But the Message of our Lord in our text was not intended for the world. As He tells us, "Unto *you* it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven."

It is only a special class who could know anything about the Mystery of God all through these nineteen hundred years—the two millenniums. These things have been hidden from the world in general. But now we believe that the time is here when they are to be given to the world, making the world conscious of the blessing that God has in store for them soon. The Scriptures tell us that the Mystery will be unfolded during the sounding of the seventh trumpet—which is now sounding. This making of these truths known, therefore, would seem to be the showering of the manna.

APRIL 14

He hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors—Isa. 53:12.

As everyone who follows the Master's footsteps must needs have some Gethsemane experiences, so also each must have a taste at least of all the Master's experiences. Let us not forget, then, to look about us for opportunities for serving the "brethren," the "little ones," the fellow disciples of Christ. Let each be careful not to add to the reproaches that must fall upon all the followers of the Lamb, but on the contrary to offer words of sympathy, and to help bear each other's crosses, difficulties and trials by the way. Thus can we best show to our Lord and Head how we would have appreciated the opportunity of helping Him bear His cross on the way to Calvary—Z '99, 125 (R 2473).

Our Lord's death was not a seeming death. His death was actual. His very being was surrendered in death. The process by which it was done was a slow, lingering one, covering a space of 3½ years, and working through physical exhaustion, mental sorrow and physical violence. So greatly did He love us that He went for parts of three days into the death state on our behalf; nor were His final hours passed amid ameliorating conditions. Though innocent of sin and crime, He was put to death as a sinner and criminal with sinners and criminals—P '27, 55.

Parallel passages: Gen. 3:15; Psa. 22:1-21; 69:21; Isa. 53; Dan. 9:26; Zech. 12:10; 13:7; Matt. 27:1-50; Mark 15:1-37; Luke 23:1-46; John 18:28—19:30.

Hymns: 168, 5, 28, 132, 135, 246, 290.

Poems of Dawn, 27: *Christ Within*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 228 (R 5064).

Questions: What effect did Jesus' death have upon me this week? What were the circumstances and the results?

CHRIST WITHIN

A LIVING Christ, of wondrous birth,
Who trod the dreary paths of earth,
Shedding abroad His holy light
Through the deep gloom of sin's dark night.

A *dying Christ*, whose precious blood
Seals the poor sinner's peace with God;
And fills the soul with fullest love,
Like to the joy prepared above.

A *Christ ascended*—all is done,

A world redeemed, a victory won.
With angel hosts, a glorious throng,
We'll sing with joy salvation's song.

A living Christ our spirits need,
A loving Christ our souls to feed;
A dying Christ, our ransom He,
A risen Christ to set us free.

This, too, our need—*a Christ within*,
A life with God, afar from sin,
A Christ whose love our hearts shall fill,
And quite subdue our wayward will.

R5064: "THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH"

OUR FINITE MINDS have difficulty in understanding some of the deep things of Scripture because of our insufficiency of knowledge and of experience. All that we know of our Lord's pre-human existence is revealed in the Word of God. The Scriptures state that our Lord was rich and *became* poor; not that He *remained rich* and *seemed* to become poor, but that He actually became poor that we might become rich. The Apostle says that He divested Himself of those conditions that He had before He became human, and that He took a bondman's form. He was made flesh. The explanation is given, "A body hast Thou prepared Me," a human body, and thus He was made "a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death."—Heb. 10:5; 2:9.

Putting together the Scriptural statements on the subject we have this: In His pre-human existence our Lord was the *Logos*, "the beginning of the creation of God," the Alpha of all God's creation, and the Omega in that Jehovah created only this One. Of the *Logos* it is written, "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." (John 1:3.) He was on the spirit plane, next to the Father.

In the Divine Plan of the Ages, formulated long before, a proposition was made our Lord with a view to the redemption of mankind; provision was made that if obedient to the Father's will, the *Logos* would receive still further exaltation, even to the divine nature. For this joy set before Him, our Lord took the various steps necessary to complete the great work of redemption. The contract into which He entered with the Father was one which involved much humiliation. While there was a sacrifice of power, of honor, of glory, yet no sacrifice of life was involved in the first step taken; namely, His acceptance of the Father's arrangement that He should be made flesh; that He should become a human being, that He should give up His existence on the heavenly plane.

Originally, as the *Logos*, our Lord was a soul on the spirit plane, in the sense that any intelligent being is a soul; for the word "soul" signifies being; and the transfer of the life principle to a human body brought Him to the earthly plane. The life principle was the

same that He had before, therefore the personality was the same. It was important to have identity of mind; and this He had by Divine arrangement.

A BODY GIVEN FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEATH

The Scriptures do not explain how the spark of life belonging to the spirit being known as the *Logos* became transferred to the human plane. When our Lord was thus changed, He merely took the step of getting ready to become the sacrifice for sinners. In His pre-existent state He could not have given the corresponding price for Adam; for He had not the human life to offer. But when He became a human being and had reached the age of maturity, He was in condition to be the Sin-offering.

We would say that our Lord as a human being was the *same soul* as in His pre-existent condition; for He had the same life principle as before; and that when He became human He did not die as a spirit being. The Scriptures declare that our Lord was "made flesh," a human being; and that the difference between Him and mankind in general was that He was perfect—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners"—separate from the remainder of the human race. (Heb. 7:26.) The Scriptures also explain that this difference resulted from the fact that He was specially begotten. The life principle by which He was conceived came directly from the Heavenly Father.

This explanation is altogether different from the theory known as Incarnation. The thought of the theory of incarnation is that a spirit being took possession of an earthly being—became incarnate, dwelt in the flesh, in the same way that some are possessed of evil spirits which dwell within them. This, we believe, is a wrong thought respecting our Lord which has come down from the "Dark Ages." There is nothing in the Scriptures about *incarnation*. The Scriptures do not say that our Lord's *body* died, while the *spirit being* within it remained alive. But the Bible says that our Lord left the glory which He had with the Father and was found in fashion as a man; that He humbled Himself unto death, even unto the death of the cross; that He was "put to death in the flesh."—John 17:4, 5; I Pet. 3:18; Phil. 2:8.

"MADE FLESH AND DWELT AMONG US"

From what we know of childhood we recognize it as the period of development. And so we read of our Lord: "And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him ... And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2:40, 52.) His was not a mind that had all the experiences and intelligence of His pre-existent state. We read that He *grew* in wisdom. His *mind* grew. Of course, being perfect He would learn much more rapidly and accurately than would others; and this accounts for the fact that as a child He was able to confound the Doctors of the Law. With His natural qualities of mind He was able to grasp the situation, to take in things rapidly.

St. Luke tells us that at the age of twelve years our Lord accompanied His mother and Joseph to Jerusalem. The Jewish children were accustomed to attending religious

services; and it was a custom that Jewish boys should make a consecration at the age at which Jesus did. Jesus knew that He was different from other boys. Very likely He told them the facts relating to His miraculous birth. It is assumed by some that He was even charged with having an illegitimate birth. But since we do not know definitely about this, we must confine ourselves to the Scriptures.

Our Lord came into the world in a miraculous manner for the purpose of fulfilling the prophecies, which were all to attain fulfilment in Him. Naturally He would avail Himself of the first opportunity of ascertaining the requirements. When at twelve years of age He learned from the Doctors of the Law that He could not assume the priestly function as a boy, He made no further attempt, but was subject to His parents, or to Mary and her husband, who properly enough were His guardians until He reached thirty years of age, when His first step was to make *full* consecration of Himself.

"I COME TO DO THY WILL"

Our Lord at thirty years of age certainly had much knowledge that Adam did not possess when he was on trial. Our Lord had some knowledge of what constitutes sin and its penalty. He had also knowledge of the fact that God had arranged for the redemption of mankind, through the great Mediator of the New Covenant—a Savior, a Redeemer, a Deliverer. He knew that the *inability of others* to keep the Divine Law written in the Decalogue and *His ability* to keep that Law, constituted the difference between Himself and others.

Doubtless our Lord's mother had told Him of His miraculous birth and of the message that had come through Gabriel and of the prophecy of Anna and of Simeon. And He had in mind the prophecy respecting Himself and the future of the great Messiah that was to come and deliver the world. All this knowledge was very valuable.

But the thing that our Lord evidently lacked was the knowledge of the deeper things of the Scriptures. He evidently found perplexities in the Bible; for He had not received the Holy Spirit. Although He might be better qualified to understand these things than were the fallen race, yet, as the Apostle says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, ... neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. 2:14.) Jesus had not been begotten of the Holy Spirit; therefore He did not have the understanding of the prophecies and symbols.

"THE HEAVENS WERE OPENED"

All this knowledge began to come upon Him when He was begotten of the Holy Spirit. He began to understand the higher things, the deep things of God. He had understood in a measure about the Lamb that was slain as the sin-offering and the things about the putting away of sin, but nothing to identify the One who was to be the great Deliverer or to explain the wonderful pictures in the Scriptures. Just as soon as He was begotten of the Holy Spirit He began to see that if He would reign, it would be by a

manifestation of loyalty to God and to righteousness. As soon as He was illuminated He saw the things pertaining to the suffering.

During our Lord's earthly ministry He learned obedience through the things which He suffered. (Heb. 5:8.) And thus He received the great illumination which was so powerful an addition to Him—just as it is a great illumination to us to see the terms and conditions of our calling—that we must walk in the steps of our Lord if we would reign with Him.

Just in what manner the higher things were revealed to our Lord we may not know. St. Paul tells us of wonderful revelations which were made to him. Doubtless our Lord also had revelations, but just what was revealed to Him thus, in order that He might understand His pre-human conditions, etc., we may not know. Nor do we know how all the acts and experiences during the previous period of His existence before He became flesh could have been impressed suddenly upon His mind. The same God who is able to give us a spirit body which will assimilate all the experiences of the present life, could also impress upon Jesus all the previous experiences which He had had.

The impress of previous experiences did not come to Him during His boyhood; for He was then *growing* in knowledge and in stature, and in favor with God and man. We believe that the impress came at the time of His consecration at Jordan; and that not only had He there given to Him the impress of His previous experiences with the Father and of the remote past, but also that He had light given to Him upon the Scriptures so that He could grasp the full purport of what He had done when He gave Himself in consecration.

As the "heavens" continued to open to our Lord, He would see that the experiences of the Messiah, which could not have been commanded under the Law Covenant, were nevertheless to be His privileges as He would see these to be the Divine will, as He would see these to be the Divine Law in the Prophecies. As a sheep would be dumb before its shearers, so He would not rebel as His rights were taken from Him. He would know that He was to be put to death; and that He was to be an innocent victim. He was to be the crucified One, the antitype of the brazen serpent.

Having consecrated to fulfil all things written in the Book Jesus was fully prepared for His every experience. This we see also is the purport of that beautiful picture in Revelation of the scroll sealed with seven seals. The proclamation was made, "Who is worthy to open the Book, and to loose the seals thereof?" (Rev. 5:2.) Up to that time no one had been found who could open the Book. But at that time our Lord was found worthy to open the Book, and to Him was given all the knowledge in the Divine Plan, that He might carry out these things in the sacrificing of the flesh.

At His consecration at Jordan our Lord gave up the human life—He gave up all rights and privileges as a human being. The ultimate purpose of this full surrender of His life was that He might bring everlasting life to mankind. The Father's arrangement with Him, however, was such that He might retain His personality, His identity. But after He was begotten of the Holy Spirit, He was a New Creature; and as a New Creature He had the human body in which to develop character, in which to have His experiences. This New

Creature was developed to perfection during the three and one-half years of His ministry, and was ready for the spirit body which had been promised to Him.

If our Lord had not been found perfect, faithful, loyal, in His pre-human condition, He never would have had this privilege of becoming a man and the Redeemer of men. Because of His obedience as a man He received the greater glory, immortality. He was perfect under all the favorable conditions before He became a man; He was faithful as a man, and being glorified, He is still faithful. Therefore He maintains the same relationship to God and to righteousness that He ever had. Consequently He would not specially need any of those things which assist in making character; for He has never shown any defects to be rectified. But we may suppose that the experiences which He had in His pre-existent state, and while He was a man, and since He was glorified, all cooperate to make His character intelligent and loyal in the very highest sense.

HE "MANIFESTED FORTH HIS GLORY"

Let us examine some Scriptures which might be understood to imply that our Lord had a clear recollection of His pre-human experiences with the Father.

(1) "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." (John 5:19.) These words were used in connection with the healing of the sick. They do not, of course, mean that the Lord had seen the Father healing the sick, but that He had seen the Father's will, the Father's Plan.

Our Lord was simply carrying out the Father's will concerning Him: "The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart"; etc. (Isa. 35:5, 6.) These miracles of healing were some of the things that He was to do, as written in the Scriptures. He knew that He was to do these miracles and that they were a foreshadowing of the things to be done by and by. As we read, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus ... and manifested forth His glory."—John 2:11.

(2) "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth." (Prov. 8:23-25.) This passage may be viewed either as a prophecy of what our Lord understood of His previous condition, or as a figure of speech setting forth the Wisdom of God all through the ages. But since the Wisdom of God is specially revealed in our Lord Jesus, so this was a foreshadowing of what Jesus might know respecting His pre-human condition.

(3) When our Lord at twelve years of age asked, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49) He would have in mind the Heavenly Father, just as any consecrated child of God might think of Him. From the information which He had received from His mother, Mary, He would know of His miraculous birth and of His special mission in the world. His mother knew that He could not be true to Himself and

His mission unless she told Him about these things. Having been told that He was specially holy and miraculously born for this very purpose, He now turned to Mary and asked, Is it possible that you should not know that I should be about My Father's business? Did not you tell me of this thing? He was surprised that Mary and Joseph should not understand that this was the very thing for Him to do.

MEMORY THE MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION

(4) Our Lord's statement, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58), serves to identify the man Jesus with His previous condition as the *Logos* before He was made flesh and dwelt among us. He is the same today, although He has been received to the spirit plane. He says, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive forevermore." (Rev. 1:18.) Originally He was on the spirit plane. Later as a man, He lived; He died. At His resurrection He was made alive on the spirit plane, far above angels, principalities and powers. But the identity, the personality, is the same.

And we can readily believe that the memory of things past is still with our Lord. We also think that He remembers the experiences which He had in the flesh and also those which He had before He became flesh. Otherwise, He could not identify Himself. Memory seems to be the means of identification of our personality. Nothing in this Scripture would seem to imply that our Lord was born into the world with the knowledge of all His previous experiences. After His consecration He received the knowledge by some means which we are not great enough to understand—by some power the Father used; for the Father has all power.

(5) "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." (Heb. 13:8.) This statement would not identify our Lord with His previous condition; for in His pre-existent state, He was not *Jesus*. He was called Jesus at His birth. He became Jesus Christ at His baptism. "By His knowledge shall My Righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities." (Isa. 53:11.) Our Lord began to bear the iniquities of the world at His consecration, and finished so doing at His crucifixion. Since then He has been reckoning certain persons to be members of Himself. When the Holy Spirit came upon Him and the heavens were opened unto Him, He probably received the knowledge which would enable Him to overcome.

Before His consecration, when our Lord was a perfect man just as Adam was, we know not what force Satan's temptations would have had; but when His mind was opened, then Satan came to tempt Him along the very line of His work, along the line of the consecration which He had already made. Satan attempted to overthrow His consecration and to thwart its completion. How much knowledge our Lord had we do not know; but the Heavenly Father gave Him sufficient to enable Him to come off conqueror. And so with us. Our Lord gives us knowledge of Himself and of the Father. He shows us the relation between the sufferings of this present time and the glories that are to follow. Thus by knowledge all the members of the Body of this Great Righteous Servant will be permitted to come off "more than conquerors" by His grace.

THE NATURAL MAN CANNOT PERCEIVE SPIRITUAL THINGS

(6) "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness." (John 3:11.) The intimation is that our Lord could tell heavenly things, but that He was not disposed to do so, because Nicodemus and others found it difficult to receive even the earthly things. How could Jesus tell of the heavenly things? By that time He may have had the impress of memory in respect to His pre-existent condition.

We are to tell the heavenly things, but not to the natural man. "Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." (Matt. 7:6.) Our Lord said that He had many things to tell His disciples, but that they could not receive them until the Holy Spirit came. (John 16:12, 13.) And, "The Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39.) "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"; "but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (I Cor. 2:14, 10.) Now if the Holy Spirit reveals some of the deep things to *us*, how much *more* could the perfect mind of our Lord enter into the holy things?

"THE GLORY WHICH I HAD WITH THEE"

(7) Our Lord's words, "Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine Own self, with the glory which I had with Thee, before the world was" (John 17:5), would not signify that He had no knowledge of His prospective share in the divine nature. He had the assurance of the Scriptures, one of which was that He should be very high; another that the Lord would give unto Him the Kingdom; another says that Jehovah God would "divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12); still another says, "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." (Psa. 110:4.) He was to be both a Priest and a King of very high state and honor.

Probably our Lord knew these things fully after He was begotten of the Holy Spirit, even as St. Paul was caught away to the third heaven and received knowledge of wonderful things "which it is not lawful for a man to utter." (2 Cor. 12:4.) And so it is most probable that our Lord Jesus had some special revelation; for we read that He said that "as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (John 5:26); thus indicating His knowledge of the fact that both He and the Church would share in the divine nature and inherency of life.

Our Lord's words show that He was not wishing to aspire to these glorious things. Very humbly He said, "Father, I have come to do Thy will. Father, I shall perform the work Thou hast given Me to do and I shall be glad to be returned to the glory I had with Thee—to ask nothing as a favor. I am glad that I have had this privilege, and I think that I

shall not suffer by reason of My obedience to Thy will. I shall be glad, therefore, to be with Thee in the glory that I shared with Thee before the world was."

He did not say to the Father, "Do not forget to pay Me; do not forget what Thou didst promise." No. He did the Father's will without any thought of compensation connected with it. So with us. Anyone who looks for the divine nature merely *as a reward* and feels that it is due him, is taking an improper view. We should feel that to be on the side of righteousness and to be identified with our Lord Jesus is a great privilege, if there be no reward of the divine nature at all; but the thought of the reward is a great incentive to run patiently for something super-abundant, exceedingly beyond what we could have asked or thought.

APRIL 15

Father, into thy hands I commend [deposit] my spirit—Luke 23:46.

With full confidence our dear Redeemer looked up to the Father, and full of faith declared that He committed all of life and all of the blessed hopes for the future to the Father's love and to the Father's power, to be provided in harmony with the Father's Plan and Word. And so must we, as followers in our Master's footsteps, look forward with faith, and in our dying hour commit all our interests to the keeping of Him who has manifested His love for us, not only in the gift of His Son as our Redeemer, but all our journey through—in His providential care, as well as in the exceeding great and precious promises which go before us and give us strength, comfort and assurance—Z '99, 128 (R 2473).

Though but a few moments before His death our Lord felt Himself abandoned by God, just at the moment of His death He recovered the consciousness of God's favor, and therefore addressed Him as Father; and so complete was His confidence in the Father's favor that without the shadow of a doubt He committed His hopes for future existence into the Father's power, having perfect assurance that the Father would restore Him to life. The literal rendering shows that He also deposited with the Father His human life-rights and His right to human life, for the use of others—P '20, 71.

Parallel passages: 1 Chron. 5:20; 2 Chron. 33:12, 13; Job 1:20, 21; 2:9; Psa. 22:1-21; 31:5; 89:26; Isa. 53; Matt. 26:39; John 8:11; Acts 7:59, 60; 21:14; 1 Pet. 2:21-24; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 2:9, 14; 12:3, 4; 1 Pet. 4:12-14, 19; 2 Tim. 4:6.

Hymns: 5, 15, 132, 187, 168, 190, 246.

Poems of Dawn, 189: *He Knows*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 35 (R 5621).

Questions: What has Christ's deposited merit meant to me this week? How has His trust in God affected me this week? What blessings flowed from these to me this week and through me to others?

HE KNOWS

HE knows the way I take,—
What matter then if dark it be,
Or rough, or hedged about,—
His staff shall comfort me.

And should His love withhold
What seems so near, so dear, so sweet,
I'll humbly take this thing
And lay it at His feet.

How sweet to *know* he knows,
And cares, and holds me by the hand,—
Will safely guide until
I reach the Heavenly Land!

R5621: IMPUTATION AND APPLICATION OF OUR LORD'S HUMAN LIFE-RIGHTS

APPARENTLY a great many of God's people have difficulty in discerning just what is signified in the expression, "Gave Himself a Ransom for all." They ask, If our Lord Jesus gave His human life a Ransom for Adam and his race, where has He now any right to human life to give in justification to those who accept His favor, in view of the fact that we read, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"?—John 3:36.

To appreciate the answer to this question, we must realize that the giving of the Ransom has various features. First of all, our Lord's consecration when He was thirty years of age, which He symbolized by water baptism, represents the giving up, the surrender, of His life to God. The life which He surrendered was a perfect human life, one to which He had a full right. St. Paul tells us that He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Our Lord was not a member of the Adamic race in a direct sense—in the sense of having received His life from a human father; therefore His was not a condemned life, like that of the rest of the world. Nothing more was needed. He surrendered the full equivalent of Adam's life and perfection. But He did not surrender His life to *Adam*; He merely put it into the Father's hands without giving it to anybody.

During the three and a half years of His ministry our Redeemer laid down His life. He completed that work at Calvary, saying there, "It is finished!" He there finished His Baptism into death; He continued His self-surrender to the end. But He has not yet made any application of this human life to Adam and His race. He has merely put it into the Father's hands. It was a life that had not been forfeited, that had not been mortgaged, that had not been embargoed. He simply surrendered His life in harmony with the Father's Plan—Luke 23:46.

RIGHT TO LIFE ON TWO PLANES

When the Father raised Him up on the third day, He made Jesus a spirit being. He was put to death in the flesh and was raised a spirit—quickened in spirit. (1 Peter 3:18—Diaglott.) This quickened One of the new nature had this new life as a *reward* for His obedience in permitting His earthly life to be taken from Him. But he had not *forfeited* His right to the earthly life; hence as a New Creature He still retained this right to perfect human life. Everything that belonged to a perfect life belonged to Him. He had permitted the Jews to take away His life, but he had neither surrendered nor forfeited His right to life. So when He was raised to life by the Father, He had not only the right to the spirit nature, but also the right to the earthly nature—not that He would have use for this for Himself; for any one having the Divine nature would have neither use nor desire for the earthly nature. The specific right that He had was the right to give, to bestow freely upon

Adam and his race, human life—the very object He had in mind when He came into the world.

So when the Lord Jesus arose from the dead and ascended up on High forty days later, He retained all the rights that He ever had. He had the right to human life, never having forfeited it; He also had the Divine nature, the reward of His obedience—a superior right, a superior nature. But when He ascended up on High, He did not apply the merit of His sacrifice for the world of mankind; otherwise the whole world would not now lie in the Wicked One. (1 John 5:19—Diaglott.) If our Redeemer had made an application of His merit for the world when He ascended, it would have taken away the sin of the world; but He did not do this. The Scriptures tell us that the Church alone has escaped from the condemnation upon the world. (Romans 8:1.) Evidently, then, the world is still in the Wicked One. The only ones who have escaped from this condemnation are those who have accepted the arrangement of this Gospel Age. Nobody else except the consecrated class has had merit and justification from Christ.

RESTITUTION IMPUTED TO THE CHURCH

How, then, does our Lord apply the merit to the Church? We answer, Not *directly*. If He were to apply His merit directly, it would give the Church human life, human perfection. God has some better thing for the Church—that the Church might attain to the same Divine nature to which Jesus attained. The Church attains this by following in the footsteps of Jesus. This signifies that as He sacrificed His human life, and laid down His earthly rights according to the will of the Father, so all who would become members of His Bride class must do the same, must surrender their earthly life, in order to be associated with Him. Only if we suffer with Him shall we reign with Him.—2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

"If any man would be My disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me." (Matthew 16:24.) Then, "Where I am there shall My disciple be." (John 12:26.) Whosoever will so do during this Gospel Age will attain to the same Divine nature, the same glory, the same immortality—the difference being that our Lord will always be Head over all, the Chief over the Church, which is His Body, and that they will always be His members in particular, the Church in Glory.

The question, then, comes up, if it was necessary for Jesus to be pure, holy, how could the Church be acceptable to the Father, when they are of the depraved human nature? The answer of the Bible is that to this class who become His disciples Jesus imputes the merit of His sacrifice to the extent of covering their blemishes, their imperfections. We are to discern between *give* and *impute*. He will *give* His merit to the world by and by. But now He is making an *imputation* to the Church.

By this term imputation is signified, that if the Church had remained of the earthly nature the same as the world, they would by and by have the right, the same as the world, to come up out of degradation to human perfection. Jesus secured by His death the privilege of giving all those rights to the Church as well as to the remainder of Adam's

race. But this class, the Church, forego all those rights to human perfection. When we consecrated ourselves to God, we gave up our right to become inheritors of the earth and earthly things; we gave up all our rights in the sense of merely surrendering them. By faith we believe that Jesus would in due time have given us those blessings of Restitution the same as to the whole world of mankind. By faith we accept those blessings and by faith we surrender them. The only thing left for the Church to do is to surrender their earthly lives. Some may have more vitality, and some may have less; some may have more talents, and some less; some may have more years, and some less; but whatever each has it is to be given up, surrendered.

So, then, at consecration the Church class voluntarily surrender their earthly nature. They surrender all the earthly rights that they have of the present time, and also those rights that would have been theirs had they remained part and parcel of the world. Jesus does not *give* to the Church at the present time any part of the Ransom-sacrifice, but merely *imputes* to them, counts to them, that part which they might have had if they had remained a part of the world.

When Jesus died, He did not pay over a ransom as an offset for Adam. When Jesus was raised from the dead, He had not paid a ransom; and when He ascended to the Father He did not pay over a ransom for the world. But He laid in the Father's hands the merit of His sacrifice. He has been *imputing* of this merit down through the Gospel Age to the Church only, but now He has about finished the imputing to the Church, and the work of *giving* to the world Restitution is about to begin; and before it begins the merit imputed (loaned) to the Church must be actually *paid over* to Divine Justice as the basis for human Restitution.

WORK OF THE GOSPEL AGE TYPIFIED

On the Jewish Atonement Day the High Priest, first of all, killed the bullock. That bullock represented our Lord Jesus, the perfect man, and the priest represented our Lord, the New Creature. Thus He typified the consecration of the human nature and also the condition of the New Creature, still in the fleshly body, typed by the priest in the first Holy.

Our Lord was in this condition of the Holy during the three and a half years of His ministry. During that time He had the privileges of the Golden Altar, and the light from the Golden Candlestick (representing the light of God's Truth), and the blessings represented by the Table of Shewbread (the spiritual food). At the end of the three and a half years, having finished the work of sacrificing Himself, having burned the antitypical incense, He passed under the Second Veil.

On the third day our Lord arose on the other side of the Second Veil—on the spirit plane—fully perfected as a New Creature, no longer in any sense of the word a man. He could go and come like the wind. He remained with His disciples to convince them that He was no longer a man—going and coming like the wind, and appearing in various bodily forms. Then, when He ascended up on High, as the great antitypical High Priest

He took with Him the blood. The blood signifies the life of the sacrifice. He appeared in the presence of God, and there He sprinkled of the blood on the Mercy-Seat. This sprinkling of the blood on the Mercy-Seat was to make atonement for a certain class. That atonement we see was made only for the priests and the Levites—not for the world.—Leviticus 16:6.

After the High Priest had finished making the atonement for the priests and the Levites, he went out into the Court again and there began a different work. Our Lord made application of the blood for the antitypical priests and the Levites during the ten days between His ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. He made application of His merit for the Church. We know this; for this satisfaction for sins was followed by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the evidence that Divine mercy had come to them.—Hebrews 9:24.

In the type, after the priest had offered the bullock, he then proceeded to the next part—the killing of the Lord's goat. A goat is inferior to a bullock. The Lord Himself was typified by the bullock. The Lord's goat symbolized the faithful members of the Church, His Body. It has been the work of the Gospel Age to offer up the Church. Not that they were able to offer up themselves; for being naturally the members of the condemned Adamic race, they were not fit to be priests, and could not be priests until the great High Priest had made an imputation of His merit for them. Therefore, the great High Priest who offered the bullock also offered the goat.

Then we see the conclusion of the matter. In the type the blood of the goat was taken into the Most Holy and was applied, not for the priests, not for the Levites, but for the people. The blood of the bullock was applied only for the priests and the Levites; the blood of the goat, for the people. (Leviticus 16:6, 15.) These two sacrifices represent all the sacrifices of the Gospel Age; the superior sacrifice was that of the Lord Jesus, the inferior sacrifice was that of the Church.

THE CHURCH NO PART OF THE RANSOM

There was a sufficiency of merit in the antitypical bullock to have been applied for the sins of the whole world. But it was God's arrangement that the Church might be permitted to share in the sacrifice. Only those who have the privilege of sharing in the sacrifice have the privilege of sharing in the glory. It was not necessary for the satisfaction of Justice that any of the Church should die; but it was necessary in order for them to partake of the promised glory. Therefore, while it was a sacrifice for our sins on the Lord's part, it was necessary on our part, in order to share in His glory. He makes the sacrifice; it is not our sacrifice. As the Apostle Paul points out, we merely present our bodies. (Romans 12:1.) God would not accept our sacrifice except through Christ; we are accepted only in the Beloved One. (Ephesians 1:3-6.) Thus by virtue of our Lord's acceptance of us is it that we have any privilege of sharing with Him in the sacrifice and in the glory.

Our Lord, therefore, has still a human life ungiven away. He does not give to the Church human life. He does not part with even a particle of the right to human life which He had. The Lord does not need an earthly body; neither will His Church need earthly bodies. What use would Jesus make of earthly rights, or what use would we make of them? We never intend to become men again; nor does He intend to become a man again. The merit of Christ was imputed to us only for the purpose of making us acceptable sacrifices; and this merit becomes released again when the last member of the Church is glorified. Then the whole value of Christ's sacrifice will be ready for appropriation for the world of mankind; for at that time the Church will have ceased to be of Adam's race, having become of the Divine nature.—2 Peter 1:4.

This work, then, of appropriating the merit of Jesus on behalf of the world is left until the Millennial Age; when the Redeemer's Kingdom will make man's Restitution privileges a real boon. Therefore, as soon as the merit of Christ is appropriated for the world, He will immediately take charge of His purchased possession. He will then take His great power and reign. Then to all those redeemed ones for whom He will appropriate the merit of His sacrifice He will be ready to give the long-promised Restitution blessings.

Through the Prophet David, Jehovah God said to His Son, "Ask of Me and I will give Thee the heathen [Gentiles, nations, people] for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." (Psalm 2:8.) This, we believe, is at the door. The Lord is about to take possession of the Church, which is the jewel class of the whole world. The blessings which He then will give are human Restitution to the race of Adam and the bringing of the whole earth, their earthly home, up to the grandeur of the Garden of Eden. This work He will share with His Body, His Bride.

From this Scriptural standpoint the Ransom-price that Jesus gives has been a progressive matter, and is not yet completed. He began to give it when He became a man; He progressed in giving during the three and a half years of His earthly ministry; He finished the giving at Calvary. He has since been using that to which He had a right on behalf of the Church, by imputation. He will have all of this merit of His sacrifice to make satisfaction for the sins of the whole world—not a single individual omitted. During the thousand years He will be giving to mankind that which He has secured by His death, and which He will make applicable to them by sealing the New Covenant. That New Covenant will be sealed as soon as the Church shall have been completed, as soon as the Church shall have passed beyond the Veil.

SPIRITUAL AND HUMAN NATURE NOT THE SAME

The views of Christian people seem to be very confused. They acknowledge that Jesus was a spirit being before He came into the world, and that He experienced some kind of change of nature in becoming a man. But very inconsistently they seem erroneously and unscripturally to reason that, having become a man, He must stay a man to all eternity—"a little lower than the angels." We should remember that the Logos was "made flesh,"

"humbled himself," not for all eternity, but merely "for the suffering of death, ... that He ... might taste death for every man."—Hebrews 2:9.

The Scriptures indicate that there is a difference in natures. As St. Paul points out, there is one flesh of man, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes and another of birds. And so on the spiritual plane—there are angels, cherubim and seraphim, just as there are beasts and birds, fishes and men, on the earthly plane. (1 Corinthians 15:39-41.) Our Lord distinctly told that He left the glory that He had with the Father. He said to His disciples, "What and if you should see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?"—John 6:62.

The expression, "Where He was before," refers to a difference in nature, in condition, from that He then had. Jesus had been in the world many times before, but never before was *made* flesh. Jesus perhaps was the Representative of God in the Garden of Eden with Adam. Very certain it is, He was the One who gave the Law to Moses as the Representative of the Father. And most assuredly He was the One who communicated with Abraham at the time when the Lord and two angels went down to Sodom, and stopped on the way to tell Abraham about the matter. Incidentally Abraham remembered that they appeared like men, ate like men, talked like men, but he knew not till afterward that they were angels. When our Lord was made flesh, it was not the first time He was on earth. On His previous visits He was a *spirit being* who merely assumed a flesh body as a convenience in communicating with men as the Father's Representative.

We see that this same power of materialization was used by other angels. For instance, at the time of our Lord's ascension the angels said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go." We remember also that the fallen angels had the power to assume human bodies. As the Scriptures point out, they desired to be men, to live on the earthly plane and in the earthly condition, for sensual reasons. Thus they abandoned their own habitation, lived as men and sought to bring forth a new race.

A MUCH MISUNDERSTOOD SUBJECT

If Jesus during His First Advent had merely *appeared* as a *man*, but had all the while been *really* a *spirit being* veiled in flesh—"incarnate"—He could not have been the Redeemer at all. The Scriptures say that Jesus *was* a man, "the Word was *made flesh*, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14)—not that He *pretended* to be a man. To be the *Redeemer* of *man* it was necessary for Him to *become* a *man*, not to *pretend* to be one. He must be *really* a *man*; otherwise He could not have been a ransom-price for Adam; for the Divine Law required *like* for *like*—"life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."—Deuteronomy 19:21.

The word Ransom (*antilutron* in the Greek) signifies a corresponding price. And so Jesus *actually* left the Heavenly glory—not merely *pretended* to leave it. He who was *rich* for our sakes became *poor*, so that He was truly that which He appeared to be—the Man. He was the perfect Man who presented Himself at Jordan—the only one who could

be the *corresponding* price for Adam. The Scriptures represent our Lord as saying to the Father, "A body hast *Thou* prepared Me" for the suffering of death. (Hebrews 10:5.) Many of us have overlooked the fact that this body was Divinely prepared for a purpose—for the suffering of death, and not, as many think, a body for placing the Lord Jesus in a state of permanent humiliation before all the holy angels, as expressed in the old hymn,

"Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary."

Our Lord is not parading Heaven under the disadvantages of a body and a nature all out of accord with His surroundings. He has already accomplished the work of sacrifice, and the *merit* of His sacrifice is in the hands of God. God has accepted the sacrifice that was made more than eighteen centuries ago; and on the books of Justice there are to our Redeemer's credit those earthly life-rights to which, as a perfect man, He was entitled.

When God conferred upon Father Adam human life and human life-rights, he immediately became the great king of earth. And so when Jesus became the natural Man He became the natural Ruler. He was the One to whom the earth belonged; and the perfect man would have had the right to earth and all the fulness thereof. Instead of keeping these rights and becoming the grand earthly Potentate, Jesus surrendered all these earthly rights and received the reward of obedience—not the reward of *sacrifice*, but the reward of *obedience*. He still has these human life-rights, and is about to give them to the world of mankind, upon condition that they shall desire to come into harmony with God, that they shall enter into a covenant of obedience. By His own blood Jesus makes them eligible to full Restitution to all that was lost in Eden and to all that was redeemed at Calvary.

The appearance of our Lord in the flesh after His resurrection was only similar to the appearance that was made by Himself and the angels long centuries before, and does not indicate that He was still a man. As a Man He never went into a room, the door being shut; as a spirit being He could enter, the door being shut. As a spirit being He could materialize, and then dematerialize, vanish out of their sight. This materialization, dematerialization and vanishing appertain not only to the flesh, but also to the clothing. Once He appeared as a wayfarer, and once as a gardener; and then He appeared as His former self in the upper room, the doors being shut. At these various times He appeared in different garments, each time dressed suitably to the occasion. It was just as easy for Him to create one style of clothing as another, and one form of body as another. It is hard to tell just where the misconceptions held by many Christian people have come in. It behooves us to be very kind and sympathetic in reproving the error, and to remember that we ourselves once had the errors and held them just as tenaciously as do others.

OUR LORD NO LONGER HUMAN

Our Lord Jesus was put to death in the flesh and quickened in spirit, or made alive in spirit; and He has been a spirit being ever since. This Spirit Being, Saul of Tarsus saw on

his way to Damascus. He tells us that what he saw was gloriously bright. It was not the flesh of Jesus that was shining. The Apostle says that he caught a glimpse of Jesus in His real personality—"Last of all He was seen by me also, as of one born out of due time"; that is to say, born before the time, referring to the Church, the resurrection birth.

We are begotten of the Spirit, and the birth will be in the First Resurrection. As it was said of Jesus, He was the First-born from the dead; just so we, the Church, will be born to spirit conditions. Then "we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2.) We will not be in the flesh then, and it will not hurt our eyes to see our glorified Lord. We shall see Him as He is! We shall be with Him! And the Apostle explains that before this we shall be "changed," because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."

APRIL 16

They shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him—Mal. 3:17.

Had the Lord sent us forth to seek His elect, we might have gathered in some whom He rejects as unworthy, because we are unable to read the heart. This thought should make us very humble, gentle and meek toward all, and very trustful of the Lord, and very much inclined to look for His leading in respect to our labors as His servants, just as Samuel looked to the Lord in connection with the anointing of David—Z '03, 223 (R 3225).

The Lord makes glorious promises to those who seek Him as the chief object in their lives. He makes them His own, even His own sons, and this will be particularly manifested in the great day. With tender regard does He deal with them. No earthly father ever treated his children with greater leniency than Jehovah treats His children who delight to do His will—P '36, 48.

Parallel passages: Psa. 66:16; 56:8; Isa. 65:13, 14; Heb. 3:14; Psa. 135:4; John 17:6, 9, 10, 24; Isa. 62:3; Psa. 103:8-13; Song of Solomon 2:16; John 10:27-30; 1 Cor. 3:23; 6:20; Gal. 5:24; 2 Thes. 1:7-10; Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rom. 8:32; 2 Cor. 6:18; 1 John 3:1-3.

Hymns: 29, 18, 21, 72, 155, 201, 204.

Poems of Dawn, 259: *Coming By and By*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 326 (R 5119).

Questions: How has this text affected me this week? Why? Under what conditions? With what results?

COMING BY AND BY

A BETTER day is coming, a morning promised
long,
When truth and right, with holy might, shall over-
throw the wrong;
When Christ the Lord will listen to every plaintive
sigh,
And stretch His hand o'er sea and land, with justice
by and by.

The boast of haughty tyrants no more shall fill the
air,
But age and youth shall love the truth and speed it
everywhere.
No more from want and sorrow shall come the hopeless cry

But war shall cease, and perfect peace will flourish
by and by.

The tidal wave is coming, the Year of Jubilee;
With shout and song it sweeps along, like billows of
the sea,
The jubilee of nations shall ring through earth and
sky;
The dawn of grace draws on apace—'tis coming
by and by.

O! for that glorious dawning we watch and wait and
pray,
Till o'er the height the morning light drive the
gloom away;
And when the heavenly glory shall flood the earth
and sky,
We'll bless the Lord for all His works and praise
Him by and by.

R5119: SPARED IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE

**"They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My
jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his only son that serveth him."
—Mal. 3:17.**

LIKE MANY OTHER prophecies, the words of the Prophet Malachi seem to have a *general* application throughout the Gospel Age and a *particular* one at the close of the Age. Eighteen hundred years ago the Lord Jehovah began to make up His jewels. The first of these jewels was our Lord Jesus Christ, who was polished, perfected and taken up on high. Jehovah did not cease His work with the perfection of His Son, our Lord. He has arranged that other jewels be cut and polished after the similitude of His Son, that they may shine with Him in the heavenly glory and Kingdom; as it is written, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."—Eph. 2:10.

These gems must all be found by God, who is making up these jewels. But having been found of Him, they are placed in the hands of the great Lapidarist, our Lord Jesus, that He may cut, polish and fit them for the glorious work of shining with Him in the Kingdom. Our Heavenly Father has appointed our Lord to be the great Master Workman in the preparation of the jewels.

In our text, the Lord Jehovah says that in that day of preparation of the jewels He will spare this class as a man spares his only son that serves him. He has not spared this class in the sense of relieving them from all suffering, for if they were thus spared they could not share the glory to follow this trial time. He did not spare Jesus, the Head over the

Church, which is His Body. But He will not permit them to be tempted above what they are able to bear. (I Cor. 10:13.) He has an interest in them and a sympathy for them, and delivers them from those things which would prove too weighty for them.

THE MOUNTING OF THE JEWELS GOING ON

In a certain sense, then, God has been making up His jewels for more than eighteen hundred years—in the sense of preparing them. But there is still a final gathering, or assembling, of this class, which has not yet been completed. The gathering of these jewels must include the resurrection, not merely of those who have been sleeping as members of the Body of Christ, but also of those who are alive and remain to the end of the Age. These all experience a change from animal to spirit conditions—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (I Cor. 15:51, 52.) In the assembling of this class—the *mounting* of the jewels, as it were—the Lord will show His own workmanship, what He has selected out of the filth and mire of the sinful race of mankind, and what He has made of them.

This gathering of the jewels is that to which the Prophet Malachi refers in the following quotation: "Behold, I will send My Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."—Mal. 3:1-3.

The Messenger of the Covenant is, primarily, our Lord Jesus, who came more than eighteen hundred years ago and presented Himself to those who were heirs of the New Covenant—the Jews. The Apostle points out that this new arrangement meant, not only a new Mediator for them, but also better sacrifices and a new priesthood, who would be able to effect a satisfaction for the sins of the people, so that it would not be necessary to render the typical sacrifices thereafter year by year.—Heb. 9:11-15.

This Messenger of the Covenant came unto His own, but His own received Him not, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God"—to become associated with Himself, to become identified with Himself, as members of His Body. They are begotten to a new nature, not of the will of the flesh, but only of God.—John 1:11-13.

THE LORD'S WORDS A REFINING FIRE

In this sense of the word, our Lord sat as a refiner of gold and silver—discriminating, purifying. The words which He spoke were not only words of grace, of eternal life, but also words of purification, likened elsewhere to a sharp, two-edged sword. (Heb. 4:12.) The Prophet Malachi compares them to fullers' soap, which would take out all stains and

leave the garment pure and white; and he also says that our Lord will sit as a refiner of gold and silver, that the Levite class may offer to the Lord an acceptable sacrifice.

This prophecy refers, as we see, to the antitypical priesthood and includes both the Royal Priests and the Great Company. The work of this great Refiner is to purify the members of the Church class—not only the Little Flock, but the Great Company as well.

This refining process takes place all through the Gospel Age. As the individual members of the Body of Christ grow in grace, they are put through not only the preliminary processes of the refining, but also the more trying ones. Gold represents the Divine or higher order of spirit nature, and silver, the lower order. The gold represents the Little Flock, and the Silver the Great Company.

None of these would be able to make an acceptable sacrifice of himself; but the great Advocate imputes His merit to each who offers himself in sacrifice and thus enables him to become such. The Father permits the Advocate to make of these acceptable sacrifices. They are *His* sacrifices, not their own. Then they are begotten to the new nature and adopted into the Body of Christ. By this offering, our Lord, as the great Mediator, is getting ready for the institution of the New Covenant.

THE PRESENT A WONDERFUL TIME

The closing scenes of the Gospel Age will be the most remarkable of the world's history. The Church will then be completed. We are not at liberty to guess when the end of the trouble will be. Whether *all* of the trouble will come in the next two or three years we do not know. But we think that the *most serious part* of the trouble will occupy a very short time.

Let us remember that we are living in most wonderful times. More can be accomplished in one month now than could have been done in years some time ago—more in one hour than in days formerly. We are still in the waiting attitude, so that the Lord can indicate His will in the matter to us. We believe that the year 1915 will be even more wonderful than the present. We fully believe that the year 1914 will see the end of the Gentile Times, *for we cannot find even one flaw in our Bible chronology*. But we do not claim infallibility. To err is human. If, therefore, the Father permits us to blunder in respect to His Word in this matter, nevertheless, He will undoubtedly have a great blessing for us. And if it should be that the year 1914 should not mark the close of the Gentile Times, we would still believe that the time could not be very far distant; for the nearer we come to that time, the nearer we see the fulfilment of the things which the Scriptures indicate will then occur.

In a short time the Lord will spare His people—not from the trouble altogether, but from any unnecessary experience. We cannot expect that He will spare them as jewels any more than He did His Only Begotten Son. He allowed that Son to be put to death—even the death of the *cross*. Yet He protected our Lord and did not permit any of the things which He suffered to work to His detriment. And so the Lord will spare us as New

Creatures. He is preparing for us the glorious things which He has in reservation for the faithful.

APRIL 17

The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you—1 John 2:27.

The blessing and power of the Lord accompanied David's anointing in some manner—just how, we may not understand—enabling him to progress in knowledge, *etc.*, and fitting and preparing him for the duties of the office to which he had been anointed. May we not consider as an antitype to this, the anointing which comes upon the Church from the time of her acceptance with the Lord? Ours is not a physical anointing, nor are the blessings conferred of a temporal character; it is as New Creatures that we grow in grace and knowledge and love, and as New Creatures that, by and by, we shall be perfected in the First Resurrection and come to the Throne with our Lord and Master as our Head—Z '03, 223 (R 3225).

It never entered the minds of the ancients that the Anointed would consist of a company, but to the Gospel Church this mystery has been made clear, and their position in this anointed company remains secure to the faithful. The holy heart and mind begotten in them at their consecration was the earnest of their inheritance, the immutable pledge of God's faithfulness to the faithful—P '30, 31.

Parallel passages: Psa. 18:50; 20:6; 23:5; 45:7; Heb. 1:9; Psa. 89:20-23; Isa. 11:2, 3; 61:1-3; Dan. 9:24; Matt. 3:16, 17; Acts 4:27; 10:38; 2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:20, 27; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13; 15:23.

Hymns: 1, 21, 90, 14, 165, 217, 218.
Poems of Dawn, 42: *Full Consecration*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 297 (R 5549).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? How? With what results?

FULL CONSECRATION

O SACRED union with the Perfect Mind!
Transcendent bliss, which Thou alone canst give,
How blest are they this Pearl of price who find,
And, dead to earth, have learned in Thee to live!

And thus, while dead to human hopes I lie,
Lost, and forever lost, to all but Thee,
My happy soul, since it has learned to die,
Has found new life in Thine infinity.

With joy we learn this lesson of the cross,
And tread the toilsome way which Jesus trod;
And counting present life and all things loss,
We find in death to self the life of God.

R5549: THE ANOINTING OF THE CHURCH

"The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you."—1 John 2:27.

UNDER the Divine arrangement with the nation of Israel their high priests, who represented the entire priesthood, were inducted into office by an anointing with a peculiar kind of rich perfume called the holy anointing oil. This oil was made according to a special prescription, and the people were not permitted to use it, upon penalty of death. After Israel had become a kingdom, the kings were also anointed with this holy anointing oil.

These two offices of priest and king were afterwards shown to be typical of a united service which would find its antitype in One who was to be a Priest upon His Throne—a Royal Priest, a Priestly King. The Scriptures give us a type of this united office in the person of Melchizedek, of whom it is written that he was king of Salem and priest of the Most High God. (Genesis 14:18-20; Hebrews 7:1-17.) By thus comparing Scripture with Scripture we learn that Messiah, who is to accomplish the great work of blessing the world, is to be the One who will combine the offices of both king and priest.

Examining the type closely, we find that the holy anointing oil was poured upon the head of the high priest only at the time of his induction into office. Poured liberally upon his head, the oil ran down to the very skirts of his priestly robes of office. As we shall see later, this circumstance was also typical.

Looking forward from the type to the antitype, we perceive the Scriptures to teach that there is to be established in the earth a great Messianic Kingdom, which will bind Satan, restrain all evil influences and give the whole world of mankind a full opportunity of reconciliation with God. We also understand that there will be done a great priestly work in connection with this Kingdom. This also will be a part of Messiah's great work, which is thus shown to be twofold; as King He will rule mankind with a rod of iron for their blessing, and as Priest He will instruct, uplift, heal their diseases and awaken the dead.

"CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY"

The nation of Israel well understood that their Messiah was to be the promised Seed of Abraham, who was to bless all the families of the earth; but not until the time of our Lord's First Advent was it due to be understood that this Seed was to consist of more than one individual. The Apostle Paul calls our attention to this fact and declares that this was the Mystery hidden from previous dispensations—that the Messiah was to be, not an individual, but a company under one Headship. (Ephesians 3:2-7; Colossians 1:25-27.) Furthermore, this Messiah is not only to be multitudinous, but is to be gathered from amongst many nations.

Only a few can understand this Mystery; many do not comprehend it yet; in fact, it is to be understood only by a special class, for whom it is designed. The Scriptures show us that the Gospel Age is set aside for the selection of this great antitypical King, greater than Solomon; this great antitypical Royal Priest, represented by Melchizedek. The call of this Age is for those who shall become members of this company, the antitypical Priest and King.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

All who would become members of this Kingdom class must look to our Lord Jesus as the One through whom the favor of God is to come to them. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under Heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." Since the death and resurrection of Christ a new way to life has been opened up. Christ will be the Head of the Church which is His Body; and the entire Church will complete the great antitypical Prophet, Priest and King—the long expected Seed of Abraham.—Galatians 3:8, 16, 29.

Therefore let all who have offered themselves to God in consecration take up the cross and follow the Master; let them live as nearly as possible the life that He lived, walking in His steps. While we cannot be perfect according to the flesh, and while God cannot approve anything imperfect, yet our perfection is to be that of intention, of will; and thus through the Redeemer shall we approve ourselves unto Him.

Reverting to the typical picture of the anointing of the Jewish high priest at the time of his induction into office and comparing it with the antitype, we perceive that the great antitypical Priest was anointed at Jordan. There our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Christ company, received the Holy Spirit without measure. At Pentecost the antitypical anointing oil began to flow down to the Church. As in the type the oil poured upon the head of the high priest flowed down to the very skirts of his garment, so the Holy Spirit has come down from the Head of the Church even to the last members of the anointed Body of Christ.—Psalm 133:1-3.

THE ENTIRE CHRIST COMPANY ANOINTED

We receive this anointing from the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. All things are of the Father and all things are by the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6.) The Father bestowed the Holy Spirit upon the Son, and authorized Him to bestow it upon His Body. This granting of the Holy Spirit was designed to be an anointing for the whole Body; for the Father recognized the Body when He recognized the Head. When Christ made imputation of His merit to cover the blemishes of the Church, He made us acceptable to the Father; and this acceptance was outwardly manifested by the tongues of fire, etc., which came upon the Apostles at Pentecost. This outward manifestation was not the most important thing, however; for the Apostles might have received the Holy Spirit without any special manifestation of Divine Power.

The tongues of fire which descended at Pentecost, like the dove which lighted upon our Lord at His baptism, did not continue to be seen. Both the dove and the flame of light were merely outward representations for the purpose of convincing the beholders that the promised blessing and power had come.

When Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, was received into the anointed company, there was another manifestation of the fact that the Holy Spirit had been given to the followers of Jesus. So there might be many manifestations of any fact. Even now God might give a manifestation to show that He had bestowed the Holy Spirit; but by so doing He would merely be *indicating* the fact—the holy Spirit was *already there*. The anointing which the Church received at Pentecost was the Divine sanction, the Divine recognition, of those consecrated to follow in the footsteps of our Lord. God thus gave outward demonstration of the fact that there was to be a Church.

Since Pentecost the same Gospel call has gone forth throughout all the world—to as many as the Lord our God doth call. (Acts 2:39.) Those who accept the terms and conditions of that call come into the anointed company. When we come into Christ, we come into this anointing. We do not get into the Body of *Jesus*, but we come into this symbolical Body of the Anointed—*The Christ*. We enter into this condition in which we are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" Jesus our Lord. Throughout this Gospel Age this anointing has continued in the Church. "The anointing which ye have received abideth in you"; it continues in you. Those who never come into this anointing will never be of the Church.

ANOINTING AND BEGETTING

As to how we may know that we have been begotten is another phase of the matter. At Pentecost when the Church began, there were outward signs by which this anointing was demonstrated—gifts of the Spirit, gifts of tongues, etc. These were merely outward gifts, the Apostle tells us, and might mean no more than tinkling cymbals or sounding brass. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3.) It might be that those having the gifts had merely come into relationship with God in an outward, formal way, and had made no real progress in spiritual things.

God's arrangement seems to be that after we have come into this anointed company and thus may from the very beginning speak and think of ourselves as the anointed class, there will by and by come a manifestation that we have really entered into this class. This evidence will not be by our speaking with tongues, etc., but by the appearance of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit—meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. The manifestation of these fruits would seem to mean that we were becoming more and more actuated by the Spirit of Christ.

But even here we must discriminate between the natural disposition and that acquired by growth in grace. For instance, there are those who have a great deal of patience—too much, in fact; they are indolent. Their patience, therefore, is not a fruit of the Spirit. In

order to distinguish between natural traits and acquired graces we are to compare the person's natural disposition with his growth in grace and in the fruits of the Spirit.

The anointing of the Spirit is not altogether the same as the begetting of the Spirit. The anointing relates merely to the recognition as a *member of a class* called to a special work in the Messianic Kingdom. When we become related to God through Christ we become members of the anointed company. But while the anointing is represented of the whole Church *collectively*, the begetting of the Holy Spirit is an *individual* matter. In various ways the Scriptures explain to us that we are begotten of the Holy Spirit by and through the Word of Truth.

SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE WORD OF TRUTH

In other words, no one can receive the Holy Spirit except he has received the Truth. As an illustration, Cornelius was a good man, who prayed much and gave alms liberally; all this, however, did not give him the Holy Spirit. But when the appropriate time came—the end of the seventy weeks of favor to the Jews—Cornelius was directed to one who would tell him what he ought to do. He was instructed by a holy angel to send for St. Peter to come to his house and to tell him *words*. (Acts 10:22.) Words were necessary.

In order to become members of the Church of Christ, there must be intelligent action on our part—it is not something of a hocus-pocus. We may know, therefore, that no heathen, however noble by nature, could possibly be of the Church class; and the same is true of people who are civilized. Whoever is to be of the anointed company must have a knowledge of the privilege of coming into relationship with God through Christ. If any one has not had this information, he cannot possibly be of the Church class.

It is the Word of God, the Gospel Message, that will bring people into relationship with God. So whoever will receive the Holy Spirit must first receive the knowledge of the Truth; and then this Truth will operate upon him. First he must take his stand for righteousness; next he must receive Christ as his Redeemer. Then, after having accepted Christ as his Savior, he must go forward and make a consecration of himself to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus. If he merely understood that this is the will of God, we believe that he would be received of the Lord—begotten of the Holy Spirit. Then it would be God's order that he receive more instruction, because he had taken the proper steps thus far.

THE PURPOSE OF THE ANOINTING

How much of this is done automatically we may not surely know. As the skilful human being operates largely along automatic lines, so the great Creator would doubtless have automatic lines along which to work; and one step would lead on to one result, and another step to another result, etc. Our supposition is that God has some great principle operating automatically by which, under Christ, all whom He would accept would receive certain blessings individually. As soon as the individual would take the required steps, he would realize the Divine blessing and guidance in his affairs.

All of the anointed have the mind of the great Head of the Church. So we are to seek to abide in Christ individually as well as collectively; for as we have come into the anointed class, so it is possible for us to go out of that class. To abide in Christ, we must, as New Creatures, grow in grace, in knowledge and in love; for as New Creatures we shall, if faithful to the end of our course, be perfected in the First Resurrection, and sit in the Throne with our Lord and King.—Revelation 3:21.

APRIL 18

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy—1 Pet. 4:12, 13.

In an unfriendly world we can expect to receive only the reproaches of our Master, for the servant is not above his Lord. The world, the flesh and the devil oppose our way. There are **fightings within and fears without**, and many are the arrows and fiery darts aimed at the righteous. But what is the safe attitude of the soul under afflictions and severe testings? Is it not in silence before God, waiting and watching first to see His leading, His will, in every matter before presuming to touch things that often involve so much? So the Psalmist suggests, saying, "I was dumb with silence; I held my peace, even from good [even from doing or saying what seemed good in my own sight]"—Z '96, 31 (R 1937).

It should not surprise God's children when trials come, for their consecration implies suffering with Christ. Nor should it discourage them; rather it should be the cause of rejoicing, because it affords them the privilege of suffering with Christ, an experience which should make all the sweeter the glory to follow. The greater the suffering endured, the greater will be the glory to be revealed. Well may this thought encourage us—P '35, 61.

Parallel passages: Rom. 6:1-11; 8:10, 17; 2 Cor. 1:5; 4:10; 1 Cor. 15:29-34; Mark 10:35-39; Col. 2:11, 12; Gal. 2:20; 2 Tim. 2:10-12; Phil. 3:10; 1 Pet. 2:19-24; 3:14, 17, 18; 4:16, 19; Heb. 7:26, 27; 13:10-16; 10:4-10, 19; 9:13-23; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9.

Hymns: 299, 114, 134, 244, 326, 259, 325.
Poems of Dawn, 174: *Perfect Through Suffering*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 297 (R 5778).

Questions: Have I this week suffered with Christ? How? Why? With what results?

PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING

GOD never would send you the darkness,
If He felt you could bear the light;
But you would not cling to His guiding hand,
If the way were always bright;
And you would not care to walk by faith,
Could you always walk by sight.

'Tis true He hath many an anguish,
For your sorrowful heart to bear,
And many a cruel thorn-crown,

For your poor, tired head to wear;
He knows how few would reach heaven at all,
If pain did not guide them there.

So He sends you the blinding darkness,
And the furnace of seven-fold heat:
'Tis the only way, believe me,
To keep you close to His feet—
For 'tis always so easy to wander,
When our lives are glad and sweet.

Then nestle your hand in your Father's
And sing, if you can, as you go;
Your song may cheer some one behind you,
Whose courage is sinking low;
And, well, if your lips do quiver—
God will love you better so.

R5778: THE CHRIST PERFECTED BY SUFFERING

"Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."—1 Pet. 4:13.

IT MIGHT at first seem strange to God's people that they should suffer special trials and difficulties as a result of becoming children of God and doers of that which is good. The natural expectation would be that he who *sins* shall suffer, and he who seeks to *avoid sin* shall be blessed. This is a natural law, and it will operate in due time—during the Millennial reign of our Lord. Evil-doers shall suffer stripes, and if found *persistent*, shall be cut off in the Second Death. But all well-doers shall be rewarded with everlasting life and blessing forever.

This is not true now, however, for the reign of the Prince of Righteousness has not yet begun. We are under the reign of the Prince of Darkness. And the evil-doers often have great success, while the right-doers suffer. David says of the wicked, "Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish." (Psa. 73:7.) Nevertheless he took his stand with those who would please God—and so also do we.

GOD'S PURPOSE IN TESTING US

St. Paul, speaking concerning the Church of the Gospel Age, says, "*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.*" (2 Tim. 3:12.) There is *no exception* to this rule; and the knowledge and expectation of this should make us stand *fast*, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and having our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace.

God allows His people to have these experiences and to suffer for right-doing. In the present time He is calling out a saintly company. This company will be the Royal Priesthood of the future, to bless all the world during Messiah's Reign. And the Bible explains to us that these need trials to prove and test their characters.

God wishes to see how loyal we are to the principles of righteousness. How much are we willing to suffer? It is a saying with the world, "Every man has his price." And so in the Church there are some who would endure a certain amount, and then back down. Others will endure a little more, and others still a little more. The Lord declares that He is seeking those who will give up everything in order to prove faithful to their Covenant with Him. This faithfulness means entire loyalty to God, to His laws, which are the laws of righteousness.

THE FIRE TO BURN AMONGST YOU

The intimation that these fiery trials will try the Church, will burn amongst God's people, does not necessarily mean that *all* the fiery trials will come from the *Church*; but that these trials constitute a fire that is to do a purifying work amongst them, burning in their midst. It is an experience that must be endured by each one individually. It will be a general experience, because each one must have a share in this matter. It is not merely that the company as a whole will have opposition against them, but that each individual will be personally exposed to the fiery trials. Therefore this fire burns in our midst and will burn to the end.

It is a different kind of trial from what could come to any other body of people. The explanation of this difference is in our text—"inasmuch as we are made partakers of Christ's sufferings." When we know that each member of the Body of Christ must be tried, we can rejoice when some of this fire touches us. We say, "I am having a share in the sufferings of Christ. I am glad that in God's providence I have a share in these trials; for if I had no share in them, how could I know that I am one of the Body members?"

THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF TROUBLE

So we all rejoice, knowing that these fiery trials are of the Lord. Not that the Lord is the *cause* of these fiery trials; for usually it is the Adversary. But we have put ourselves into the Lord's hands, and He has promised to supervise all that concerns us. Therefore, whatever comes to us, we may be sure that it is of the Father's purpose, or permission for our good. If, therefore, we recognize that this is something that the Lord's providence has arranged for us, it is all right, no matter how frequently we have to go to the Throne of Grace for help in time of need.

God has revealed to us that He purposes to give to The Christ very great exaltation, great glory, honor and immortality. Therefore we are looking forward to the time when this Body shall be perfected, and we shall share in the glory of our Head. When the glory shall be revealed, we shall be glad with a great joy! These trials that come to us are from a variety of sources. In our context they are spoken of as the *one* trial of the Church, but

that one trial is made up of a variety of experiences. If these difficulties and trials came all at once, they might be too severe for us. Therefore the Lord permits us to be taken out of the fire for a little while. "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust."—Psa. 103:14.

TORTURES OF TODAY MORE REFINED

And so the Father has arranged that we shall have little seasons of refreshment between times, so that when the next trying experience comes, it will find us a little stronger and more ready to profit by it. Some of these trials come from the Adversary himself. Apparently the things that have been done to the Church could come from none other. Think of the devilish disposition manifested toward our Lord, and reflect upon His sufferings. We cannot think that mankind under any ordinary conditions could ever have had so malicious a spirit as that manifested against Him. The Devil had to do with all the wicked persecutions of the saints—the cutting out of tongues, the racking of their poor bodies, and the shooting out of *bitter words* from the *tongue*.

We are more used to this latter form of persecution today than in olden times; for the world—the average man—would not permit the things done in the Dark Ages. But the wicked feelings are still there—the animosity, the gall. As the Apostle James says, the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, and it sets on fire the course of nature. (James 3:6.) And so in our day the tongue and the pen are often used as weapons of evil.

We have all noticed, perhaps, how willing the world is to *speak* evil and to *believe* evil—how willing to say that which they do not know. This is all because they are obsessed, besieged by the Adversary. But we are living in a more civilized day than were our brethren of the past. We think the individual who does these wicked things today—who slanders and vilifies God's people—is under some malevolent influence. And then the temptation comes to us to speak evil of them in return—to do all the harm we can against them. If we find this disposition to speak evil arising within us, we are to resist it, to allow the fire of this time to burn up these elements of our old nature. And the fire will have this purifying effect upon us, if we receive it aright, making us meet for the Heavenly Kingdom.

SECONDARY SOURCE OF TRIAL

Not only from the Adversary do these trials come, but they come from the weaknesses and the imperfections of others. And perhaps those that come from the brethren are the most difficult to bear. We know that "the god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not." But when it comes to those who have made a profession of loyalty to God, and who have named the name of Christ, whether they be Presbyterians or Episcopalians, Baptists or Congregationalists, or those who are Bible Students—if in any of these we find the persecuting spirit, we are more discouraged and less likely to have the proper sympathy for them.

We are to remember, however, that nothing can happen to us unless the Father permits it. If we did not get the trials from Methodists or Presbyterians or Bible Students, we would get them from somewhere else, in order to burn up our dross and strengthen the elements of our character which need development. We are to take all of these things patiently, knowing that they are working out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." We are to look away from these things and to recognize the grand purpose of God. We are to reflect that this is the way in which God is chiseling us and polishing us to make us ready for the grand Temple of Glory. And when we think of this, we can look with fortitude and patience on these fiery trials, recognizing that we shall get a blessing out of them.

"Through many a thorny path He leads
My tired feet;
Through many a path of tears I go,
But it is sweet
To know that He is close to me—
My God, my Guide;
He leadeth me, and so I walk
Quite satisfied."

Thus we learn as people of God to *glory*. We may glory in all the things which He has done *for* us and *in* us. The things that naturally would be least likely to be gloried in are tribulations, persecutions. But we may glory also in these. We may rejoice in them—not that we enjoy the tribulations, the persecutions, but we realize that these are working for us characters pleasing to God. The Lord will see to it that we get enough, and not too much, tribulation.

The word *tribulation* has the thought of serious trouble—a combination of troubles that makes the experiences serious. It would not mean that we would fall into some difficulty and soon get out of it again, but it would mean severe and continued trouble. Sometimes we cannot see why we have the troubles that come to us. They may come in the form of sickness, or death, or financial trouble, or humiliation of our unrecognized pride and self-love; or we may have a combination of trouble. There is no difference whether it is one kind or another kind—they are *tribulations*. But it is for us to recognize that in all these trials the Lord supervises and makes them work for our good.

The *world* has persecutions of a certain sort. People in business will sometimes persecute one another. Sometimes persecutions are in a political way. The Lord indicates to the Church that we may rejoice in any persecution, especially if we are in no way *blame-worthy*. "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed [feel disgraced]," said the Apostle. (1 Pet. 4:14-16.) He is suffering because the "darkness hateth the light," and slanders the Truth. This has been so from Jesus' time all the way down.

BLESSING RESULTING FROM PERSECUTION

Shall we say that we will not be reconciled to any certain experience? No; we have committed all to the Lord, and it is for us to bow in full submission, knowing by faith and from the assurance of God's Word that all things are working together for good to us. No matter what the trouble may be, it will bring patience if we are rightly exercised. Some of the Lord's people may have patience well developed, and thus not need so many of these experiences. But whatever we *need*, we should desire.

We remind you again of the story of a certain brother who took account of his qualities, and decided that he was most lacking in *patience*. Then he prayed most earnestly to the Lord to give him more patience. He kept on praying; and the more he prayed, the more difficulties he seemed to have, the greater trials of patience. Then it occurred to him that this was the answer to his prayer; for that was the way to get patience. And when he began to see the matter aright, it encouraged him and made a great change. He saw that the Lord was answering his prayer by giving him the very experiences he needed to develop in his character this grace of the Spirit.

"Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." This does not mean that we get all of our patience first, then all of our experience, and then all of our hope; but that they are all developing together. We have a good courage and are desirous of pleasing the Lord; we are not ashamed to be His children. And the reason why we are not ashamed is that with this hope, we have the realization of God's love; and we are able to say, "If I had *tribulation*, I now have more *hope* and more *patience*. I am getting the results in these tribulations, in the fruits of the Spirit." Whoever escapes experiences that would develop the fruits of the Holy Spirit will never gain a place in the Kingdom.

Patience can be gained *only by trials*. Faith can be developed *only by necessities*. We have need of preparation for our future work. This can be gained only by those experiences which will touch us with a feeling of the infirmities and difficulties and trials of the groaning creation to whom we shall be ministers and representatives when we reach the Throne. For us, then, the lesson of present experiences is to resist evil; not with evil, but with *good*. "Be not overcome of evil; but resist evil with good."—Romans 12:21.

APRIL 19

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things—Matt. 12:34, 35.

Our first concern, then, should be for the heart—that its affections and disposition may be fully under the control of Divine grace; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, brotherly kindness, love, faith, meekness, temperance, supreme reverence for God and Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles be fixed, established, in the heart, then out of the good treasure of the heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace—Z '96, 30 (R 1937).

The heart is the source of our words and acts; therefore as one's words and acts are, his heart is. A good heart overflows in good words and acts; a wicked heart, in evil words and acts. How necessary, therefore, to keep the heart pure! To all the Lord's followers the admonition is certainly appropriate, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23)—P '34, 47.

Parallel passages: Luke 6:45; Psa. 37:30; Prov. 10:20; 12:6, 17-19; 15:4, 23; Deut. 5:29; 6:5, 6; 1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Chron. 28:9; 2 Cor. 12:14; Psa. 51:10; Jer. 17:9, 10; Matt. 5:8; 12:33, 36, 37; 15:18-20; 23:26; Heb. 3:8.

Hymns: 116, 44, 130, 125, 136, 49, 154.

Poems of Dawn, 146: *Scatter Seeds of Kindness*.

Tower Reading: Z '06, 92 (R 3746).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How did this text prove true in this week's experiences? What were the results?

SCATTER SEEDS OF KINDNESS

LOVING words will cost but little,
Journeying up the hill of life;
But they make the weak and weary
Stronger, braver for the strife.
Do you count them only trifles?
What to earth are sun and rain?
Never was a kind word wasted,
Never was one said in vain.

When the cares of life are many,
And its burdens heavy grow
For the ones who walk beside you,

If you love them, tell them so.
What you count of little value
Hath an almost magic power,
And beneath that cheering sunshine
Hearts will blossom like a flower.

So, as up life's hill we journey,
Let us scatter all the way
Kindly words, to be as sunshine
In the dark and cloudy day.
Grudge no loving word, my brother,
As along through life you go,
To the ones who journey with you;
If you love them, tell them so.

R3746: "TAKE HEED HOW YE HEAR."

"Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only."—Jas. 1:22

OUR lesson follows the Sermon on the Mount, and was evidently intended as a parable, to impress upon the minds of the Lord's people the importance of what they had heard—the importance of obeying as well as hearing the good tidings. It sets forth the good results of careful obedience, in contrast with the unsatisfactory results to those who would fail to obey. It is evidently not evil surmising if we are on the lookout for false teachers, who our Lord declared would come amongst his sheep to mislead them. Neither can it be evil speaking to call the attention of the sheep to such false teachers. The Master and the apostles foretold and forewarned against them and so should all who are faithfully following the Master's example.

But we are to distinguish them in the manner which our Lord and the apostles clearly indicated: however smooth, polished, educated, gentle, they may be on the surface, we must get to know them better than by surface indications before we may dare trust them as leaders of the flock—we must become intimately acquainted with them, their motives, ambitions, private life. This our Lord intimates by telling us to beware of them if they are ravenous, greedy, selfish, even though outwardly they may have a sanctimonious air. The Apostle speaks of these, saying that "grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock": "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you": "even denying the Lord that bought them."—Acts 20:29; 2 Pet. 2:1, 3.

We are to balance the matter, however; and while vigilant to detect and resist the wolves in sheep's clothing, as well as out of it, we should remember our Lord's teachings on the other side of the question—that those who are not against us are on our part, and that we should neither reprove as wolves nor disown as brethren those whose hearts, whose characters, give evidence that they belong to the Lord, even though they follow

not with us in respect to his service, the promulgation of his message, etc. In other words, we are to love all and wish God-speed to all loving the Lord and manifesting his Spirit, whether they associate with us or not. In a word, the divine rule is very broad and very narrow at the same time. It is narrow as respects discipleship and character: faith in the redeeming blood, consecration to the Master, and a manifestation of his Spirit are the lines of discipleship—broad within themselves, but narrow as compared to the lines of the world.

"KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS"

Anticipating our query respecting how we may know the true from the false our Lord says, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." He illustrates this by suggesting that grapes are not to be expected on thorn-bushes nor figs on thistles, although it is said that there is a thorn-bush in Palestine which grows a fruit somewhat resembling grapes, and a kind of thistle with heads shaped like figs. Nevertheless, no one was in danger of being deceived thereby, nor should any among the Lord's people be in doubt respecting the character and the fruitage of the life of those who are the followers of Christ.

The thought is that the Lord's true people are of such a kind that the fruit of their lives is nourishing and refreshing toward all who have fellowship with them. On the other hand there are persons who, thistle-like, are always scattering seeds that will cause trouble—false doctrines, evil surmisings and errors; and there are some who, like thorn-bushes, instead of bearing refreshing fruit, are continually reaching out to impede, to irritate, to annoy, to vex, to poison, to injure, those with whom they come in contact. The intimation clearly is that the Lord's people ought to have little difficulty in distinguishing between the false teachers who would mislead them and the under-shepherds who gladly lay down their lives in the service of the flock. The one class are continually mischief makers, underminers, destroyers. The other class are helpers, builders, strengtheners, peacemakers.

Not content with giving us a word-picture distinguishing between wolves and sheep, between injurious plants and fruitful ones, our Lord next institutes another illustration still more searching—contrasting a healthy fruit-tree with a diseased or evil one, contrasting a healthy Christian with a perverted and misguided one. He declares that a sound tree brings forth good fruit, but a corrupt or diseased tree brings forth undesirable, evil fruit. How we have all witnessed this in nature—the sound apples come from good apple trees that are in healthy condition. The knotty, wormy, unsatisfactory fruit comes from trees that are diseased, under-nourished, uncared for, unpruned, attacked by worms, etc.

In this illustration our Lord seems to refer to the fact that those who are his disciples, sound and proper enough to begin with, might become evil, might lose their spiritual strength and fruitfulness—their carefulness. Lack of nourishment in the soil would expose a tree to disease, blight. So the Christian who would add to his attainment in knowledge is liable to decline in spirituality unless he have spiritual nourishment of the right kind. As without pruning the tree would develop suckers, which would corrupt it

and ultimately destroy its fruitfulness, so the Christian needs the disciplines, the prunings, that he may develop in character and the graces of the Spirit. Our heavenly Father is the great husbandman and has promised us the proper care, yet it is not exactly with us as with the trees; for because of our higher endowment, our godlike quality of individuality, will, we are dealt with differently.

To a considerable degree it is for us to determine what nourishment we will have. The Lord supplies the good soil of Truth, the refreshing showers of grace, and the nourishment of precious promises, but it is for each of his people to use these and thereby to grow in grace, knowledge and love. We cannot, then, blame the Husbandman if we come short, and be unfruitful from lack of nourishment. None of his good promises can fail; whatever failing there may be must be in ourselves. Likewise with the pruning—the Lord will send the chastisements, trials, difficulties; but with our independent will it is possible for us to pass these by and, failing to use them, fail to correct the weaknesses, shortcomings and wrong developments of our nature. It is possible with us, notwithstanding all the development or pruning we may receive, to set our affections on houses, lands, or earthly aims, objects or individuals, which, like the suckers in the illustration, would draw away our vitality and hinder our bearing of acceptable fruit.

The sound tree cannot bear poor fruit, nor the corrupted or decayed tree bring forth good fruit. While each of the Lord's people is to examine himself before the mirror of God's Word, to ascertain his own character, disposition, likeness or unlikeness to divine standards, nevertheless, in this matter of deciding about fruit, whether it be good or bad, each of the Lord's people is called upon to exercise judgment in regard to others as well as to himself—what are the results, the fruitage, the token of my own life, and what is the fruitage, results, token of my brother, my neighbor. Our Lord's intimation is that these tests are specially applicable to those who would be leaders of his flock. They should all be examples, bearers of good fruit, and these good fruits should be looked for as a test of good, sound character—a character fully in harmony with the Lord. True, all are imperfect, and with the best of intentions we cannot do all that we would, but the weakest of the Lord's brethren must bear some fruits that other brethren could discern, and these fruits should be accepted by the brethren according to the divine standard, viz., not of the flesh but of the spirit, the will, the intention. So, then, every true child of God should manifest before the brethren and before the world honesty, faithfulness of intention, a consecrated heart, mind, will, which would seek in all things to do the will of the Father in heaven.

In Palestine, to this day, fruit trees are taxed, and hence a tree which will not bear, whose fruitage is poor, cannot be tolerated, for it would entail a loss instead of a revenue. Similarly, the assurance that the Lord will ultimately cast away every unfruitful one—"every branch in the vine that beareth not fruit he taketh away"—while every branch that beareth fruit is purged, that it may bring forth more fruit, is a further lesson along the same line.

Our Lord used a fig-tree to represent the Jewish nation, and pointed out that it was not bringing forth the desired fruitage, and that therefore it would be cut down and destroyed.

The symbolical "fire" which utterly destroyed the Jewish nation made an end of their tree. The Jews will indeed receive a further blessing at the hand of the Lord, but, as he declares through the prophet, it will be "not by your Covenant." The blessing to come to Israel and all the nations in the future will be the New Covenant. Similarly, in the end of this Gospel age, not only will there be an individual test of the Lord's people as respects good and bad fruit, but Christendom as a whole, as a system, will be found unfruitful, unsatisfactory; and when the true saints of the Lord shall have been gathered out and glorified, the tree, the system as a whole, will go down, in the great time of trouble with which this age shall close and the new dispensation begin. Christendom will indeed be favored and blessed under the New Covenant of the Millennial age, but its special privileges and opportunities of the present time under the Abrahamic Covenant will be forever gone.

"I NEVER KNEW YOU"

Continuing his discourse, our Lord implies eventually a great number of nominal followers devoid of his Spirit, not bringing forth the fruitage that he desires, not members of his called and chosen and faithful class, though outwardly, nominally, all of these. Of this class he says there shall be many. He points down to our day, saying, "in that day"—in the closing of this age, in the testing time, in the time when he shall come to make up his jewels and to glorify them as his Bride, his members, his associates in the Kingdom. Many at that time—in our day—will profess that they know the Lord, that they are prophesiers or teachers, that they are casting out devils, opposing sin and multitudinous forms of evil, and that they are carrying on mighty works, benevolent institutions, colleges, seminaries, etc., in his name. The Revised Version gives, "by thy name," intimating that the name of Christ is used rather as a charm, to conjure by.

How true is this picture to the conditions of our day! How many take the Lord's name in vain, associating it with their enterprises, which are often in direct conflict with the Master's Word and Spirit. Why do they use his name? Simply as a talisman to conjure by, to increase their influence, to satisfy their own minds, to make themselves believe that in doing their own wills they are working the will of God. How true this is in respect to nearly all religious institutions of our day! Take the churches, for instance, recognizing more or less clearly the divine opposition to their sectarian spirit and creeds and methods and organizations—they, nevertheless, are not satisfied unless they somehow connect the name of Christ with their institutions and arrangements.

But the testing time is near—the Lord will inquire respecting the fruit of these systems; he will not be deceived; yea, he will expose the bad fruit, that all may see that his judgment is just. It will be manifest that neglect of his Word has led to degeneracy, decay—that the suckers of worldly ambition, pride, wealth, show, etc., have been cultivated, notwithstanding all of the trying experiences which might have served to prune these. It will be shown that many of the prophets of Babylon are false prophets, whose teachings have misguided the people and, instead of blessing, have done injury, instead of enlightening have blinded. It will be manifested that many of them are ravaging wolves in sheep's clothing, hungry with ambition for fame and prominence and

honor of men, and willing to barter the interests of the flock for their personal aggrandizement. It will be shown that much of this conjuring in the name of Jesus has been merely a cloak under which, deceiving and being deceived, sectarian fruitage, and not the love, joy, peace and holy Spirit, have been cultivated. The day will declare it, will show it, will manifest it. The whole world shall be witness eventually that God's name was proven a dishonor, and his Word misrepresented, because false teachers were looking every one to gain from his own quarter—his own denomination.—Isa. 56:11.

The Lord never knew the sects—he never recognized them, he never authorized them; they are of men, and for men, not of the Lord nor for the Lord's glory. Claiming that all there is of Christianity is due to themselves, they are proud and boastful and realize not that the Lord's true cause would have flourished far better without them in the simplicity of the early Church, one in redemption through the precious blood and in consecration to the Redeemer. The gathering out of the Bride class and the leaving of the remainder will be saying in effect, "I never knew you, never recognized you, never authorized you;" and these unauthorized sects will go down in the great time of trouble. We are glad, however, that the thousands and millions who have been deceived by these false systems will have a glorious opportunity during the Millennial age to come to a knowledge of the Truth and a right understanding of the character of God as revealed in the fulfilment of his gracious plan. Thus many who miss the great prize may still have a glorious opportunity for the lesser prize or favor of God in restitution, etc.

"DEPART FROM ME, YE THAT WORK INIQUITY"

We believe that there are active workers in the sectarian systems called "Babylon" who will yet be reached by the knowledge of the Truth and delivered. Our Lord intimates this, saying, "Come out of her, my people." Some of his people evidently are in Babylon, and it is our present mission in the name of the Lord to call these out—through the presentation of the Present Truth, which will show to all who are truly the Lord's where they stand, and their duty. Others of the active workers in the iniquitous systems, which are counterfeits of the true, misrepresenters of God's message and binders and enslavers of the Lord's people, because not at heart loyal to him, will not come out of Babylon, and therefore will share in the condemnation coming upon her. They will go into the great time of trouble, and for a season at least be cut off from all fellowship with the Lord. These workers of iniquity will have their hands full of the trouble which they have helped to bring upon the world of mankind by their misrepresentations of the divine character and plan. It will be a terrible chastisement, and our hope for them is that "when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth all the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isa. 26:9.

ON THE ROCK OR ON THE SAND

This picture or parable of one house built upon the rock and the other house built upon the sand refers not to the Church and the world, but to two parties in the Church. None are in the parable except "those who hear these sayings of mine." The world hears not our Lord's message at all. As the Apostle declares, the world is both deaf and blind to

spiritual things. Those who hearken to and appreciate the Lord's sayings represent at least a nominal Church, and amongst those of the nominal Church are some who are obedient to the Lord's Word while others are disobedient. The obedient are built upon the rock, the disobedient upon the sand.

Those who build upon the rock our Lord explains to be such as not only hear his message but are obedient thereto to the extent of their ability. Let us remember the words to which he refers—they are the words or message of the Sermon on the Mount, which show the things which are blessed of God in contradistinction to the things which would not have his approval. Those who do, who strive for, who to the best of their ability obey these divine teachings, the message from heaven, are laying the foundations which will be permanent, which will guarantee them against all the storms, difficulties and trials of the present life.

Those who hear the Master's words and say, "Yea, Lord," but who do not put the Master's teachings into practice, are not built properly upon the rock of Truth, upon Christ. They are building their hope, their faith, their trust upon a foundation which will not stand. When the adversities of life come upon such their hopes will be undermined, their faith will collapse. Thus does the Lord teach us that it is not merely to know his will, to be doctrinally informed, but that he is looking for such character development in us as will bring us into full harmony with his teachings, into heart harmony, and, to the extent that we are able, to obedience in all the affairs of life. The other, whose faith is built upon knowledge without obedience, without growth in grace, will not be accepted to the Kingdom, will not be members of the Bride class, will not be joint-heirs with God's dear Son.

"THE FIRE OF THAT DAY"

In this lesson our Lord describes not only the trials and tests which come upon all Christians throughout this Gospel age, but especially the great test in the close of this age—in the "harvest" time. Here his figure is that of rain, floods, and winds beating upon the faith structure of his professed followers, overthrowing the faith of those not properly constructed in accordance with his teachings, but unable to harm those founded on the rock of Truth. A mighty downpour of Truth throughout Christendom is in progress. The great storm is already raging. The various denominations are trembling under the shock. Their foundations on human tradition, creeds, theories, ignorance, superstition of the "dark ages," are realized to be unsatisfactory. Ere long the storms of Truth will move the quicksand foundation upon which nominal Christendom is built, and her wreck will follow. Only the true people of God will be able to stand the great storm of "that day"—already beginning.

This is the same storm and flood mentioned by the Lord through the prophet Isaiah—"The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding places ... when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye be overthrown by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it

pass through, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report [the message, the Truth]."—Isa. 28:17-19.

The same day of trial is pictured under another figure by the Apostle Paul when he says, "The fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." He pictures true believers built upon the rock, the true foundation, but points out to us the necessity of having a proper house, or faith, as well as a proper foundation. He pictures one faith structure built of wood, hay, stubble, combustible materials, which will shortly be destroyed in this day when the fire of divine judgment shall test every doctrine and destroy every error. He pictures also the proper building constructed of gold, silver and precious stones, the divine promises, and how these will stand every test.

The lesson as a whole is, first, that we must be on the rock foundation to have either part or lot in the matter—to be able to stand any test; second, that of those upon the rock, trusting in Christ, loyal to him and his atonement work, there will be two classes—the "little flock," faithful to the Word and upheld by it and protected, and the "great company," not sufficiently diligent and careful respecting the divine promises, and who will have a faith structure largely composed of error, which will be consumed. Respecting this latter class the Apostle declares, "the same shall be saved, yet so as by fire." This fitly describes the deliverance of the great company, who will "come up through great tribulation and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb."—1 Cor. 3:12, 15; Rev. 7:14.

"DOERS OF THE WORD"

Our golden text is well chosen—"Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only." To be honored with a knowledge of the divine will and plan is a great boon, a great blessing; but it brings a great responsibility: "to whom much is given of him shall much be required." We who have heard the voice of him that speaketh from heaven, speaking peace through Jesus Christ; we who, on the strength of this message of forgiveness of sins, have been accepted in consecration as members of the body of Christ, we have greater responsibility than have others. To attain the glorious things to which we have been invited we must not merely have this honor but must make use of the privilege and show our appreciation by obedience to the terms of the Covenant—presenting our bodies as living sacrifices to the divine service, in faithful obedience to righteousness, and in endeavoring to assist others in the same course.

APRIL 20

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

This does not mean that the Lord's people are to be content with the usual routine of daily life in the home or in the shop, and are to say to themselves, "God accepts my labor as though it were given directly to Him in some other more desirable form," but it does mean that each person so situated should day by day carefully scan his earthly duties and obligations to see in what manner he could justly and properly cut off moments, hours or days from the service of earthly things and earthly interests that now might be given to sacrifice for spiritual things and spiritual interests of himself or others. The consecrated heart, the self-denying disciple, is the one who will improve the moments as they swiftly fly, using them as far as possible in the Father's business—Z '03, 407 (R 3265).

One's character is manifest in all he does; therefore his treatment of little things and small duties is as good an evidence of his character as is his conduct in great things. This is the Divine rule of estimating character, and measures the saints, whose faithfulness to the Lord in the little things of the present life He considers a sufficient guarantee of their faithfulness in the great things of the future—P '33, 63.

Parallel passages: Zech.4:10; Matt. 25:21; Luke 16:11, 12; 19:17; Heb. 3:2; Prov. 28:20; Matt. 10:22; 24:45-47; 1 Cor. 4:2; Rev. 2:7, 10, 17, 26, 27; 3:5, 11, 12, 21.

Hymns: 312, 13, 110, 114, 183, 197, 200.

Poems of Dawn, 295: *My Service*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 234 (R 5740).

Questions: Have I this week been faithful? In what things? At what cost? With what results?

MY SERVICE

I ASKED the Lord to let me do
Some mighty work for Him;
To fight amid His battle hosts,
Then sing the victor's hymn.
I longed my ardent love to show,
But Jesus would not have it so.

He placed me in a quiet home
Whose life was calm and still,
And gave me little things to do,
My daily round to fill;
I could not think it good to be
Just put aside so silently.

Small duties gathered round my way,
They seemed of earth alone;
I, who had longed for conquests bright
To lay before His throne,
Had common things to do and bear,
To watch and strive with daily care.

So then I thought my prayer unheard,
And asked the Lord once more
That He would give me work for Him
And open wide the door—
Forgetting that my Master knew
Just what was best for me to do.

Then quietly the answer came:
"My child, I hear thy cry;
Think not that mighty deeds alone
Will bring thee victory.
The battle has been planned by Me,
Let daily life thy conquests see."

R5740: FAITHFULNESS IN LITTLE THINGS

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

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

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

So it would appear to be a general principle in life that those who are careless in small things and careful in large matters will in due time or under great stress prove unreliable and unfaithful in everything, if such faithfulness should conflict with their own selfish

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

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

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

HUMILITY ESSENTIAL TO SERVICE

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

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

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

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

LITTLE TESTS OF CHARACTER

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

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

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

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

"LORD, IS IT I?"

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

But the Christian who makes a mistake, and who sees his mistake and makes what amends are possible, will find his experience beneficial to him—perhaps throughout the remainder of his life. Through the castigation which he imposes upon himself he will learn greater carefulness. Care and watchfulness are necessary, and we should see to it that they extend to every affair of life—to the use of our time, our talents, our money, etc. Whatever we have of these is from the Lord and belongs to Him. We should therefore carefully consider what we shall do with these opportunities and be very conscientious in the use of them—how much we shall use for ourselves and how we shall use the remainder. Our course in these matters will show to the Lord whether or not we are fitted for a place in glory.

Our use or abuse of all the talents, great or small, entrusted to us by the Master will demonstrate how careful we are to note His will and to do that will in respect to this feature of our stewardship. By and by He purposes to give to the faithful those things which will be of far more value than dimes and dollars; affairs of great responsibility will be committed to them. If any have not been faithful—if any one has thought of the time, the dimes, the dollars, etc., as being his own, and has so used them, that one will not be of the class the Lord is seeking. He is viewing us according to the Covenant of Sacrifice which we have made with Him. (Psalm 50:5.) If we had a million dollars, it would be only a small thing in His sight. It is the manner in which we use the things of this life that manifests our loyalty to the Lord and that demonstrates how we would use the Divine power during the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom, for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

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

APRIL 21

We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need—Heb. 4:15, 16.

In the moment of temptation the heart should lift itself to the great Master, in full assurance of faith, recognizing His love, His wisdom and His ability to help us, and His willingness to make all things work together for good to those who love Him. Asking for assistance in such a time of need would surely draw to us the Lord's counsel and help and strength for righteousness, truth, purity and love; and thus we shall be hourly victorious, daily victorious, and finally victorious—Z '98, 23 (R 2248).

There is no experience of trial from the flesh, the world and Satan falling to the lot of the Lord's people that the Lord has not in principle endured. Even though His temptations were not along the line of sin, but along the line of worldliness and natural selfishness, they were nevertheless keen, and worked in Him sympathy for us under like trials. This should give us confidence to approach God through and in Him for help in every time of need—P '27, 55.

Parallel passages: Heb. 2:17, 18; 3:1; 5:1-5; 7:11-28; 8:12; 9:23; Luke 23:34; John 14:6, 13-16; 16:23-26; 17:20-22; Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 10:13; Eph. 3:12; Heb. 10:19-21.

Hymns: 96, 139, 167, 168, 299, 35, 239.

Poems of Dawn, 35: *There's Only One*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 358 (R 5585).

Questions: What experiences of this week have been in line with this text? How was I exercised by them?

THERE'S ONLY ONE

PSALM 73:25

THERE'S only one upon whose care
We safely lay our thoughts to rest;
There's only one who knows the depth
Of sorrow in each stricken breast.

There's only one whose pity falls
Like dew upon the wounded heart;
There's only one who never leaves,
Though enemy and friend depart.

There's only one, when none are by,
To wipe away the falling tear;
There's only one to heal the wound,
And stay the weak one's timid fear.

There's only one who understands
And enters into all we feel;
There's only one who views each spring
And each perplexing wheel in wheel.

There's only one who can support,
And who sufficient grace can give
To bear up under every grief,
And spotless in this world to live.

O blessed Jesus, Friend of friends!
Above us raise Thy sheltering arm,
And while amid this evil world,
Protect us from its guilt and harm.

R5585: TEMPTATIONS PECULIAR TO THE NEW CREATION

"We have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."—Hebrews 4:15, 16.

ST. PAUL had been speaking respecting the antitypical Priesthood, and had been showing that Aaron had been only a typical priest, that the Levitical priesthood never really took away sin, that a better Priesthood was necessary, that this higher Priesthood was represented in Melchizedek, and that God had declared that Jesus would be "a Priest forever, after the Order of Melchizedek." Jesus is a Heavenly High Priest—not an earthly high priest. The thought, then, might be gathered that if our Lord is not an earthly priest He would not know how to sympathize with us. But the Apostle assures us that our great High Priest can fully sympathize with us, because "He was tempted in *all points* like as we are."

We are not to understand the Apostle to mean that our Lord was tempted in every manner that the *world* is tempted. He had none of the temptations peculiar to a drunkard, etc. His was not an unbalanced mind. He was tempted "like as we are"—The Church. Like our Master, we are not, as New Creatures, tempted as are the world. The world has its own kinds of temptation. We are not of the world. We are being tested as spirit-begotten children of God. We are tested as to our loyalty to Him, as to our faith and obedience. Of course, while still in the flesh, we are liable to temptations along the line of

our natural tendencies as members of the fallen race, but these are not our temptations as New Creatures.

THE WORLD NOT ABLE TO UNDERSTAND US

The world knows nothing of our peculiar trials as New Creatures. They know merely about the common trials and weaknesses of humanity. But we, having been justified in God's sight, and set apart for His service, desire to carry out our new aims. We are no longer of the world. The world, the flesh and the Devil seek to turn us aside, to draw us back into the old ways; and these temptations are liable to make us forget our covenant of special relationship to the Lord, and what we have agreed to do and to be. It is in this respect that we are being especially tempted and tried, and we must ever be on our guard. We know that Jesus, our great Head, was tried in like manner with us.

When Jesus told His disciples that He was going up to Jerusalem, and that He would be betrayed into the hands of the chief priests and the scribes, and they would condemn Him to death and deliver Him over to the Gentiles, who would mock and scourge and crucify Him, St. Peter said: Master, do not talk that way—it is discouraging. And why speak of these strange things about eating your flesh and drinking your blood? Lord, do not say these things! God forbid; this shall not be your lot!

So even His chosen Twelve could not understand the Master. Jesus answered (but not in the crudity of the Common Version), "Get thee behind Me, adversary"—you are becoming My opponent. You would undo the very work I am doing. Instead of helping you are hindering Me, because your thoughts are not God's thoughts, but men's.—See Matthew 16:21-23.

And so it is with many who seek to show us kindness, who think they are serving our best interests. They say that we are foolish in thinking so much about religion. They mean well. They do not realize that we must be about our Father's business. This is the kind of temptation that comes to us as Christians, as followers of the Master. The special temptations of the Lord's children are not temptations to commit gross immoralities; and the temptations of Jesus were not of this kind. But He did have the temptation to withhold the Truth and to give something that would be more palatable.

Some of our nominal church friends may say to us: Why do you not engage in slum work, or in social uplift work? You are continually talking about the Kingdom! the Kingdom! As God's ambassadors we are here for the very purpose of telling men about the Kingdom, about the glorious things God has in reservation for His saints, and also His purposes for the world. We know that human "slumming" methods will fail to save the world, but the Kingdom will save it. The temptation is to do something that others would applaud, instead of doing and saying things of God's Word that bring disapproval from the world and the nominal church people. The Editor has friends who say to him, If you would not talk as you do, and write as you write, more people would listen to you. You could be very popular if you would speak a little differently. You are putting too much religion into your sermons. We reply, Yes, but we are speaking and writing to instruct the

people respecting God's Word, character, Plan; and respecting His present call to the Church.

THE CHARACTER OF THE MASTER'S TEMPTATIONS

The Master probably had presented to His mind the suggestion: Now take an easier way. This way that *seems* to be indicated is the crudest possible one. Go to God and tell Him that it does not seem right to you, who have been loyal through all these ages, that you should be subjected to such treatment; that this seems a very strange way to treat a faithful Son; that there can be no good reason for it, and nothing can be gained by it. Ask God if He cannot make some change. Ask Him if He is not overdoing the matter.

And so we, His followers, may sometimes have similar suggestions. But a murmuring, rebellious spirit would prove that we are not in the right attitude of heart; it would prove that we had either never really submitted our will to the Lord or else had withdrawn it, and that we lacked confidence in Him. Any such temptations must be promptly resisted by the child of God.

When St. Peter sought to defend our dear Master from the soldiers and officers who came to arrest Him, though knowing what the end would be, Jesus said: "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" He did not think for one moment of yielding to any temptation to use His superior power to prevent His enemies from taking Him. He showed them that He possessed such power; for they all went backward, and fell to the ground. Thus He made it manifest that had He chosen to exercise His supernatural power He was infinitely stronger than they, and submitted not because He *must*, but because He was in reality voluntarily submitting Himself to death. This was a demonstration of His previous declaration: "No man *taketh My life* from Me, but I *lay it down* of Myself." (John 10:17, 18.) He steadfastly refused to yield to any appeals from His flesh to escape or to lessen His sufferings. "He was tempted in all points like as we are, *yet without sin.*"

We might weaken sometimes; we might come short—and we *do* come short. We cannot fully live up to the glorious standard. *Christ* was without sin. *We* have sin abounding in our flesh, and we have weaknesses which He did not have. But if we are to *follow in His steps*, we are to *overcome*, and to prove overcomers *to the end*. We are not to say to ourselves; I cannot live as Jesus lived, even if I try ever so hard; what is the use of setting up so perfect a standard? But there *is* use in it; and we should earnestly strive to come as near as possible to that standard. By keeping this glorious Pattern ever before us, we shall be able to come much nearer perfection than if our standard was lower. We must have no less than this perfect standard as our aim, if we expect to win the prize for which we have entered this race.

If Jesus had sinned and had come short in any way, it would have meant failure complete. He would never have had a resurrection. This was typified in the Jewish high priest when he passed under the veil with the blood. The high priest who had not followed every instruction of the Law in the offering of his sacrifices would have died

under the veil. This was what Jesus feared in Gethsemane, when "He offered up strong crying and tears unto Him who was able to save Him out of [Greek *ek*] death"—not to save Him from *dying*, but to save Him *out of* death by *resurrection*. And the record is that He was heard and was strengthened, comforted. (Luke 22:39-45; Hebrews 5:7.) As soon as He had the Father's assurance that He had not violated any conditions, and that He would not go into eternal death, He was content to suffer any other experience that might come to Him.

OUR SYMPATHETIC HIGH PRIEST

From the fact that our High Priest was tempted and suffered, we may know that He is not one who is cold and indifferent. On the contrary, He is One who is full of sympathy, who has had the largest kind of experience. (Hebrews 2:18; 5:8.) If then, we have temptations, what must we do? We are to come to our great High Priest; and as we come to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, we may come with boldness (or, more properly translated, with courage, not doubting), knowing that the One who meets us there is fully able to sympathize with our every sorrow and need, and with our every temptation.

If we have not sinned wilfully, if our sins have been those of imperfection of the flesh through besetment, so that at the time we were not able to overcome and to control the flesh properly, we may come with courage, knowing that the Lord understands all about the weaknesses of our fallen human nature—He remembers that we are but dust: (Psalm 103:13, 14.) St. Paul says we cannot properly judge even ourselves as respects our own weaknesses. He says (1 Corinthians 4:3, 4), "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self; . . . but He that judgeth me is the Lord." He knows how to make all due allowance. Then let us not hesitate to come to Him in prayer, pleading His promises. Let us seek for the mercy of the Lord, knowing that we shall receive it, when we are truly striving to be faithful to Him.

Our Father knows *all about* these experiences we are having, and He made the provision for our covering. *He* provided succor from our difficulties, that we might come in as members of the Body of Christ, even though imperfect. He knows that we cannot fully control our imperfect bodies. But as we become stronger, we should be better able to control the mortal body. The new will should subjugate the old mind, and have better success in conquering the flesh. We must scrutinize ourselves and our progress; we should not be satisfied nor feel that we are proving overcomers, unless we can from time to time see growth in ourselves in Christlikeness and in ability to subdue the old nature with its impulses and tendencies.

No other arrangement would have been so good for us as the one the Lord has chosen. We have our weaknesses and imperfections charged up to us; but God has provided a way by which we can have them all forgiven, if they are unavoidable or if there has been no wilfulness connected with them. Any measure of wilfulness in a child of God requires expiation by stripes. If we judge—closely inspect or scrutinize—ourselves, our thoughts, words and actions, we shall require less judging and disciplining by the Lord to correct

our faults. If we realize that we have been remiss in any way in keeping our vows, if we think that we have been lax in some particular at any time, it is helpful to impose some penalty upon ourselves that we shall *feel*. We should go to the Lord in earnest prayer, asking forgiveness, and promising Him by His grace to strive to be more watchful in the future. We should *daily* scrutinize ourselves along this line, and never lightly pass over any failure.

How precious and comforting the realization that our merciful High Priest is touched with the feeling of our infirmities! We should never, however, relax our vigilance because of this knowledge, or take any advantage of His mercy. But we rejoice that we have a Mercy Seat to which we can go as soon as we are conscious of our inability to be all that we would, and rejoice to know that we shall not be turned away.

APRIL 22

I say unto you, That every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment—Matt. 12:36.

If, in the daily scrutiny of our ways, which is the duty of every Christian, we discover that in any particular our words have been dishonoring to the Lord, we should remember that in the name of our Advocate we may approach the Lord in prayer, explain to our Heavenly Father our realization of the error, our deep regret at our failure to honor His name and His cause by a holy walk and conversation, and humbly request that the sin be not laid to our charge, but that it may be blotted out through His gracious provision for our cleansing through Christ, humbly claiming that in His precious blood is all our hope and trust. Thus we should render up our account for every idle word; and by our words of repentance, supplemented by the merit of Christ applied by faith, shall we be acquitted—Z '96, 32 (R 1937).

The words that are uttered are but expressions of one's sentiments, and therefore go to make up one's character. Idle words are useless and pernicious thoughts expressed, and inevitably undermine character. When one comes on trial for life, this undermining of character will have to be accounted for and righted. It behooves each one therefore to pray: "Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips"—P '20, 71.

Parallel passages: Psa. 26:1-4; 50:3-6; 139:23, 24; Jer. 11:20; 20:12; 2 Thes. 1:4, 5; Matt. 25:14-30; 1 Cor. 11:31; Ezek. 18:20-28; Matt. 11:22; 12:37-42; 25:31-46; John 5:22-30; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:5-16; 1 Pet. 4:5, 7.

Hymns: 63, 67, 230, 333, 24, 73, 171.

Poems of Dawn, 143: *In the Presence of the King*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 245 (R 5517).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences respecting this text? What lessons did I learn from them?

IN THE PRESENCE OF THE KING

IF we could always feel each little thing
We do, each hour we spend
Within the presence of the King,
What dignity—'twould lend!

If we could realize our every thought
Is known to Him, our King,
With how great carefulness would it be fraught,
And what a blessing bring!

If, when some sharp word leaves a cruel sting,

Our faith could know and feel
'Twas heard within the presence of the King,
How soon the wound would heal!

Oh, when the song of life seems hard to sing,
And darker grows the way,—
Draw nearer to the presence of the King,
And night shall turn to day!

R5517: CONTROL OF THE TONGUE A NECESSITY

"I say unto you, that every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment."—Matthew 12:36.

OUR LORD was addressing some of the Scribes and Pharisees who were trying to "catch Him in His words"—to take advantage of technicalities of language. In their endeavor to oppose Him, those Scribes and Pharisees were doing everything they could to discomfit or vanquish Him in His reasoning, even going to the extent of using arguments which they did not really believe. This is a very dangerous procedure. No matter how just we think our cause to be as a whole, we are not to resort to any misuse of language to uphold what we believe to be the Truth.

Possibly those Pharisees might have said amongst themselves, "We must use strong arguments to keep ahead of that Nazarene. He uses strong language Himself. We must hold up our end of the controversy, and not show the white feather." But this position did not justify their conduct. Since Justice is the foundation of the Throne of God, any attempt to take advantage of another in any manner whatever will surely bring its own punishment.

From our Lord's comments at various times on the subject of the *tongue* we realize that in His day there must have been some seriously wrong condition prevailing amongst those with whom He came in contact. The Scribes and Pharisees attributed evil power to Him, and declared that He was the tool of Satan—that Satan was speaking through Him, etc. At first our Lord told them in a general way that they deceived themselves. Later, He reproved them severely and showed the fallacy of their arguments. In connection with our text He declared that by their words they should be condemned—be dealt with, corrected in righteousness and brought to true reformation, or else perish in the Second Death.

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

Human beings are the only earthly creatures that can talk—whether orally or in writing or otherwise. More and more the people of God realize the wisdom of the Apostle James' statement that although the tongue is a little member, yet it is the most dangerous of all, because it has the widest influence. If a man sin not with his tongue, he is a perfect man. (James 3:2.) We cannot estimate the possible results of our words. This influence

may reach even to the ends of the earth. Therefore we are to consider carefully what we may say, in order to determine whether our words will glorify God or whether they will dishonor Him—whether they will stir up good thoughts and impulses in the minds of others or whether they will stir up that which is evil.

In His Wisdom God has seen fit so to create us that our conduct of today has much to do with our character of tomorrow. Thus we are either making or breaking character continually. It is well that all should know this fact. Not only worldly people, but Christians also, should understand this principle; for Christians are now on trial for glory, honor and immortality. Therefore by neglecting to weigh carefully their words they might lose the great prize for which they are striving.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

By way of emphasis our Lord declared that every idle word—every unprofitable utterance—must be accounted for in a day of reckoning. With the Church, we understand the Scriptures to teach that this day of reckoning is this Gospel Age. Daily are we to go to our Heavenly Father and say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us." Not only must we render up our account daily, but at the end of our course there will be a general summing up. By this we do not understand that at the end of our race course we shall be lined up and questioned about every word of our experience, but that each one who comes into contact with the Truth is either building up character or else breaking it down, and that his character at the end of his probation will determine his reward. As a pupil daily learns his lessons and prepares himself for the final examinations at the end of the year, when there is a general testing of his knowledge, so with the pupils in the School of Christ. Day by day our Master deals with us; but at the end of our course there is to be a summing up.

Doubtless there are in every one of us some things that are disapproved of the Lord; for we all have the treasure of the New Mind in earthen vessels and therefore cannot do as we would. But we have pledged ourselves to serve the Lord and to be loyal in doing His will. Therefore He is dealing with us *now*. In so doing, He warns us that the tongue is a very important member of our body, and that we are to be careful how we use it; for it will have a bearing upon the final decision in the end of this Gospel Age, when the returns are brought in. Then it will be determined whether we are worthy of the highest honor—joint-heirship with our Savior—or whether we shall be servants to that class or whether we shall be unworthy of life upon any plane of existence.

OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF SLANDER

But there is also a reckoning with us now. Our Lord declares that the tongue is so important a member that it represents our hearts more accurately than does anything else. The hand might do a good deed, yet the heart might be very different from the hand. In fact, the hand might not express the real sentiment of the heart at all. But the tongue is sure to give utterance to what is really in the heart. Therefore by our words we are daily either building up or tearing down character.

There is a spirit which shoots out bitter words. From the standpoint of the Lord, this is MURDER. Thus at the end of the Jewish Age the Scribes and Pharisees criticised and slandered our Lord. Although from their knowledge of the Law they knew that they would be accountable for their actions, yet they did not appreciate the fact that they would be judged by their words.

So will it be in the world's Judgment Day—the Millennium. Mankind will be held responsible for the work of their tongues. But they will have a more favorable opportunity than if judged now; forces will then be at work which will give them a more prompt judgment; and therefore they will learn their lessons quickly. They will have a responsibility for their words. Those that "knew not will be beaten with few stripes"; but those who "knew and did not" act according to their knowledge, "will be beaten with many stripes."

SPECIAL BRIDLES FOR THE TONGUE

Under stress of sudden temptation the Lord's people, who are now on judgment, might impulsively say that which is not pleasing to the Master. But we must *learn* not to speak thoughtlessly; we must learn to weigh our utterances. Since we are servants of God, we should ever take heed to our ways, in order to render the best possible service. We are not merely to have a good will to do that which is right; we are to seek to bridle our tongues. Whatever vows or resolutions or restraints we may seek to put upon our tongues may be considered as bridles, by which we are determined to bring ourselves into full subjection to the will of God.

So long as Satan and his demon host are at large, the Lord's people will do well to take heed to their ways, that they sin not with their tongue. Satan and his angels are seeking to subvert those who have given themselves to the Lord and to catch them in their words. So while we are in their presence we must be especially on guard, that they may not entrap us. As the Psalmist says, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked [One] is before me."

AN IMPORTANT LESSON FOR ALL

Although our Lord declared that men should give account for every pernicious word, yet He referred to the thoughts behind the words. It was the attitude of heart that distressed Him. He knew the attitude of heart displayed by the Scribes and the Pharisees would bring injury upon them.

Amongst the Lord's people there is nothing more important than that they should learn to be very just. While it is right to be loving, kind, generous, yet *justice* is the very foundation of character. All love and kindness not based upon justice are neither satisfactory nor pleasing to the Lord. In dealing with others, a child of God will not think, What will my fellow-men let me take from them? but, What are the rights of others, and what would my Heavenly Father have me do?

It is very natural for one to recognize his own rights in any matter, but the fallen nature does not so quickly perceive the rights of others. Therefore one of the most important lessons for the Lord's people to learn is to do unto others as they would have others do unto them—simple justice.

We fear that many of the Lord's dear people have not fully realized that obedience to the rules which govern the New Nature means absolutely the "Golden Rule" on their part toward all others. They must not do to others what they would not have others do to them. It is the duty of the New Creature to bring the body into such subjection that justice shall rule in every act and word, and so far as possible in every thought. One must be just in his thoughts before he can properly be just in his dealings. Whoever thinks unjustly will act unjustly in spite of endeavors to the contrary.

THE TREASURE STORED IN OUR HEARTS

As we reflect that the Church is standing before the Bar of Divine Judgment, under the personal inspection of our Lord, and that in His estimation our words are a criterion of judgment, we cannot weigh too carefully the underlying principles upon which His decision will be made. Our Lord's words, as recorded in Matthew 12:34-36, indicate that both the heart and the mouth are under special scrutiny. How necessary therefore is a right condition of heart, in order that the words of our mouth may be acceptable to our Lord and Redeemer!

In our Lord's statement, the heart is *representative* of the character, and the mouth is the *index* of that character. The word *heart* is sometimes used in Scripture with the force of the word *mind*. Out of the abundance of the mind the mouth speaks. A good man brings forth good things out of the treasure of his mind. But all mankind are by nature sinners; therefore all are by nature evil to some extent. God does not approve of any who are under the sentence of death. Nevertheless there are those of the condemned race of Adam who are relatively good—those who, despite the imperfections under which they were born, the blemishes of their fallen nature, are desirous of being in harmony with the One who is all-good.

We find nothing in Scripture to support the doctrine of total depravity—to imply that there is nothing whatever of good in humanity. Even though no one is perfect, nevertheless, there are some who have at least a good will, good intentions. Such superior characters of past Ages were represented in the Ancient Worthies—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the Prophets of Israel, etc., who fully demonstrated their obedience to God and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness.

THE CLASS APPROVED OF GOD

During this Gospel Age also there are some who are good. Amongst the heathen, as well as in Christian lands, there are those who are well-meaning, well-intentioned, those who are not malicious, not striving to do wrong, but endeavoring to do right. In order to

have the Divine approval in this Age, however, one must be of those who come unto the Father through Jesus; for none others are accepted of God. The Father will not receive any one whose heart is not sincere, who does not have good intentions, who does not manifest loyalty to Him and to the principles of righteousness.

Therefore any whom we have reason to believe are accepted of God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, are no longer to be counted as "children of wrath, even as others," but as of the Household of Faith. Despite the frailties of their flesh, they are good at heart; else God would not accept them. With these there is a constant conflict between the New Will and the desires of the flesh.

When we come to consider those who are good at heart, we find that all of them have imperfect bodies—some more so than others. Shall we give up the struggle for the prize because we cannot do perfectly? No! The Lord assures us that He looks at the heart, not at the flesh; that He has made a very gracious arrangement through our Lord Jesus by which the imperfections are cleansed away. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Therefore all His children may come with courage to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, there to obtain mercy and help in every time of need.

CHIPS OR APPLES—WHICH?

The good things brought forth from the treasure of a good man's heart will be those things which he has stored up from time to time. As the Psalmist says of the godly man, "His delight is in the Law of the Lord; and in His Law doth he meditate day and night." And of himself he declares, "Mine eyes prevent [anticipate] the night watches, that I may meditate in Thy Word," Law, precepts—the spirit, the purpose of that Law, not merely the outward form. So should we meditate upon the spirit of the Law of God. The sentiment of our heart should be the desire to get the Divine Mind as nearly as possible on every subject. All who are eager to be in harmony with God and to attain His character-likeness will think upon things that are good, pure, holy.—Psalm 1:2; 119:148; Philippians 4:8.

As one thinks upon things that are good, the mind becomes stored with good. Wherever there is a mouth disposed to speak upon things that are evil, there is an evil disposition—a mind in which evil has been stored. Whatever one has stored up in the mind will be *topmost* and sure to be spoken. An evil treasure will show itself, despite all endeavors to hide it; and likewise a good treasure will manifest itself; for the mind can hold only a certain amount.—Luke 6:45.

A father saw his son reading a novel. He knew that his son was in the habit of reading along this line. Calling the boy, he said, "John, I wish you to empty the apples out of that basket, and then take the basket to the woodshed and fill it with chips." The son did as he was directed. When he returned the father said, "Now put in the apples." The son replied that he could not do this, because there was not room enough in the basket for both chips and apples. Then the father said, "That is just what you are about to do with your mind. You have been filling your mind with chips; and when you try to put in apples, there will

be no room." Thus it is with all of us. If we fill our minds with jokes, foolish sayings, etc., we shall not be able to fill them with the things of the Holy Spirit.—Ephesians 5:1-7.

Many of the Lord's people find that, while their hearts are good, there is in their flesh a tendency for certain things that are not good. Thus there is a continual struggle between the flesh and the spirit as to whether the treasure stored up shall be chips or apples, so to speak. It is for each New Creature to decide which shall fill his mind—what kind of society he will choose, where he will go, what he will read, what kind of influences he will come under, what kind he will resist, etc. If in the past he has to any extent treasured up evil things, he should now try to rid himself of them. If his mind has been filled with jokes and levity, things not proper to the child of God, he should seek to put these away.

HOW CHARACTER IS BUILT

Finally, there is a relationship between this laying up of a good treasure in our minds and that of which our Lord spoke when He said, "Lay up for yourselves treasure in Heaven." In laying up treasure in our minds and hearts, we are building character. Whoever goes into a man's house and sees what he has gathered in the way of treasures can easily perceive the direction in which that man's mind is bent. His preferences demonstrate his character. Thus it is with us all; the things which we cultivate are an index to our character.

When we come to render up our account as New Creatures, character will decide whether we shall be esteemed worthy to be of the Lord's elect Little Flock. Only those who have laid up the treasure of a character like that of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Pattern, will be fit for an inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. Our eternal destiny therefore will be decided by the way in which we now use our minds and the thoughts which we now accumulate. Whoever cultivates good thoughts will receive a blessing, not only in the present life, but throughout the future.

Our first concern, then, must be for the heart—that its affections and dispositions may be wholly under the control of Grace Divine; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, meekness, self-control, faith, brotherly-kindness, love, supreme reverence for God and for Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles are established in the heart, we shall have no difficulty in controlling our tongue; for out of the good treasure of our heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace.

APRIL 23

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

Everyone who will be a sacrificer must of necessity be meek, humble, teachable, else very shortly he will get out of the way. He must also learn to develop the grace of the Lord along the line of patience, because it certainly requires patience to deny ourselves and to submit at times to injustice where there is no proper means of avoiding it without doing injury to the Lord's cause or to some of His people. It also implies a cultivation of brotherly kindness and, in a word, the development of the whole will of God in our hearts and lives, namely, love, which must be attained in a large and overcoming measure ere we shall have completed our work of sacrificing—Z '03, 408 (R 3265).

An honest and good heart is the best of all possessions, for to such hearts God gives the Truth, and in such hearts the Truth remains, and through such hearts the Truth works, bringing forth an abundant fruitage, ultimately ripening into the Divine likeness, necessary for all who would share with Christ in administering the affairs of the Kingdom—P '36, 48.

Parallel passages: Job 23:11, 12; Psa. 119:11, 129; Luke 11:28; Acts 17:11; Matt. 13:23; John 8:31; 14:21; 15:5, 8; Jas. 1:22, 25; Heb. 3:14; Rom. 2:7; Heb. 10:36; 12:1; 4:2; 1 Pet. 2:1, 2; Psa. 1:1-3; Col. 1:6, 10.

Hymns: 125, 22, 49, 154, 198, 267, 315.

Poems of Dawn, 73: *Even So, Father*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 228 (R 5736).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they received? What did they effect?

EVEN SO, FATHER

SOMETIME, when all life's lessons have been
learned,
And sun and stars forevermore have set,
The things which our weak judgment here hath
spurned—
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet—
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans were right,
And how what seemed unkind was love most true.

And we shall see that while we weep and sigh

God's plans go on as best for you and me;
How, when we called, He heeded not our cry,
Because His wisdom to the end could see;
And e'en as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God, perhaps, is keeping from us now
Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.

And if, sometime, commingled with life's wine,
We find the wormwood, and recoil and shrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine
Pours out this portion for our lips to drink;
And if some friend we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
Oh! Do not blame the loving Father—no.
But bear your sorrow with obedient grace.

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends His friend,
And that sometimes with sable pall of death
There also comes a boon His love doth send.
If we could push ajar the gates of Truth,
And stand within, and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all apparent strife,
And for life's mysteries could find the key.

If not to-day, be thou content, poor heart!
God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.
And if, through patient toil, we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,
When we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we shall say that God knew best.

R5736: IS MY HEART "GOOD GROUND"?

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

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

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

WHAT CONSTITUTES A SHALLOW HEART

Amongst those who do receive the Truth are the stony-ground class. These are at first very much enthused, but they lack depth of character. They are not the kind the Lord is now seeking. They will not bring forth the fruitage, for they have not sufficient depth for rooting. They are shallow. They desire to trim their sails in harmony with the favorable winds of this life. As soon as they find out that the Truth is not popular, they foresee persecution or social ostracism; then their ardor cools and their interest in the Harvest Message wanes and gradually dies out. Thus they are like wheat planted in shallow soil, which comes up and flourishes a little while; but when the hot sun comes out it withers away, not having much root.

The heart that is like the thorny ground is favorable as to soil. It is good ground, with fine prospects for developing the fruits of the Holy Spirit. But it is infested with thorns, which are not removed, but are permitted to remain and so choke the wheat. These thorns are not the frivolous pleasures of life—theaters, cards, dancing, etc.; but, as the Lord explains in the parable, they are the cares of life, the ambitions of life, the deceitfulness of riches—perhaps the feeling that if they can accumulate wealth they can serve the Lord's Cause the better. This tendency to go out after other things allows a condition to obtain that is unfavorable to the wheat class. These may be good business men, fine politicians, or they may be immersed in some kind of study. Others of them may be fine housekeepers and have a pride as to how well things are kept, or they may be leaders in society or in works of reform, etc. All these are the thorns of the parable. A heart of this kind does not bring forth fruit, because the ground, while good, is otherwise occupied, and the Message of the Kingdom and its work are crowded out to a large degree, so that no fruit is brought to perfection.

HONESTY A BASIC QUALITY

Then we come to the "good ground" class of this parable, ground where the soil is not only good, but cleared of all noxious weeds which would prevent the proper growth of the wheat seed. This condition represents entire consecration to God. Everything which would hinder has been cast out. The cares of this life are not permitted to enter this heart and choke the Word. Such a one has made a bona-fide contract with the Lord and knows

when he is keeping it; and he will keep it. He has the proper quality or depth of character and more or less of ability. And there is the special trait of thorough honesty, loyalty.

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

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

FOUR HUNDRED MILLION TARES

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

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

As we look about in the world we see that the great Enemy oversowed this wheat-field of the Kingdom with false seed, the darnel, the tare-seed, as represented by these various messages that have gone forth throughout the world. This seed does not necessarily bring forth bad people. They are people who are workers for various things, some of them more

or less good, but they are not children of the Kingdom. At the present time these tares are, many of them, influential. And the whole four hundred millions of them represent, not the true wheat-field, but merely an imitation, usurping the place really belonging to the true wheat class.

TIME REQUIRED TO DEVELOP FRUIT

In this Harvest time, now about ended, a separation has been taking place between the true wheat and the tares. The true wheat are being gathered into the garner, while the tares are being bound in bundles to be burned—not literally burned, but destroyed as tares, as imitation wheat. They will soon cease to call themselves Christians. They will recognize themselves as what they have always been—parts of the world. Many of these are Church members, but are purely of the world and its spirit. They discount the true wheat, and consider them a little queer, fanatics.

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

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

APRIL 24

Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification—Rom. 15:2.

The lesson to each disciple of the Lord is that the special mission of his office, vocation, calling in the present time, is to sacrifice. ... One form of service frequently not discerned by the Lord's disciples is the opportunity of renouncing our own ways or plans, our own methods or preferences, and in the interests of peace accepting instead the plans, the preferences of others—where it is merely a matter of personal preference, and where we believe the Lord will be as willing to have the matter one way as another. We can in the interests of peace sacrifice our preferences to the wishes of others, if we see some good can be gained by such a course—Z '14, 308, 309 (R 5555).

From the connection, we see that St. Paul means by one's neighbor, a fellow disciple of the Lord Jesus, and others in a lesser sense. It is not only the duty, but also the privilege of the disciple of Christ to deny self in order to please the others, not their flesh, however, but their new hearts, minds and wills. This pleasing is to be for their good, so that they may be built up in faith, hope and love—P '30, 31.

Parallel passages: Matt. 8:19-22; 10:37-39; 13:44-46; 16:24, 25; 19:12, 21; Luke 14:26-33; 21:2-4; John 12:25; Acts 20:22-24; 21:13; Rom. 14:1—15:5; 1 Cor. 6:12; 8:10-13; 9:12-27; 10:23, 24; Phil. 2:4; 3:7-11; 1 Pet. 2:11-16; 4:1, 2; Jude 20, 21.

Hymns: 224, 8, 23, 95, 134, 170, 259.
Poems of Dawn, 165: *A Little Light*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 69 (R 5412).

Questions: Have I this week denied self for the brethren? How? Why? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

A LITTLE LIGHT

'T WAS but a little light she bore,
While standing at the open door;
A little light, a feeble spark,
And yet it shone out through the dark
With cheerful ray, and gleamed afar
As brightly as the polar star.

A little light, a gentle hint,
That falls upon the page of print,
May clear the vision, and reveal
The precious treasures doubts conceal,
And guide men to an open door,
Where they new regions may explore.

A little light dispels the gloom
That gathers in the shadowed room,
Where want and sickness find their prey,
And night seems longer than the day,
And hearts with many troubles cope
And feebler glows the spark of hope.

Oh, sore the need that some must know
While journeying through this vale of woe!
Dismayed, disheartened, gone astray,
Caught in the thickets by the way,
For lack of just a little light
To guide their wandering steps aright.

It may be little we can do
To help another, it is true;
But better is a little spark
Of kindness, when the way is dark,
Than one should walk in paths forbidden
For lack of light we might have given.

R5412: THE SPIRIT OF HELPFULNESS

**"Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification."
—Romans 15:2.**

THE Apostle Paul does not say in our text, Let the *younger* ones please their neighbor, nor does he say, Let the *older* ones please their neighbor; but he says, "*Let every one of us please his neighbor.*" All of the Lord's people should have such an interest in one another and in the Lord's cause, and should have so much of the spirit of the Master, that they would seek rather to sacrifice themselves than to gratify self, especially at the expense of others.

If we have the spirit of the Master, we shall find various ways in which we will sacrifice self without waiting for specific directions. The Law of Love will incite us to act contrary to our own natural preferences, if by so doing we shall help one another in the good way.

In his letter to the Corinthian Church the Apostle illustrates this principle by a practical application re the Greek custom of offering their meat in their temples. After having been thus offered to the idols, the meat was considered to be especially sacred. Thus nearly all of the meat available was offered to idols, so that whenever one wished to have meat he could find none that had not been thus offered.

Those who had come out of idolatry into Christianity, knew that the worship of idols was wrong; for they had learned that there is only the one true God. They also knew that the meat itself had not been hurt by being offered to idols; for an idol is *nothing*. But they should have been willing to deny themselves meat rather than to injure the conscience of a weak brother who still thought that the meat thus offered was sacred, or who thought that it was contaminated. The Apostle declares that he would abstain altogether from eating meat rather than risk stumbling a brother who could not take the broader, truer view. To stumble such a one, might be to throw him out of the right way entirely.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR INFLUENCE

The Apostle did not say that it is not *right* to eat meat; but that he was willing to *forego* his rights and privileges in order to edify another. These others of whom he spoke had not come to appreciate fully the fact that meat offered to idols had not been hurt thereby. To set meat before a piece of stone would not injure it; and so to set it before an idol would not hurt it. But St. Paul could better afford to give up eating meat altogether than to stumble a brother.

The *principle* is obvious. We should, if necessary, be willing to deny ourselves some of our privileges if this course would be of any assistance to a brother and would avoid stumbling him. Some of the Lord's people have very sensitive consciences, others are less sensitive. The longer one has been in the School of Christ and the more ability he has, the more easily should he discern what would be pleasing to the Lord. As a Christian, he would not want to do anything to offend the Lord, even if he were to go without meat for the remainder of his life.

But if he could take the position that his own conscience would approve of a certain course, then the question would be, Would he allow his intelligence, his poise of mind, to work injury to a brother? Would he wish to stumble a brother, to make him weak, to lead him to violate his conscience? Or would he wish to lose all his influence for good over his brother? The Apostle answers this suggestion in the negative; he says, When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak consciences, ye *sin against Christ*. "Wherefore, if *meat* make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."—1 Cor. 8:1-13.

RE SUNDAY OBSERVANCE

Applying the above principle—our responsibility for our influence—to Sunday observance, we are not to feel a bondage, as the Jews did on their Sabbath day. But we should avoid driving tacks or making any unnecessary noises. We should avoid singing or playing on an instrument anything that would not generally be recognized as in keeping with things sacred. We should avoid what would be considered by others as not observing the Sabbath. We should do this for the sake of our influence. To our understanding every day is a part of the great Sabbath into which we have entered—*rest in Christ*. We have a greater liberty. But we are not to use this liberty to the injury of others.

Many people think that any kind of labor is a violation of the Fourth Commandment. From our viewpoint we know that the Sabbath of the Jew was typical; and we see what the antitype is. We are enjoying the antitype of that Sabbath. But while we might have liberty to work on Sunday, our so doing might stumble our neighbor. We would not be violating any *principle* in not observing Sunday; but for the sake of not stumbling our neighbor, we are glad to rest from our work and to give ourselves to the study of God's Word.

Christian people generally do not observe Sunday in the way they *think* they *should* observe it. The conception of many is that they should observe it as rigidly as the Jewish Law set forth; and that neither the ox nor the ass, the automobile, the street cars nor the steam cars should be used. Indeed, they would not think it right to go any great distance on the Sabbath.

As a matter of fact, the nominal church of today are not living up to *their own* conceptions of God's Law. As we get opportunity, we would like to assist these people to get a truer meaning of the Sabbath, that their consciences be not hurt, but be free from *uneasiness*. Sunday should be a day that is quiet and reverential in every way, and devoted specially to the service of God—a day in which business is restricted, and as far as possible eliminated. But the interests of the Lord's work forbid our always refraining from the use of steam cars, street cars, etc., on Sunday.

Remembering that the word *Sabbath* signifies *rest*, as the Apostle used it (Heb. 4:9, *margin*), we can see that the Church of Christ keeps the Sabbath, or rest, *every day*, and recognizes God's arrangement in connection with this matter. Those who keep every seventh day *as* a Sabbath, but who fail to enter into and keep the *rest of faith*, are not keeping the true Sabbath, but keeping another, so far as the Church is concerned.

The Sabbath arrangement was for the *Jews*. We have the better arrangement under our Covenant. We enter into rest, our Sabbath, every day; and we are hoping soon to enter into the still Greater Sabbath. In that Sabbath, the Millennium, we shall have not only rest of *heart*, but also perfection; and we shall then not be beset by the trials and difficulties of life. During His ministry Jesus chose the Sabbath day in which to perform miracles, heal the sick, that He might show forth the kind of works which He will perform during the Great Sabbath Day, the seventh-thousand-year day—the Millennium.

HELPING, NOT HINDERING, OUR NEIGHBORS

We can apply this principle in a general way. We can apply it to our conversation with Christian people. There is a way of taunting people on their ignorance, etc. This is not love; for love does not delight to expose another's weaknesses. The more careful we become in our words and our actions, the more polite we shall be, the more helpful.

"Politeness is to do and say
The kindest thing in the kindest way."

One may be polite for the sake of policy or for the sake of principle. Our pleasing of our neighbors should be for their edification. We should be glad to do all that we can for their assistance, their edification, their uplift, their upbuilding. If we can speak a pleasant word, a kind word, it would be for upbuilding; and we should speak it, instead of speaking an unkind word.

In our desire for the upbuilding of others we are to have in mind primarily the upbuilding of the Lord's people in spiritual things. As the Apostle says, we are "to provoke one another." We know that there are different ways of provoking others, and St. Paul shows us the right way. What the Apostle had in mind was the reverse of provoking to anger, hatred and strife. Some of the dear brethren who are evidently very sincere have not caught the spirit of the Truth on this subject; and wherever they go, they are apt to stir up the evil mind of others, instead of stirring up their good mind and provoking to love and good works.

We are to please our neighbors so far as it would be for their good, and according to right principles. But to upbuild one in injustice would not be right. We should not think it right to let our neighbor's chickens run all over our garden; and we think that he would thus be more edified by our firm stand for right. But we must not tell him how to manage his chickens. We must do our best to keep his chickens off our place; but we would make a mistake if we were to go in and order our neighbor's chickens, house and children. To do so would be busybodying. We shall have enough to do to look after the weaknesses of our own family.

APRIL 25

Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him—Heb. 11:6.

"According to thy faith be it unto thee," would seem to be the Lord's method of dealing with all who are His disciples, from first to last of their Christian walk and experience. Faith when He seems not to notice us; faith when things seem to be going prosperously with us in our spiritual affairs and in our temporal affairs; and faith equally strong when the currents and forces seem all to be against us. The victory that overcomes the world is the faith that in all conditions is able to look up to the Lord with absolute confidence in His goodness and faithfulness, and to realize that, according to His promise, eventually all things will work together for good to us because we are His people—Z '00, 139 (R 2625).

Except love, nothing is more pleasing in the sight of God than faith. The Father, therefore, is pleased with those who exercise confidence in His character. Accordingly, those who distrust His character, impugning, as they thereby do, His wisdom, justice, love and power, cannot but be displeasing and, therefore, unacceptable to Him, because "without faith it is impossible to please God." Therefore let us have faith in God—P '35, 62.

Parallel passages: Heb. 11; Acts 14:15; Rom. 4:11, 12, 16, 18, 19; 1 Thes. 1:9; 1 Tim. 4:10; 1 John 5:4; John 3:15-18, 36; Gen. 15:1; Matt. 5:12; 6:1, 2, 5, 16; 10:41, 42; 6:33; Jer. 29:13; 2 Pet. 1:5, 10; 3:14.

Hymns: 174, 198, 125, 21, 58, 32, 92.
Poems of Dawn, 90: *Is It for Me?*
Tower Reading: Z '15, 197 (R 5716).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What results did they bring?

IS IT FOR ME?

IS it for me, dear Savior,
Thy glory and Thy rest?
For me, so poor and humble,
Oh! shall I thus be blest?

Is it for me to see Thee
In all Thy glorious grace,
And gaze in endless rapture
On Thy beloved face?

Is it for me to listen

To Thy beloved voice,
And hear its sweetest music
Bid even me rejoice?

A thrill of solemn gladness
Hath hushed my very heart
To think that I may really
Behold Thee as Thou art;

Behold Thee in Thy beauty;
Behold Thee face to face;
Behold Thee in Thy glory
And rest in Thine embrace.

R5716: THE PRESENT ADVANTAGES OF FAITH

"Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

—Hebrews 11:6.

PAUL the Apostle is in this text laying down a general principle as to what is the Divine pleasure. God is not pleased to deal with humanity as with the brute beasts. He did not make man to live a mere animal existence, appreciating only the enjoyment of his physical senses. Man was made to glorify his Creator and to have a knowledge of Him, in order to obtain the fullest happiness and blessing from the enjoyment of his God-given faculties.

As man shall in due time come to see his Creator's glorious character and the object of his own existence, and as he grows in ability to appreciate these, he will be most highly blessed. The knowledge gained will bring full confidence in God to all who become upright in heart and who desire to conform themselves to the grand purpose of their Maker in creation. Mankind are now bowed down with the weight of the sin and the accumulated infirmities of the ages, in bondage to Satan and his evil reign. Man has been the spectacle of the Universe. He has been the source of astonishment and sorrow to all the holy beings in God's infinite domain. His experiences, his weaknesses, his degradation, his sufferings under sin, have through all the centuries been preaching most powerful sermons, and have been giving impressive object lessons as to the effects of disobedience to God.

Throughout the Millennial Age, the great Jehovah will do a mighty work through the Messiah. It will be a work of opening all the eyes long blinded to the glorious light of the goodness of God. It will be a work of unstopping all the ears long deaf to the voice of Truth. The sons of men shall be washed from their pollution; their wounds and putrefying sores shall be anointed, bound up and gradually healed by the Great Physician; their tattered raiment shall be exchanged for the garments of righteousness. By the close of the

Golden Age of Blessing man shall stand forth clothed and in his right mind, a glorious image of his Creator in the flesh.

When man shall have attained the full likeness of God, he will not need any special development of faith; for faith will be inherent in him. He will have communion with his Maker; he will once more be a son of God. He will know his Creator as even Adam in his perfection did not know Him. He will have had such revelations of the terrible nature and results of sin, of the marvelous love of God in his deliverance from sin, that he will have an established character, fixed for righteousness, and a hatred of sin that will be an all-sufficient safeguard throughout eternity. After all this manifestation of the contrast between righteousness and iniquity, between the glorious sunshine of God's love and the horrible darkness and gloom of the pit from which they were lifted, any who still love and prefer the bondage of corruption will be destroyed in the Second Death.

When man first fell from his perfect estate, and the penalty of death was pronounced, the conditions did not manifest Jehovah as a loving God; and man thought he would be happier in his alienation and sin if he did not know about God at all. God gave, indeed, a hint of a coming time of restoration, when the Seed of the woman should crush the serpent's head; but the statement was vague. So, with very few exceptions, men tried to forget God, to give Him no place in their thoughts or their affections. Gradually they drifted further and further away from Him.

"WITHOUT GOD, HAVING NO HOPE!"

St. Paul in commenting upon this fact, declares that God gave mankind over to a reprobate mind. As they did not wish to retain Him in their knowledge, He left them to their evil course, to pursue the lusts of their depraved minds, and to learn by sad experience the bitter fruitage of sin, and the misery, vanity and woe which it brings. Man's perverse heart must be broken, before he can be brought to a realization of his condition as declared by the Apostle in the words, "Without God, and having no hope in the world"! Humanity has had bitter experiences, and has gone down from one depth of depravity to another, until now mankind have become so alienated from God by wicked works and self-will that many do not know that there *is* a God. Others conjure up in their minds a demon, whom they worship as God. So the poor world is today in a sadly confused, benighted condition.

Many believe that there is some law of Nature, some law of development and progression; and thus they speak of Nature as God—an impersonal god. They cannot worship such a god; for an impersonal god could not sympathize with them nor deliver them from their troubles. The Bible, however, presents a God of intelligence, a God of sympathy, a God who cares for His creatures and who has a marvelous Plan for their restoration to His own glorious likeness. How glad we are that we know this loving, living God! How glad we are that He has let us into the secrets of His counsels, that He has made known His wonderful Plan to us in advance of the inauguration of the great work! How it rejoices our hearts, to know not only of our own glorious share and place in

this great Plan, but to know also of the blessings so soon to come to the poor groaning creation!

BLESSINGS PROPORTIONATE TO FAITH

In proportion as the people of God come into close heart-fellowship with Him, in proportion as they hear His voice speaking to them through the Prophets of old, through Jesus and His Apostles, and through His daily providences, they hear a good Message, a glorious Message, one that assures them of His loving sympathy, of His great Power and of His purpose to exercise that Power for the deliverance and blessing of all the world. As the Scriptures themselves assure us, it is a Message of "great joy to *all people*." Some can believe and receive this Message of good more readily than can others, and the more fully one receives it the more fully he will be blessed. Both knowledge and faith are necessary for that blessing. Some have not now the capacity for faith and some have not the knowledge. Those who have no faith will have to wait over for the next Age.

Some can look out into the realms of space and by modern appliances and mathematical calculations determine the distance to the sun, the center of our own solar system. With the aid of the telescope they can sweep through the vast expanse of the Universe and see something of its grandeur and its glory. They can study the movements of the planets in their various orbits, and forecast their future positions. They can ascertain also that there is a vast system of systems in the great material Universe. Truly, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language. (But) their melody extendeth through all the earth, and to the end of the world their words!"—See Leeser and R.V.

But these wise men who study these wonderful works of the Almighty do not realize nor appreciate the love of God as manifested in His Son, our Redeemer. They have a certain knowledge of the Power of God, but very few of them appreciate His character. As the Apostle Paul has truly said: "In the Wisdom of God, the world through its *wisdom* knows not God." (1 Corinthians 1:21. R.V.) Jehovah does not purpose that any shall *know Him save in His own appointed way*. The wisdom of man *cannot* find Him out.

God is now seeking only those who have the true wisdom, in that they realize their own insufficiency, their need of instruction and guidance, and who can exercise the necessary faith when the Message of God is brought to them. All others will be able to appreciate the Message in the incoming Age of Blessing. Those who are now too wise in their own conceits will be brought through humiliating experiences to a contrite and humble condition of mind. The credulous will be given the true knowledge which will lead to a real faith.

Many noble minds are filled with the wisdom of this world. They think of the mighty Universe with its millions upon millions of systems of worlds rolling through infinite space. They look at the earth, and think of the comparatively insignificant size of the little planet on which we live. By the power of the microscope, they examine the wonderful

construction of plant and flower. They scrutinize the marvels of the structure of molecules and atoms of matter, and of midgits, mites and microbes. Then they shake their heads and say: "The idea that a God of such infinite Power would concern Himself about humanity! He is far too busy to trouble Himself about us!" These must wait a further and more favorable time for their enlightenment. The Lord can deal as yet only with those who have naturally some faith and who have gained a sufficient knowledge of Himself and of His character to believe in His Love and to be desirous of coming into fellowship and communion with Him.

A SPECIAL CLASS NOW DEALT WITH

The basis of the Apostle's argument in our text is that faith is the essential thing in coming to God. God will not receive any one who does not exercise faith. St. Paul recounts the faith of the worthies of old, who gained such victories through their faith, and who received the testimony that they pleased God. Then he declares that whoever would come to God *now* must *believe*. There are some who are drawn to the Lord, who desire to come to Him. There are others who desire to get away from Him as far as possible and to keep away. These have no real knowledge of God, but are grossly blinded by "the god of this world."—2 Corinthians 4:3, 4.

The class referred to in our text as coming to God or as willing to come to Him, have a heart-hunger for their Creator—a longing for Him that nothing else can satisfy. They say to themselves, "There is a God who made me. The more I learn respecting the vast Universe and of my own anatomy, the more I see the Wisdom and the Power of God, and the more I realize my own littleness and weakness and need. For this great God my soul is crying out, and I have been told that He has made a revelation of Himself, that to certain Prophets of old He revealed the fact that He takes an interest in His human creatures. I mean to study what He has declared through these His servants. I am also told that He has revealed Himself and His love further through Jesus Christ His Son; and that this Son of God came to earth and died for sinful man that he might live. If God has really given man His Message, I want that Message; I will draw near to this God, that I also may receive His blessing."

The Lord encourages all such through His Word. He says, "Draw nigh to Me, and I will draw nigh to you." And as these come, seeking to know His will, He becomes the Rewarder of their faith. He points them to the one who is the Propitiation for the sins of all who come to Him. He makes known to them that those who come to Him through His appointed Channel may have the Savior as their Advocate, upon the terms of faith and consecration to lay down their lives in sacrifice with Him. Thus step by step they come into the fulness of salvation, and enter into the Holiest by the blood of the cross. They are accepted in the Beloved.

CREDULITY NOT FAITH

Many imagine that they have faith when in reality they have only credulity. Their so-called faith is not founded upon the Word of God and upon His promises. Such credulity

will surely fail when the great testing time comes. Credulity is the acceptance of a thing without good reason, without sure evidence. Faith, on the contrary, is the acceptance of a thing because we have indisputable evidence of its reality, its truthfulness and its reliability. As we exercise faith in God, we come nearer and nearer to Him.

"According to your faith be it unto you," are the Master's words. Every exercise of faith is based upon something real and tangible to faith. There is a mental tangibility for faith and also a physical, or outward, tangibility. True wisdom searches out the two grounds for faith. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him; and He will show them His Covenant."

These increase in faith as they go on in the path of obedience. Faith and obedience are like our two feet. We put one forward, and then the other, and then the first one forward; and so we develop in faith by continuing in the spirit of obedience, following on wherever the Lord points the way. "We walk by faith and not by sight." But we have good, tangible evidences all along our Heavenward journey. Outside of all other evidences, the true Christian has in his own personal experiences abundant proof of our Father's love and care. The Master said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall upon the ground without your Father. ... But ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthew 10:29.) As he progresses in the narrow way the child of God comes to learn the fulness of meaning in these words of our Lord.

FAITH A REAL SUBSTANCE

So the Christian who walks closely with the Master finds the truth of the Apostle's words that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence [proof, conviction] of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1.) Faith is not only a groundwork, or basis, for our hopes (itself also having a groundwork in proven facts), but it is a real substance—a mental substance, so to speak, which stimulates and clarifies the mind. Faith is not a substance that we can hold in our hand or walk on with our feet. But it becomes a strength to our minds as we progress in the knowledge of God and of the things which God has to give to those who love Him above all else and who seek to render Him loving, devoted service. Faith becomes as real and tangible to us as any material substance—even more so; for the things upon which our faith lays hold are eternal.

APRIL 26

He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his—Heb. 4:10.

Instead of demanding one day of the seven, the law of love really controls, regulates our entire time; seven days of the week we are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength; seven days of the week we are to love our neighbor as ourselves; and seven days in the week we are to rest also—rest from our own works; rest by faith in the finished work of Christ; rest in the love of God; and rest in the peace of God which passes understanding, ruling in our hearts continually—Z '02, 205 (R 3037).

To enter into rest implies that we accept Christ's finished work as our justification before God, and that we abide with perfect assurance in the consciousness of the reckoned enjoyment of all Millennial blessings. He who has this faith, instead of going about to establish his own righteousness, has peace in the sense of enjoying Christ's righteousness. Thus justifying faith gives Him the rest of justification. Furthermore, in consecration, ceasing from living for self and the world, and looking forward with perfect assurance to the successful outcome of God's Plan, he has the same kind of rest that God enjoys—P '34, 47.

Parallel passages: Heb. 3:7—4:11; Job 22:21, 26; 34:29; Psa. 4:8; 17:15; 25:12; 29:11; 37:4, 11, 37; 119:165; 125:1, 5; Prov. 3:17, 24; Isa. 26:3, 12; 28:12; 53:5; 54:10, 13; 57:2, 19; John 14:27; 16:33; Acts 10:36; Rom. 5:1; 8:6; 14:17; 15:13; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 2:14-17; Phil. 4:7, 9; Col. 3:15; 2 Thes. 3:16.

Hymns: 251, 97, 115, 179, 244, 305, 307.

Poems of Dawn, 83: *Assurance*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 25 (R 5387).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? In what did they result?

ASSURANCE

IT may not come to us as we have thought,
The blessed consciousness of sins forgiven;
We may not hear a voice that shall proclaim
Our title clear to the sweet rest of heaven.

We may not see a light upon the path
Above the brightness of the noonday sun,
Whose radiance shall reveal our names enrolled
As ransomed by the Lord's Anointed One.

Not thus may the sweet knowledge come to us,
That all is well with us forevermore;
Not with a flash of glory on the soul
Do all pass into life through Christ the door.

But like the winter merging into spring,
Or gently as the trees put forth their leaves,
May come to us the impulse of that life
Which God bestows on those sin truly grieves.

If we are conscious of a firm resolve
To follow Jesus as our constant guide;
If, in prosperity or in distress,
Our hearts cling closely to the Crucified;

If we are not ashamed to have it known
That in His service is our chief delight;
Though we may never feel the ecstasy
Which those attain who reach the mountain height;

Yet, if the hour of secret prayer be sweet,
When we hold converse with the Friend Divine,
And dear the time when with His "own" we meet,
For us the promise stands, "They shall be Mine."

R5387: REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

"My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exod. 33:14.

WE ARE NOT to think of our Heavenly Father as literally walking through the wilderness with the children of Israel, as leaving the affairs of the Universe and going with them in their journey. Nor are we to get the thought that God is everywhere at the same time. This unscriptural thought has been the foundation for much error. Christian Scientists say that God is everywhere—in every piece of wood, of china—in *everything*. When we ask what they mean, they say that since the word *God* simply stands for good, and since there is good in everything, therefore God must be in everything; for God means good and must be everywhere, even in every atom of matter. So on this erroneous doctrine of God's omnipresence they build their theory. But theirs is not the Scriptural thought.

The Scriptural thought is that God specially manifests His Power and Love to His people. God is in Heaven; the earth is His footstool. But by His various powers and agents, and by His intelligence and knowledge, He can be as if present everywhere—through His angels, His messengers. Just as we by the telegraph and the telephone can

have communication with the uttermost parts of the earth, so God can exercise His Power in every part of the Universe.

The words of our text, we remember, were the Lord's answer to Moses when that great statesman was in perplexity. He had been commanded to go forward as the leader of Israel, and through Divine favor to bring them into the land of Canaan, there to give them rest.

From the beginning of the wilderness journey, there was more or less of disinclination or fear on the part of the people. They realized that they were breaking up their homes and going forth into a strange land. Even though they had been oppressed by the Egyptians, they reasoned that if they went out into the wilderness with no Egyptian taskmasters, this would mean that they would have no food. Thus they were stiff-necked—like an ox—difficult to turn about.

The Lord's promise to Moses was, "My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." And He promised to be with the Israelites. He gave them assurance that they might recognize His power in their midst; for God's energy in all the affairs of earth, as of the Universe, is not merely a power to know the things that are happening, but to control all events that they may outwork His designs. He guides and assists the efforts of His people. Additionally, the angels of the Lord quite probably were employed in this special work of superintending the affairs of the Israelites.

This thought is in harmony with the Scripture which intimates that there is a guardian angel for each one of the Lord's saints, who has supervision over him. We read, "In Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven." (Matt. 18:10.) They have immediate communication with the Father; and thus He has direct oversight of all who belong to Him.

The Divine Power was manifested directly with the Israelites in the Shekinah glory over the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy, which indicated the Lord's presence with them. And when they were to journey onward, the pillar of cloud went before them by day, and the pillar of fire by night. When they were to stop, this cloud would stand still. While they were encamped, the cloud would rest over the Tabernacle, and the Shekinah glory rested between the cherubim on the Mercy-Seat in the Tabernacle. Thus the presence of God went with them to the Land of Canaan, and gave them all things which He had promised—Joshua 23:14.

MOSES' NEED OF ENCOURAGEMENT

From our context we perceive that Moses' meekness was again manifesting itself. He had previously asked for some one to be mouthpiece for him, and the Lord had said that Aaron might be his mouthpiece. Rash people often get into trouble, because there is a lack of meekness, modesty. But it was not so with Moses—"the meekest man in all the earth." Humility is a most important element of character. The meek man will find it

easier to be gentle and patient than will the man who lacks meekness. And so in enumerating the fruits of the Holy Spirit St. Paul mentions meekness.—Gal. 5:23.

When the Lord promised that His presence should go with Moses, He was speaking to him as the *Mediator*. Therefore He said, "My Presence shall go with *thee*." As soon as Moses had inaugurated the Law Covenant at Sinai, Israel was in covenant relationship with God, and the Lord with Israel.

ISRAEL'S FAILURE TO ENTER REST

One might get the thought that God's promise to give rest would signify that Moses should have a rest of mind, and that all who would come into line with Moses and with God's promises would also have a rest of mind. But this mental rest is not what is here meant. The Israelites were going from the land of Egypt into the Land of Promise, which was to be an everlasting inheritance to them, if they would keep their Covenant. But of all the adults who came out of Egypt, only Caleb and Joshua entered into Canaan. (Num. 32:11, 12.) The majority failed to enter in because of their lack of faith. The forty years' wandering in the desert was because of their fearfulness and consequent rebellion.

When on the wilderness journey Israel came finally to the place where they could see the land of Canaan, spies were sent to make investigation and to report as to which would be the best way to enter the promised land. All of the spies save Caleb and Joshua, gave an unfavorable report. Then through timidity the people said, "We cannot go up and take that land. Those people are giants, and we look like *grasshoppers* beside them." So in their lack of faith they murmured against going up. Therefore God swore in His wrath, "This people shall not enter into My rest."—Hebrews 3:11.

TYPICAL AND ANTITYPICAL REST

The Apostle Paul shows that the rest in Canaan was a type of the rest of the people of God, in this Gospel Age. (Heb. 4:3, 9.) By *faith* we rest in God—we rest in His promises. We are not moved away by any of the adverse conditions of the present time. Our rest is the *reality*; the rest of Israel was the *type*.

The antitypical rest, into which the Lord's people enter, has two phases. We who believe enter into rest *now*. We have the peace of God ruling in our hearts and guiding our lives. We have the peace of faith, the rest of faith, the confidence that God will direct our course. Therefore we are *contented*, even though not yet *satisfied*. We shall not be *satisfied* until we enter into our *complete rest*. Our true rest will be that glorious, perfect condition beyond the veil, which we shall attain through the First Resurrection.

St. Paul, in discussing this question in the 3d and 4th chapters of Hebrews, declares that the people of Israel failed to enter into rest, not because God did not perform His part, but because they failed to exercise the proper faith in the Lord; they had "an evil heart of unbelief." And he proceeds to say, "Let *us* therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1.)

There are requirements; there are conditions. The Apostle means that whoever would be of this *overcoming* class must take heed, or he will fail to enter into the eternal rest of God. There *will be* such a class of overcomers; and God has predestined and foreordained that they shall enter into this glorious and perfect rest. If we are faithful unto death, we shall attain this glorious rest by the resurrection "*change*."

JOSHUA A TYPE OF CHRIST

The world is not now able to enter into rest. They are like the raging sea. They have not come into relationship with God. As the Scriptures tell us, mankind is a poor, groaning creation, travailing together in pain. They do not see the rest which God has provided. We see, however, that when the antitypical Moses, the great Mediator, shall have been completed, He will lead the people into rest.—Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22.

Moses did not lead the people into the Land of Promise; it was Joshua—their new leader—who led them over Jordan. Thus the type shows that mankind will enter into the promised land, not by the Law, but by a Savior. The name Joshua means savior—Greek *Jesous*. (Heb. 4:8, margin.) So Jesus will lead all of mankind who will, into the true Land of Promise—into love and loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness. It will take the entire thousand years of the Messianic Kingdom to bring the world into condition for all the blessings which God has in store for them.

Our Lord Jesus entered into rest by trusting the Heavenly Father to fulfil all His gracious promises. Jesus, the Head of the antitypical Moses, thus enjoyed perfect rest of heart, and realized the Heavenly Father's continual presence with Him. This continued for three and a half years; and then He entered into the rest complete, by the First Resurrection.

The same is true of all the members of the Body of the antitypical Moses—The Christ. God's presence goes with them. The world at present is not in a condition to enter into the Father's rest. Only the members of the Body of Christ have entered into this rest of faith, trusting in the Lord. And none except those who continue faithful will be recognized as members of the great antitypical Mediator. All who lack faith lack proof that they are in the Body of Christ. If, then, our hearts are disturbed and we cannot enter into this rest of faith, the proper course is to seek the Throne of Grace, that we may overcome the difficulty.

THE REST PROVIDED FOR MANKIND

As for those Israelites who the Lord said should not enter into His rest, we understand Him to mean, not that *no* Jew will enter into the true rest of God, but rather, that this was a prophecy of the end of the Jewish Age—that they as a nation would not be ready to enter into this rest of faith which was then offered them—that *as a nation* they would fail. They did fail; for "they knew not the day of their visitation."

As soon as the great Messiah shall establish the New Covenant, both Jews and Gentiles will enter into peace and prosperity, as rapidly as they enter into that New Covenant. But the disobedient, after a full, fair trial, will go into the Second Death. Throughout the Millennial Age mankind will be entering into the actual rest, which will mean deliverance from the bondage of Sin and Death. Before Messiah's Reign shall have ended, they will have fully entered into that rest and into perfection of life, and will be counted in as a part of the seed of Abraham, according to the promise, "I have constituted thee a father of many nations." (Gen. 17:5; Rom. 4:17.) The blessing of the Lord will be upon them all. Any *refusing* to enter into the rest of God will be cut off—the wilful sinner shall die at one hundred years of age.—Isa. 65:20.

APRIL 27

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus—Phil. 2:5.

To have the mind of Christ is indeed the one requirement of lawful striving—a mind which humbly and faithfully submits itself to the will of God as expressed in His great Plan of the Ages, and which devotes all energy to the accomplishment of His will, because of an intelligent appreciation of the ends He has in view. If so filled with the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, we, like Him, will desire to be as free as possible from entangling earthly affairs, and to have our time as free as possible for the Lord's service, and then to devote all energy, ability and effort to that service—Z '02, 265 (R 3069).

The mind that was in Christ Jesus disposed Him to self-emptying of His prehuman nature and to self-sacrifice, even to the ignominious death of the cross, that He might glorify God. Such a disposition is surely the fitting attitude of everyone who loves God supremely. As supreme love for self leads to self-exaltation, so supreme love for God leads to self-humiliation, that He may be exalted; and as truly as one abases Himself under God's mighty hand, so truly will the Lord exalt him in due time—P '33, 64.

Parallel passages: Isa. 53; Matt. 11:29; 20:26, 27; 23:12; John 13:14, 15; Rom. 15:3; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:7, 8; 1 Pet. 2:21; Phil. 3:7-9; Heb. 13:13; Prov. 3:34; 15:33; 25:6, 7; Isa. 57:15; 66:2; Jer. 45:5; Luke 22:24-27; Jas. 4:6, 10; 1 Pet. 5:3, 5, 6.

Hymns: 322, 167, 168, 144, 4, 134, 229.

Poems of Dawn, 82: *Just to Let Thy Father Do What He Will.*

Tower Reading: Z '11, 440 (R 4928).

Questions: Have I this week abased myself for the Lord's sake? How? Under what circumstances? With what results?

JUST TO LET THY FATHER DO WHAT
HE WILL

JUST to let Thy Father do what He will;
Just to know that He is true, and be still.
Just to follow, hour by hour, as He leadeth;
Just to draw the moment's power, as it needeth.
Just to trust Him, this is all. Then the day will
surely be
Peaceful, whatso'er befall, bright and blessed, calm
and free.

Just to let Him speak to thee, through His Word,
Watching, that His voice may be clearly heard.
Just to tell Him everything, as it rises,

And at once to bring to Him all surprises.
Just to listen, and to stay where you cannot miss His
voice,
This is all! and thus today, you, communing, shall
rejoice.

Just to trust, and yet to ask guidance still;
Take the training or the task, as He will.
Just to take the loss or gain, as He sends it;
Just to take the joy or pain as He lends it.
He who formed thee for His praise will not miss the
gracious aim;
So today, and all thy days, shall be moulded for
the same.

Just to leave in His dear hand little things;
All we cannot understand, all the stings.
Just to let Him take the care sorely pressing;
Finding all we let Him bear changed to blessing.
This is all! and yet the way marked by Him who
loves thee best:
Secret of a happy day, secret of His promised rest.

R4928: THE GRACE OF HUMILITY

"In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."—Phil. 2:3.

THOSE WHO naturally have a humble mind have no particular difficulty in esteeming others better than themselves. But there are some who naturally have another attitude of mind. This is not necessarily their fault, for they may have been born with larger self-conceit than were others. But even if we were born with humbleness of mind, we should need to take care that self-conceit and pride do not come in. Sometimes in their own heart some people feel boastful of the knowledge they possess. They like to shine, even though they know they have no more brilliancy than others; they would like to obscure the shining of others that they might be the more noticed in the darkness.

It would, therefore, be a safe matter for each of us to follow the Apostle's suggestion to cultivate this *humility of mind* and never allow it to be lost. "*Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time*"; "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (I Pet. 5:6; Luke 14:11.) God would do this abasing, not of a vengeful spirit, but because the one who would vaunt himself must be brought low.

There might, however, be circumstances when some who appear to be vaunting themselves really are not doing so, but circumstances and conditions make it *seem* so.

Therefore, to best fulfil the Apostle's injunction, we should, as he suggests in this text, cultivate the spirit of humility—not considering our own good qualities so much as those of others. If we have good qualities, we are glad; let us make use of them.

In comparing ourselves with others, let us look at our own blemishes. There are very few in whom we cannot see some good qualities, good traits. If, therefore, we look at our own imperfections and the good qualities of others, we shall find ourselves more and more appreciative of others; and this will be of assistance to us in running the race.

As an illustration of seeing something to admire, even in our enemies, we have the suggestion of the old lady to her nieces. One niece said to the other, "Auntie can say something good about everybody. I believe she could say something good even about the Devil." "That is so," answered the other. "Let us ask her." Then she called, "Auntie, is there any good about the Devil?" "My dear," replied Auntie, "I wish we all had as much perseverance as he has."

So if we could find something in the Adversary that we could admire and commend, we can certainly find something in all others to admire and commend and to give them credit for. Thus we will cultivate the spirit that will be most helpful to ourselves for our future work.

The consideration of our own imperfections would, as we have suggested, make us very humble of mind and keep us in a very humble attitude of mind. This might discourage us unless we had the proper relationship with the Lord and His Word. We know that "all things work together for good to those who love God." (Rom. 8:28.) Through His Word our Lord has provided for such the "Balm of Gilead" for their encouragement, and the anointing oil and the comfort of the Scriptures.

The Lord does not cast us off if we are not wilfully wrongdoers and if we take in the right spirit the humiliating things. That disposition is what He wants. Those things which would humiliate us in the sight of others and in the sight of the Lord Himself, will, if we are rightly exercised by them, work together for good to us. Such He will bless and lift up and give an appreciation of His Love. This He purposes to do. We have every evidence that the Lord will give the necessary encouragement, and we have the assurance of the Scriptures that those who obey His Word to the *best of their ability* shall not be overcome.

For each one to look merely upon his own things, interests, welfare or talents and to ignore those of others would manifest a general selfishness and, consequently, a dearth of the Spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of love and generosity. In proportion as we are filled more and more with the Holy Spirit, Love, we shall find ourselves *interested in the welfare of others*. This was the mind, disposition, or spirit which was in our dear Redeemer, which He so wonderfully manifested, which we must copy and develop in our characters if we would ultimately be of the "little flock," who shall be joint-heirs with Christ in His glory, concerning whom God has predestinated that to be accepted with Him to this position they must be "copies of His Son."—Rom. 8:29.

OUR GREAT EXEMPLAR

That we may partially discern how our Lord Jesus exemplified this spirit of humility, the Apostle briefly sums up the story of His humiliation and shows how it led to His present exaltation. He points out to us that when our Lord Jesus was a spirit being, before He stooped to take our nature and to bear the penalty of our sin, He was in "a form of God"—a spirit form, a high and glorious condition. But instead of being moved selfishly and ambitiously to grasp for higher things than God had conferred upon Him—instead of seeking to set up a rival Empire, as Satan did—He did not meditate a *robbery of God* to make Himself the Father's *equal* (Satan's course), and say, "I will ascend above the stars [the bright ones, the angelic hosts], I will be *as* the Most High" [His peer, His equal]. Quite to the contrary of this, our Lord Jesus, "the beginning of the creation of God," was willing, in harmony with the Father's plan, to *humble* Himself, to take a *lower* nature and to do a work which would involve, not only a great deal of humiliation, but also a great deal of pain and suffering.

The Apostle points out how the "Only Begotten" proved His willingness and humility by complying with this arrangement; and that after He became a man He continued of this same humble spirit, willing to carry out the Divine Plan to the *very letter* by dying as man's ransom-price; and not only so, but when it pleased the Father to require that the death should be a most ignominious one in every respect, perhaps beyond the requirements of the ransom merely, He did not draw back, but said, "*Thy will, not Mine, be done,*" and stooped even to the ignominious "death of the cross!"

Here we have the *most wonderful demonstration of humility, meekness and obedience to God that ever was manifested or that could be conceived of*. And this is the pattern the Apostle points out that *we* should seek to copy. "Let this same [humble] mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 2:5-10.

This humility enabled our Lord to render perfect obedience, on account of which the Heavenly Father has so highly honored Him as to raise Him from the dead to the divine nature, to a station far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named. That this is the Apostle's argument is shown (verse 9) by the word "*wherefore*"; i.e., on this account, on account of this humility just described, God has highly exalted Him.

Not only did our Lord's beautiful and perfect humility and obedience demonstrate that He was *to the core* loyal to the Heavenly Father, but it also demonstrated that in Him the Father's spirit, Love, dwelt richly, for He shared the Father's love for the race He redeems. On this account also He is found worthy to be the Divine Agent in the blessing of all the families of the earth, according to the terms of the Divine Covenant made with Father Abraham.

Thus He has become the "Seed of Abraham" which is to bless the race redeemed; and hence it will be to Him that "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" when

Jehovah's "due time" shall come for the pouring out of Divine blessings upon the redeemed world—that all may come to a knowledge of the truth and, if they will, into full harmony with God, and to eternal life.

Not only does the Apostle hold up the Lord Jesus as the great Example of a proper humility, self-abnegation and obedience to God in the interest of others, but he would also hold up before us the reward, the high exaltation of our Lord by the Father, the result or reward of His obedience, that we also might be encouraged and realize that, if faithful in following the footsteps of our Redeemer and sacrificing the advantages of the present to serve the Lord and His cause, then in due time we also may expect to be glorified with Him and to share His name and throne and work, as members of His anointed Body, His Church, His joint-heir.

Beloved, let us apply to ourselves the loving exhortation of the Apostle to the Church at Philippi, contained in the succeeding verses (Phil. 2:12-16), and continue in the way upon which we have entered, making more and more progress in the race-course, working out in ourselves through humility and obedience the character, the disposition of Christ, with fear and trembling, and thus working out each *our own share* in the great salvation to glory, honor and immortality which God hath promised.

WORKING OUT OUR SALVATION

We cannot work out our own *justification*, but being justified by the blood of Christ, and being called with the heavenly calling, we can make our calling and election *sure*. We can work out our own share in the great salvation to which we have been called in Christ by giving heed to the instructions of the Lord, by following the pattern which He has set for us; not that we shall attain perfection in the flesh, but merely perfection of will, of intention, of heart, and if we keep the body under to the extent of our ability, its weaknesses and imperfections will be reckoned as covered by the merit of our Lord, the Holy One.

It is encouraging also for us to know that this warfare against weakness and sin is not merely one of *our own*, but that God is for us, has called us, and is helping us. He already works in us, by His word of promise, and has led us thus far in the willing and the doing of His will, His good pleasure; and He will continue thus to lead and to help us and to work in us by His Word of Truth, *if we will continue to give heed to His counsel*. "Sanctify them through Thy Truth—Thy Word is Truth." The Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation" to every one that so accepts it; and no greater stimulus to true godliness can be found than the "exceeding great and precious promises given unto us; that *by these* ye might be partakers of the divine nature."—2 Pet. 1:4.

Moreover, in following in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus, running the race for the great prize set before us in the Gospel, we are not to *murmur* by the way, *finding fault with its difficulties and narrowness*; nor are we to dispute respecting it, nor seek to have any other way than that which Divine providence marks out for us, realizing that the Lord knows exactly what experiences are necessary to our development in the school of Christ;

and realizing also that, if obedience were possible, while our mouths are full of complaints and dissatisfaction with the Lord and our lot which He has permitted, it would indicate that we are at least out of sympathy with the *spirit* of His arrangement; and such an obedience, if it were possible (but *it would not be possible*), would not meet the Divine approval, nor gain us the "prize." Hence, as the Apostle exhorts, we should "Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, ... holding forth the Word of life in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."—Verses 14-16.

APRIL 28

We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us—Rom. 5:3-5.

We have need of patience, and that can only be gained by trials. We have need of faith, and that can only be developed by necessities. We have need of experience for our future work, which can be gained only by such experiences as permit us to be touched with a feeling of the infirmities and difficulties and trials of those about us, to whom we shall be ministers and representatives in God's Kingdom. For us, then, the lesson of present experiences is to resist evil, and not with evil, but with good—Z '03, 348 (R 3228).

In themselves tribulations are not to be gloried in, but we may glory in them, when they work in us patience; and such perseverance in well-doing is rewarded by God's approval, which, when realized, fills the heart with hope for ultimate victory. Nor is this hope vain, because God delights in giving this victory to those whose hearts are filled with Divine love, a love that is the choice fruit of the holy Spirit given us by God in Christ Jesus—P '27, 55.

Parallel passages: Matt. 5:11; 1 Pet. 3:12-14; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 7:4; Heb. 12:5-13; Jas. 1:2-4, 12; Phil. 1:20; 2 Tim. 1:12; 2 Cor. 1:22; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13, 14.

Hymns: 300, 305, 263, 92, 201, 166, 90.
Poems of Dawn, 203: *Our Blessed Hope*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 291 (R 5544).

Questions: What were this week's experiences along the line of this text? How did I receive them? What did they accomplish for me?

OUR BLESSED HOPE

WHAT though this earthly house of clay
Sink into ruin and decay,
Though health and vigor pass away,
Christ is *my life*.

What though fond dreams of youth be fled,
The light that shone upon my head
Extinguished and forever dead,
Christ is *my light*.

What though bright hopes now withered lie,
Like autumn leaves, all sere and dry,

Or meteors vanished from the sky,
Christ is *my hope*.

What though rude billows round me roll,
His voice the tempest can control;
They ruffle not my tranquil soul,
Christ is *my peace*.

What though dear friends I once caressed
Within the silent grave now rest,
The valley clods above them pressed,
Christ *ever lives*.

What though perplexing paths appear,
God's Word, a lamp, makes all things clear;
Onward I pass, nor evil fear,
Christ is *my way*.

What though the darkness deeper grows,
And foes more active to oppose,
God's truth provides a sweet repose,
Christ *shall appear*.

R5544: REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you."—Matthew 5:11, 12.

THESE words of our Lord are addressed to His disciples—not merely His Apostles, who were chosen to be His special messengers, but all His followers throughout this Age. A disciple is a pupil—one who is being taught by another. All who are Jesus' disciples are to take the message of our text to themselves. "Blessed are ye," signifies that *persecution* is a favor from God. Consider it as a favor from the Father when men shall revile you—not because of the reviling, but because they shall say these things of you *falsely*, for Christ's sake.

No one would choose naturally to be persecuted or to have evil spoken against him. The Scriptures say that a good name is more to be esteemed than great riches. But if it is for Christ's sake that we suffer, we may know that the Lord will recompense us. In the Lord's arrangement there is to be a time of "evening up" for all we suffer here. Thus we lay up treasure in Heaven. All that we suffer now is storing up for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if borne for Him.

From this standpoint we should really desire persecution. We are not to strive for it, not to endeavor to bring it upon ourselves unnecessarily; but realizing that if we lack persecution we lack one of the evidences of being true disciples of the Lord, we rejoice when in the providence of God it is our portion. Some, it is true, might be reviled for something evil or unwise that they had done. There would be no blessing in such an experience. The blessing comes when the accusation against us is false and is for the Truth's sake.

"All who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution." Hence we should investigate our lives to see whether we have this evidence that we are living godly. The Lord is the "True Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We are the lesser lights. In letting our lights shine faithfully, we shall bring upon ourselves persecution. Let us not imagine that escape from persecution in our own case is the result of superior wisdom or tact on our part. "*All* who will live godly shall suffer persecution," is the promise, the assurance of Scripture. We should not court it, but should desire this evidence of our faithfulness, and should wish to be one of the "blessed" ones, of whom the Master speaks in our text. Then let us ask ourselves, Do I have persecution for Christ's sake? We should make a prayerful examination of our hearts to see whether we are fully loyal to God, to see whether we are letting our light shine out properly. If we lack this proof of sonship, we should inquire, What is the reason?

PERSECUTION A SURE RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS

A sister once said to the Editor, "I have no persecution, no opposition. Everything seems to be going favorably with me." She seemed troubled. We asked the sister to study her own heart to see whether or not she was as faithful as she knew how to be. Upon her reply we said, "Probably you take your persecutions with such grace that you are happy under them." The sister replied that she *would* be happy if she thought that was the case. Then we told her that the only other explanation we could think of was that the Lord was allowing her time to gain strength in order that she might bear what would come to her later. We told her to pray about it. A year or two after we again saw the sister. We recalled the circumstance, and asked her if she had yet had any persecution. She answered, "Oh, yes. I have had plenty of persecution, but I am happy and rejoicing in it!"

It is impossible to rejoice in persecution until we get the right focus on the subject. We cannot do this of ourselves, and need, therefore, to take the matter to the Lord and confer with Him. After we have had "a little talk with Jesus," our faith takes hold on Him. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to be exceeding glad and joyful in persecution and affliction for Christ. The Apostle Peter also declares, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as ... an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters; yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him glorify God on this behalf."—1 Peter 4:14, 15.

The Master was not surprised at the attitude of the chief priests and religious leaders of His day. He knew from the beginning that he would have their opposition and hostility,

and He warned His disciples not to expect otherwise. As to the reason why there should be persecution against the Lord and those who faithfully follow in His footsteps, He himself tells us, saying, "The darkness hateth the light." Darkness stands for Satan, for sin, for everything contrary to righteousness. God is represented as the great light, "and in Him is no darkness at all." Light is healing, beneficial, health-giving.

They who are of the darkness hate those who are of the light, because the light reproves the darkness, and the darkness does not like to be reproved. Wherever righteousness is, it is a rebuke to that which is sinful, dark. Our Lord stood for the light. He represented the Truth, the Heavenly Father. And those who were in darkness were in opposition to Him in proportion to their darkness—some of these knowingly, others in more or less of ignorance. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all them which believe not." Satan has been skilful in putting darkness for light and light for darkness.

IN GOOD CONSCIENCE MANY HAVE OPPOSED LIGHT

The fact that many of the world are in opposition to God and righteousness is not because as a rule they are evil of heart, but because Satan has succeeded in making the darkness seem desirable and the light undesirable. It was thus in the religious systems of Jesus' day, and we believe that it is the same in the religious systems of today. Saul of Tarsus was for a time one of those blinded by Satan. In persecuting the followers of Jesus he verily believed that he was doing God service. But when he was apprehended by the Lord and the light was revealed to him, he proved himself loyal to God.

And so we trust it is with some who today oppose the light and truth now being proclaimed. They are deluded; but if their hearts are fully loyal to the Lord, if they are true to their consecration vows, the Truth will be revealed to them before "the door is shut"; for "ye, brethren, are not in darkness; ye are the children of light." "The wise shall understand." Soon the knowledge of the Truth will come to the "foolish virgins," and they will wash their soiled robes in the blood of Christ—during the great tribulation shortly to come to the whole world. And soon, too, the light of the knowledge of God is to fill the whole earth. But so long as Satan is "the Prince of this world," and there are those in the world who have his spirit, and those who are followers of the Lord and have His spirit, just so long must there be conflict.

The opposition of the darkness to the light may be manifested in different ways. In the days of our Lord and the Apostles there were persecutions of Christians by Jews. Later, during the long centuries in which the Word of God was neglected and the Truth was obscured by gross errors, there were persecutions of Protestants by Catholics and of Catholics by Protestants and of Jews by both—all because of failure to study the Word of God and to follow its teachings. But very few in these dark times had access to the Word.

Some of the opposition to our Lord was open, and some of it was hidden. Many of the Apostles, like their Master, suffered death by violence; and many of the faithful down

through the Gospel Age have suffered violent deaths. At the present time, outward persecution is not sanctioned by law, nor is it tolerated to any great extent.

PRESENT METHODS OF PERSECUTION

Persecutors have all along used the weapon of reviling, slander, saying all manner of evil falsely against those who are God's true people. As the Bible declares, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Today slanderous charges are made and villainous, opprobrious expressions indulged in by opponents of the Truth, and this is the chief weapon, because the defamers have not the power at present to use open, personal violence. Public sentiment and law would not permit it. But the persecution is of the same brand, the same spirit—merely governed by circumstances and conditions. Those who would say all manner of evil falsely, knowing the charges are false, are the very kind who would crucify or burn at the stake, had they the power. Not being permitted to use personal violence by the present laws and the general sentiment, these are forced to content themselves with bringing all sorts of false charges—seeking to assassinate the reputation and destroy the influence of those who are proclaiming the Truth, the Word of God.

The right attitude of the persecuted ones is indicated in our text. Instead of feeling downcast and discouraged by these experiences, and thinking them strange, evidences that God is against us, we should conclude the very reverse. We should say to ourselves, "This is the same kind of experience that the Lord had, and that His people of the past have had." So, "Marvel not if the world [especially the religious world—the world that hated Him] hate you. Ye know that it hated Me before it hated you," forewarned our Master. So far from being discouraged, we are to rejoice—not that any could rejoice in the persecution for its own sake, for persecution is grievous; but we are to rejoice because "great is your reward in Heaven." What we do not get here of prosperity, we shall get *there*—in the Kingdom.

The Socialists say that they intend to have some of the good things *now!* They have not sufficient faith in the future blessings to be willing to wait. But the class addressed in our text are those who have faith in God and His promises, those who are associated with Christ, who understand that the experiences of this time are working out for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and they are content to await God's time. These are rejoicing in their hearts, realizing that they are enduring for righteousness' sake, that they are on the side of God, the side of right, the side of Truth, and realizing that these afflictions are only momentary, as it were; for the present life is but a mere span compared with the eternal life, the glorious immortality, so near at hand, in which we shall receive the blessings promised—joy forever with the Lord.

"FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED"

The Master gave all His followers fair warning that they were not to expect the world to appreciate their attitude. One might well reason that if one gave up sin and adopted a righteous course, the world would esteem him; that all would see the worthiness of his

character and would show him special deference. But we must not expect this under the present reign of Sin. It would be a very broad way into the Kingdom, and a great many then might take this course for the favor of man, for the prosperity which it would bring them. The Lord could never demonstrate our fitness for the Kingdom honors under such conditions.

If our great Master was called Beelzebub, we cannot expect that the members of His Household will be treated any better. If He who was perfect was held up to scorn as the Prince of Devils, we may expect similar treatment to be meted out to His followers by those whom the Adversary has blinded; for we are less able to uphold the standard of righteousness than was He. When His enemies attempted to make His character appear vile in the sight of others, He did not retaliate. Jesus did on proper occasions point out the wrong-doing, the wrong character, of those who were the religious leaders and teachers; but He did not do this in a retaliatory sense. On various occasions He accused them of being untrue, unholy, hypocritical; but He said nothing with a view to injuring them, but with the desire to show them their improper condition of heart, that they might profit by His instruction. He endeavored to help others to see the real condition of these blind leaders of the blind, in order to prevent them from falling into the ditch toward which their leaders were hastening.

THE MASTER'S CRUCIAL TEST

When the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law tried to trump up charges against the Master and to put evil constructions upon what He said, He was patient under all these trying conditions. He submitted to the treatment. It might be asked, Why did God permit His Holy Son to suffer such revilings? Why did He not smite down those who did so wickedly? The answer is that the Father wished to demonstrate the kind of character that was pleasing to Him, and He wished to test the loyalty of Jesus Himself. Would He be submissive and obedient or would He resent these affronts? Would He say, "I will have none of this! I did not come into the world to bear such indignities"? His painful experiences were thus tests of His loyalty to the Father.

Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that He should submit Himself, even unto death, and He had agreed to do this. Now the crucial test was: Would He continue loyal to the Father and carry out His purposes? If so, He would be worthy to be the Messiah, worthy to be the Divine Son of God throughout eternity. Our Lord's experiences had all been foretold in prophecy. In order to fulfil these prophecies it must be that He receive revilings, and He must accept them properly. The Apostle Peter shows that in this He was a worthy Example to all of His followers. As He who was holy, harmless, undefiled, did not seek to have the Father bring upon the revilers some punishment for their misdoings, so this is an example for us; so we should walk in His steps.

SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION STILL HERE

We realize that in our case there is none righteous, not one who is perfect. So we see that our enemies might have some cause to revile us. They might see some of our

imperfections and have something that they could pick at and exaggerate. The Apostle Peter says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." As they said all manner of evil against our Lord falsely, we may be sure that they will say all manner of evil falsely against us. And as He bore it patiently, so are we to take patiently everything that comes to us, and to recognize that nothing can possibly happen to us except what the Father will foreknow and permit for our good and for His glory. Our Master left us a portion of His cup that the Father poured for Him. After the cup has all been drained, then will come the glory and the honor—but not now.

We might naturally expect under the changed conditions of the present day, that those who are loyal to God and His Truth would not be maltreated and persecuted as in Jesus' day. But we believe there is another way of viewing the matter. We believe that Jesus, if He were here in the flesh today, would be persecuted and maligned by the worldly-minded, especially in the nominal Church systems. Now, instead of crucifying Him literally, or roasting Him at the stake, they would "roast" Him before the public—a more refined form of persecution—for the spirit of persecution is still here.

In proportion as the followers of Jesus are faithful to the teachings of the Master, in that same proportion they will be out of harmony with everything opposed to the spirit of Christ, and in that same proportion they will be misrepresented and persecuted. In Jesus' day there were plenty of people who did reverence to the Doctors of the Law, who made broad their phylacteries and were very exact as to the letter of the Law, the paying of tithes, etc. Jesus did not seek honor and high position. But He appealed to the people to turn from sin, to walk in His steps, to stand for the Truth as against all unrighteousness and untruth. This appeal touched no responsive chord in the hearts of the worldly-minded.

For this reason, we say that the world has not changed, that the world is still in opposition to the Word and its spirit—particularly the religious world. It is still true, however, as in the days of our Lord in the flesh, that the common people are inclined to hear the Gospel gladly, if not blinded by the religious leaders. But today, as in Jesus' time, many are influenced by the false representations of those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual shepherds. If then the world should come to be in sympathy with us as a people, and should speak well of us, and we should become popular, we should come under the condemnation expressed in the Master's words, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you; for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

THINK IT NOT STRANGE

If, on the contrary, we find that in spite of our best endeavors we are beset by opposition, and are viewed with suspicion, if unworthy constructions are placed upon our unselfish efforts to do good and to carry to others the glorious light which has so blessed our own hearts, let us not be surprised or feel aggrieved; for undoubtedly it is for the same reason that Jesus was opposed.

The spirit of light is the spirit of Christ. The spirit of darkness is of the world. All who have sympathy for that which is evil, or have been so blinded that light appears as darkness, will oppose the light. There has been so much of selfishness in the world, and the people have been so often taken advantage of and duped, that we cannot wonder that they are slow to believe that there are any who can be actuated solely by the motive of blessing their fellows.

It will be to the interest of some to promote priestcraft, and they will, therefore, seek to break down whatever is inimical to their interests. They say, "You are opposing us." We reply that we are only holding up the light. But they feel that the light that is reaching the people is undermining their influence. We believe that this is the secret of much of the strong opposition to the Truth that is prevailing in some quarters. There is a large number, we believe, who in many respects are good men, but who are fighting the light. We may suppose that they do not realize what they are doing—that unwittingly they are holding on to the ignorance of error, in bondage to Sin and Satan. For this reason they are in antagonism to those who are lifting the veil from before the Lord's people and showing them the character of God, that He is Love. Hence the conflict which is going on.

Another phase of opposition is in respect to financial matters. When we claim that what is given to the Lord should not be obtained by cajoling the people, should not be pulled out of them, worked out of them, extorted from them, but that whatever is given should be a free will, voluntary offering, we are running counter to the custom of centuries. As one Baptist minister said to two of our brethren, "Think of Pastor Russell's advertising 'Seats free and no collections!' Where would *we* be if we did not have collections, or if the people got the thought that it is not the proper thing to pass the collection baskets?"

THE REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE SOON TO VANISH

As our Master was hated *without a cause*, so let this be our experience, as far as possible. Let us see to it that the hatred, the malice, the envy and spirit of murder which is heaped upon us is entirely undeserved. Let it be our earnest endeavor that our lives, as fully as we are able, shall reflect the light of the Truth, shall be as noble and upright as possible in all things; that our words and actions shall glorify the Lord whom we serve, and be eloquent of our love for all mankind, especially for the Household of Faith, whether enlightened by Present Truth as yet or not.

In a very little while, we believe, we shall be glorified with our Lord, if faithful. Then a new Dispensation will be inaugurated; and those who hate us now, chiefly because blinded and misled by the Adversary, will bow their hearts before us as the Anointed of the Lord, and we shall have the blessed privilege of uplifting them, of enlightening and forgiving them, of helping them to attain the perfect image and likeness of our God.

HOW FAR ARE OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED?

The question might arise with some, To what extent does God supervise the experiences of His children? The Master said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" Then how would it be with our cup? Is God not also our Father? Are not we members of Christ? Who, then, but the Father pours our cup? But we know that God is not a participator in any evil thing: how, then, has He anything to do with the evils that come to His people?

We answer, There are all manner of evil forces and influences surrounding us. These evil influences are of Satan and the fallen angels. "Our Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and the fallen angels also go about seeking how they may assault the children of the Lord. But they can have *no power whatever* against us except as the Father shall permit it. He will permit no evil influence to touch us to our injury as New Creatures, if we keep close to Him. And He will prevent harm or injury to our persons, unless he sees it will outwork good to us, if we are rightly exercised by it.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR OUR GOOD

We have also the opposition of the world. But Satan, the Prince of this world, succeeds in blinding the minds of men, putting error for Truth, and darkness for light, in order to make the way of righteousness and obedience to God appear foolish and undesirable and extreme. Those who have more or less of the spirit of the world bring against the Lord's children in a perfectly natural way, aside from the direct influence of the Evil One and his cohorts, a certain amount of opposition. For instance, our Lord, as the time of His death drew near, was speaking to the Apostles about the great climax of His experiences—that He would go up to Jerusalem, that men would crucify Him, etc. Then Peter said, Lord, Lord, do not allow your mind to run in this channel! You have come to earth to be the great King! Do not let the thought get into your mind that you are to be crucified! And the Lord turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind Me, adversary!" He was the Lord's adversary for the time.

So the world often become adversaries of the children of God in their zeal for what they think the more honorable and advantageous course for us. They urge, Do not take such an extreme view of things, and you will get along better. This is opposition to our consecration vow; and when we resist their well-meant efforts, they seek to thwart us and to bring us back to their views and ideas. The ideal of the world for us as Christians would be, Do good, and work for social uplift, for civic reform; build hospitals, establish orphanages, etc.; but do not spend so much time studying that old Bible, or they will call you an extremist or a heretic. So the world tries sympathetically to influence us. And our Father permits these influences to be brought to bear upon us for our proving. We may be sure that the Lord so supervises our experiences that nothing can come to us in any way whatsoever but what will work for our spiritual good so long as we keep ourselves in His love—so long as we wholly abide in Him. And death itself is powerless to touch us until God's time for us shall have come.

Our flesh is our constant, ever-present adversary. It tries to say, No, no! Do not carry this thing so far! Our flesh is inclined to be in harmony with the world. But our New Creature replies, Jesus walked the way of sacrifice and suffering—and St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John. Then the flesh suggests that *they* were *special* persons. But we know that the Bible teaches us that the same course is to be followed by all of the Lord's faithful people, and that *all* these will receive persecution.—2 Timothy 3:12.

All will not be crucified, nor will all be thrust in a caldron of boiling oil or be sawn asunder or beheaded. We shall probably not have any of these experiences; but we *must suffer*. So we bid our flesh be silent, and we rejoice in the experiences that we do have; for "if we suffer [with Him], we shall reign with Him." (2 Timothy 2:12.) Of course we rejoice! And the *world* says that we are going *insane!*

THE PRECIOUS PROMISES OUR STRENGTH

We are to remember, dear brethren—and this is to be a parting thought with us—that nothing can by any means harm us, aside from our Father's will. We are promised that not one hair of our heads shall be hurt—figuratively. And we have the guarantee from the Lord that "all things shall work together for good to those that love God," who put *their trust* in Him. Whatever would not be a blessing to us will not be permitted. Our trials and tribulations, rightly received, are to work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

As we look back, we can see that all who have walked in the narrow way have received persecution. Whoever has been in accord with God has been out of accord with the course of this world. There were the Baptists, and then the Methodists, who in the early days had persecution because they had more light than others. The Presbyterians also for a time, because they had greater light than others, received persecution.

THE NIGHT ALMOST OVER

And we must expect the same today. Persecution will come to those who have the courage of their convictions. The Lord tells us that the anointing that we have received of Him is for the very purpose that we may show forth His praises. (1 Peter 2:9.) We must examine ourselves to see if to any extent we have kept our light under a bushel. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews, St. Paul recounts the sufferings of the Prophets and worthies of old. Some of them were stoned to death, some sawn asunder; they were killed and persecuted in a variety of ways. These godly men endured much for righteousness' sake. "And *all* who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer* persecution."

But the night is almost over. Soon the Lord will rise up. He will stretch forth His hands—His Power—and His children shall be delivered. Soon will come the glorious Reign of Messiah. Then all who will live righteously shall have peace. Altogether, dear friends, our text is very precious—one that should encourage our hearts and help to guide us on our way, and bring us comfort and rejoicing in these closing days of our pilgrimage.

"Our God is love; He loves to hear our voices;
In Christ we share the riches of His grace;
He loves to fold His arms of comfort round us,
And let us nestle in the children's place.

"He loves to answer prayer, though not it may be
In just the way that we should think the best;
But in His own prospective, perfect judgment
He gives the blessings and withholds the rest."

APRIL 29

He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him—Psa. 91:15.

It is always our blessed privilege to carry our sorrows and vexations to the Lord,

*For He knows
How to steal the bitter from life's woes.*

He does it by showing us, through experience, the vanity of all earthly things and their utter inability to satisfy the soul's cravings, or to comfort the wounded spirit. Then comes the thought that however vexing our experiences, they will soon be over; and if we permit them to do so, they will only work out in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and develop in us strong and noble characters, disciplined to thorough self-control, thoughtful consideration, patient endurance of affliction and loving loyalty and faithfulness and trust in God—Z '96, 31 (R 1937).

It is the privilege of Christians to pray to God through Christ, to thus have access to God in prayer at any time; and to them is given the assurance of a gracious answer. God also is with them in all afflictions with His sympathy, love and help. His deliverance out of the trouble is sure, when the latter has accomplished its purpose. Amid the trouble He is their support, and the highest honors possible of attainment for such He has in reservation for them in His glorious Kingdom—P '20, 71.

Parallel passages: Job 14:14, 15; Psa. 27:8; 50:15; 145:18; Matt. 6:6; 7:7, 8; John 16:23-26; Dan. 12:1-3; Psa. 21:2, 4; 107:6, 7; 2 Tim. 4:8, 18; Rev. 2:7, 10, 17, 26, 27; 3:4, 5, 12, 21.

Hymns: 19, 35, 41, 72, 120, 204, 310.
Poems of Dawn, 30: *To Jesus Always*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 264 (R 5757).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in reference to this text? How have its assurances affected me?

TO JESUS ALWAYS

I ALWAYS go to Jesus,
When troubled or distressed;
I always find a refuge
When I with Him can rest.
I tell Him all my trials,
I tell Him all my grief;
And while my lips are speaking
He gives my heart relief.

When full of dread forebodings,
And flowing o'er with tears,
He calms away my sorrows,
And hushes all my fears.
He comprehends my weakness,
The peril I am in,
And He supplies the armor
I need to vanquish sin.

When those are cold and faithless,
Who once were fond and true,
With careless hearts forsaking
The old friends for the new,
I turn to Him whose friendship
Knows neither change nor end:
I always find in Jesus
An ever faithful Friend.

I always go to Jesus;
No matter when or where
I seek His gracious presence,
I'm sure to find Him there.
In times of joy or sorrow,
Whate'er my need may be,
I always go to Jesus,
And Jesus comforts me.

R5757: FULL DELIVERANCE PROMISED TO GOD'S SAINTS

"He shall call upon Me and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him."—Psalm 91:15.

WHEN considering the above text, we are naturally interested to know who or what class would be thus favored of God and whether or not we might become members of that class. The context seems to show that the Psalm is prophetic and refers to the Lord Jesus and the Church—The Christ as a whole. No doubt it has been true in a certain sense of some others. For instance, when Abraham called upon the Lord, God heard him in his troubles and blessed him. And the Lord will yet give him great honor, because he loved and trusted God. The same might be said of the faithful ones all through the Jewish Dispensation. But the Psalm seems to refer especially to The Christ. These are the ones who bear the closest relationship to God. Their love is manifested in a special sense by their faithfulness to the will of God, their faithfulness in honoring His name, their faithfulness in upholding His Truth, in being willing to die in God's service, in laying

down their lives for the brethren, in developing the fruits of the Holy Spirit; for all this is included in their covenant.

It is this class, therefore, that the Lord will answer when they call upon Him; it is this class that He will deliver and honor, will care for in trouble. All who come to God, must necessarily, before they can be accepted, enter into a Covenant of Sacrifice with Him through Christ, giving up their will—loving the Lord and His will better than themselves and their own will or the will of any other. Of course, a large proportion of those who proclaim themselves to be Christians are merely nominal Christians—Christians in name only, who never made a covenant with God.

Of those who do enter into this Covenant, not many, judging from what we can observe, carry it out faithfully, submitting their lives and their every interest to God's will. Noticeable examples of the faithful ones of the past were our Lord Jesus and His Apostles. And there have been others, of course, of this faithful class throughout this Gospel Age, now closing. All these are styled by Jehovah His jewels, and are to be made by Him into a glorious diadem, the Lord Jesus being its brightest and choicest gem. These are to show forth during eternal ages Jehovah's Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. Throughout this Gospel Age God has been working in these to will and to do His good pleasure.

CONDITIONS OF OBTAINING THE PROMISE

But God works in no one contrary to that one's own will. If we wish to step out from under Christ's instruction, there is nothing to prevent us. God *would* that we remain, but is not willing to urge upon us, to press upon us, this matter. God wishes only such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in Truth, because they love Him. This class who seek faithfully to do the Lord's will because they love Him may call upon Him in every trouble and difficulty. His answer will not come in an audible voice, and may not come in the manner that we expect; but He will answer in the best way the petitions of His saints which are asked in harmony with His will, His Word. That is, as Jesus said, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you [if you remember and act upon My teaching], ye may ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you"; for those thus abiding in Him would ask only those things which God has provided for them, only such things as His providence has arranged for them, only such things as His Word authorizes His saints to pray for. The Lord has promised these that they shall have their requests. He has been blessing and caring for His people throughout the Gospel Age. Their needs are often supplied before they call. They are to have the Word of God clearly in mind that their prayers and endeavors may be in line with His will. Thus their *dis*appointments will be *His* appointments, and will be accepted as of the Lord.

THE BLESSINGS OF TRIBULATION

"I will be with him in trouble," is the promise. The intimation here is that the Lord will not, necessarily, prevent our getting into trouble. We might see the trouble coming and pray to the Lord, but He might not deliver us from the trouble. And we should not ask

that we might be spared the affliction if His Wisdom sees it is best for us to have it. The trouble might prove very beneficial to us.

The Lord has already told us in His Word that we are to rejoice even under tribulation; for tribulation, rightly received, will work out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." So while the Lord does not promise us that we shall *escape* trouble, He does promise that *with* the trouble He will give His children consolation of heart, sustaining grace, that will enable them to rejoice in the midst of their tribulation. (2 Corinthians 4:6-18; 12:9, 10; Isaiah 43:1, 2.) This was exemplified in our Lord Jesus and in the Apostles. Paul and Silas were able to sing praises to God in prison with their feet fast in the stocks and their backs bleeding from the whippings which they had received. They could rejoice in tribulation for Christ's sake.

The Lord is ever with His people; therefore they should not be discouraged. His children have the comfort and assistance of the letter of the Truth and the spirit of the Truth. But they have all these blessings only in proportion as they are willing to exercise *faith*; for the glories promised are not yet theirs in reality; these are theirs only by promise now.

OUR FULL DELIVERANCE

"I will deliver him and honor him." The deliverance of the Lord's saints, in the fullest sense of the word, will be by their participation in the First, Chief Resurrection. Our Lord Jesus was delivered from all His trials and afflictions when He was raised from the dead. The promise to the Church also is that we shall be delivered when our resurrection "change" shall come to us. "Sown in weakness," we shall be "raised in power"; sown an animal body, we shall be "raised a spiritual body." This will be the full deliverance, and with it will come the promised honor and exaltation.

There are deliverances, of course, for the children of God at the present time, according to our need. And the Lord gives us a certain kind of honor, but not usually the kind of honor that the world appreciates. This honor may come mixed with such tribulation as would make it not desirable in the world's eye. But the honor that will come to the saints in the end will be such as all will know and will appreciate. All the members of Christ will share in the Kingdom glories and honors with their Head. He and the members of His Body glorified will reign in the Father's Kingdom, and will be associated together throughout all eternity in the great work of God.

"Press on, beloved, in the race,
The goal is very near,
Faint not, thou soon shalt see His face—
Then, be thou of good cheer!"

APRIL 30

Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light—1 Pet. 2:9.

The very object of our being called into this light is that we may let it shine. If we do not let it shine we are unworthy of it, and the treasure will be taken away and we shall be left in darkness. If indeed we have received the light and have consecrated ourselves fully to God, let us ask ourselves, What am I doing to show forth the praises of Him who has called me out of darkness? Am I going forth with these tidings to my neighbors near and far?

Can I truly affirm that I am:

All for Jesus, all for Jesus—

All my being's ransomed powers;

All my thoughts, and words, and doings,

All my days and all my hours?

—Z '03, 165 (R 3199).

God's people are selected from the rest of mankind to become sharers in His Kingdom, a people separate from others and dedicated to the Lord, a possession entirely the Lord's. To such a destiny, to such a high privilege are they called, that they might reflect credit upon God by proclaiming in words and acts, His wisdom, justice, love and power. This being our calling, let us hold up His attributes before others by our teachings and example—P '36, 48.

Parallel passages: Ex. 19:5, 6; Deut. 7:6; 10:15; Dan. 7:18, 22, 27; Isa. 61:6; 66:21; Zech. 6:12, 13; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2:5; Eph. 1:4, 5; Matt. 5:16; John 15:8; Titus 2:14; Acts 20:28; Rom. 8:23-25; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; John 17:9.

Hymns: 225, 41, 322, 153, 216, 310, 6.

Poems of Dawn, 38: *Lord, Here I Bring Myself.*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 151 (R 5460).

Questions: How did this week's text affect me? In what circumstances? With what result?

LORD, HERE I BRING MYSELF

LORD, here I bring myself,
'Tis all I have to give,
My heart's desire is wholly this,
Henceforth for Thee to live;

To own no will but Thine,

To suffer loss or shame,
All things to bear, if only I
May glorify Thy name;

Henceforth mine every power
Each day for thee to use,
My hands, my feet, my lips, mine *all*,
As Thou, my Lord, shalt choose.

Dear Lord, my constant prayer
Is for increase of grace,
That I *by faith* may walk with Thee,
Till I behold Thy face.

R5460: "THE ISRAEL OF GOD"

"Ye are a chosen generation, a Royal Priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."—1 Pet. 2:9.

IN OUR text the Apostle Peter is pointing out the fact that the Church of Christ is separate and distinct from all other people. For many centuries before our Lord came, the Jews had understood that they were God's people. He had made a special Covenant with them through Moses, which constituted them His people. He had also made certain promises to them dependent on their keeping of the Law. Thus they were His chosen—heirs of certain special promises that were conditioned upon their obedience, and of certain other promises that were stated without specified conditions. God had also promised to make a New Covenant with them, to give them a new heart, to take away their stoniness of heart, etc. But after the First Advent a different arrangement began.

The Apostle is directing attention to the new feature of God's Plan—that during the Gospel Age He is calling out a special people. There will be no competition between the two classes—the new nation and the nation of Israel—for the promises given to Israel after the flesh were *earthly*, and the promises given to Israel after the spirit are *spiritual*. The *Jews* were a "peculiar people" (Deut. 14:2), a special people whom God had separated from the world; they were a chosen generation, or race. They were the generation, or race, of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. This special generation was recognized of God as His people, Jews, Israelites, through the Law Covenant, as well as through the preceding promises God had made to Abraham.

But since Pentecost God has started this other work in the world—another generation—peculiar, separate, selected for a particular purpose. And this generation will all be holy—there will be none but holy ones in it! The other nation had a priesthood, but this new people is a *whole nation* of priests. We see how this description applies to the Church. The Apostle Paul points out that while Aaron and his sons were typical in some

respects, yet they did not typify all the features of God's Plan. They typified how Jesus would die—as a Sacrifice—how all His associates would be sacrificers. But Aaron and his sons did not typify the still higher priesthood which God had in mind when He established the Levitical priesthood. This higher Order of Priests was typified by Melchizedek, the king-priest.—Hebrews 6:20.

CHURCH'S FUTURE TWO-FOLD OFFICE

Jesus is this great antitypical Royal, or Kingly, Priest, and His Church is the Body of this antitypical Melchizedek. Before the new Order can reign as kings, and before they can serve as Priests, they must go through a certain process. The members of this Body of Christ must be first generated. It is a *new race*—all are begotten of the Holy Spirit. As Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit at the time of His consecration, and there became a New Creature, spirit-begotten, so also the Church, those who are to walk in His steps, must first make a full consecration before this new generative power will begin to operate in them.

This power began to operate in Jesus at His begetting, and completed its work in His resurrection. And so with us: This power will complete its work in us when we have proven our loyalty even unto death. When this work has been accomplished in all of the Priesthood class, then they will be of the Royal Priesthood indeed, on the Heavenly plane. This power of the Holy Spirit is not only a generating, or begetting, power, but an anointing power. And the anointing is not only to a priestly office, but also to a kingly office. This New Creation are a holy nation in the sense that they are representatives of a special Government, a Divine Government.

THE HOLY NATION—TYPE AND ANTITYPE

Israel purposed to be a holy nation, and in a typical way they were a holy nation. But in a broad sense, the Church constitutes the holy nation—separate and distinct from humanity. We are a separate nation in every sense of the word—living in the midst of people of the world. We keep *our* laws and also *their* laws. We are obedient to the "powers that be," realizing that the Lord has permitted these and wishes us to be subject to them, wherever our consciences will not be sacrificed. The Lord tells us that as representatives of His Kingdom we are to make known His Message. He tells us that the world is in a rebellious condition because they have become blinded by the Adversary.

And so He sends us as His ambassadors to tell men of His goodness, His Plan, which He purposes to work out, that the hearts of those who have an ear to hear His Message may turn to the Lord. He tells us not to expect many to hear this Message; for they will be so deaf and blind that they cannot understand. But He assures us that by and by their blindness will be taken away, and they will be ready for what He has for them.

The world does not understand us—they do not know that we belong to a different Kingdom; but we understand them. As the Apostle points out, "He that is spiritual judgeth all things." But they *cannot* understand, because no man can understand beyond

his mental status, so to speak. We who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit still understand the *natural* things, but the natural man does not understand the spiritual things—"neither *can* he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"; "they are foolishness unto him." So we dwell in the midst of a perverse race, or generation, fallen into sin for six thousand years. As our Lord declared, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."—John 17:16.

OUR PRESENT GLORIOUS PRIVILEGE

And we are a peculiar people in the sight of the Lord. This word *peculiar* signifies a *separate* people—implying that God had done something special for us. The Lord Jesus has purchased us. His merit—the purchase-price—has been applied on our behalf. The only ones for whom this purchase-price has as yet been applied are the spirit-begotten ones. The Apostle's Message is to these. What object had God in selecting this peculiar people? It was that we might "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." Is God proud, or vain, that He wishes His praises to be shown forth? Oh, no! God wishes His praises to be known because His praises will show to His creatures the great blessings He has provided for them.

If we go out and tell men that "God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," we are showing forth His praises. We are not making *God* happy by so doing—He was already happy. But we are in this doing a great favor to the people who hear: we are telling them that God will bring them back again into His favor; that He will remove the curse. So, then, it is a great privilege now to tell forth the praises of God! But alas! not very many have the ear to hear; yet by our zeal in showing forth the Master's praises, we are doing all that we can to help men back to God.

The greater work by and by will be the work of the Kingdom in ruling mankind, in overthrowing sin, in instructing and healing the people, bringing them into harmony with their Creator. And this will require a thousand years for its accomplishment. This glorious work will be ours! How wonderful it will be to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord—to be higher than angels! We shall be next to Jesus, as He will be next to the Father—"far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named."

"BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH"

But it is not only the honor that we should seek, but also the privilege of service God is pleased to give this class; the privilege of opening all the deaf ears, of awakening the whole world, to see, to know, to understand our God, to realize that the knowledge of the Lord is to fill the whole world—"for the earth shall be *full* of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"—*ocean deep!* (Isa. 11:9.) That glorious work of the future shall be done only by those who have proved themselves wholly loyal to God. If we are careless or indifferent about telling forth the good Message and showing forth His

praises, we shall show that we are not worthy of the Kingdom. Those who prove loyal and faithful to the end will be the ones whom the Lord will exalt by and by.

And in doing this, God has been merely carrying out a course which men have imitated. God laid His plans long before men were born; nevertheless, wise men instinctively follow certain great principles. Napoleon is said to have directed that the various men who were faithful to him be made princes in the countries he conquered. Our Lord says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10.) So we have from every standpoint the greatest encouragement to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." This Scripture implies that we realize we were once in darkness, and that we know we are now in the light.

Comparatively few have had this experience. Those who have been raised out of ignorance and sin into a heart appreciation of God's Plan are the ones referred to here. They could not get this light, except by being begotten of the Holy Spirit and becoming members of this holy nation, this peculiar people. And we cannot do the world greater good than by telling them of God's great favor, and thus helping them also out of darkness into the light. The light is given us that we may let it shine. May we be enabled to sing from our hearts:

"All for Jesus, all for Jesus—
All my being's ransomed powers;
All my thoughts and words and doings,
All my days and all my hours!"

WE ARE NOT OUR OWN

In Titus 2:14, St. Paul sets forth a similar thought: "A peculiar people, zealous of good works." The people here referred to by him are the saints of God, those who are waiting for the fulfilment of God's promises—for those things which were to be brought to them at the coming (during the *parousia*—presence) of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. These are the people who realize that they have been purchased with the precious blood. Some translators render 1 Pet. 2:9 "A *purchased* people, zealous of good works." The Lord's people are a people who have been redeemed, purchased. Whatever they were through the fall, they have been redeemed from that condition. St. Paul, in recounting certain sins, said, "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified."—1 Cor. 6:9-11.

The thought in Titus 2:14 is much the same as in the other. Ye are a peculiar people, a people bought back from Sin and Death, and all such are "peculiar," different from the remainder of mankind. Amongst mankind, in Christendom, we find *some* that are *vicious*, and even amongst the *heathen* we find *noble* people. But these peculiar people of whom St. Paul wrote, are different from all others—they are New Creatures in Christ.

To these, "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." They have new hopes and new aims. They are hoping to attain the highest position offered to any in the Universe; namely, to be made associates in the Government of Messiah. These are very wonderful hopes. And the possession of these hopes by faith constitutes them different and peculiar, separate and distinct from all other people.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PECULIAR PEOPLE

While others seek the emoluments and distinctions of the present time, these count all the things of this world as loss and dross, in view of the wonderful things that God has set before their minds. They have seen the "pearl of great price," and have given their all to purchase it. They see that the Kingdom of God is the most valuable thing that is obtainable now or ever will be attainable. They have recognized the terms upon which this Kingdom-Pearl may be obtained and are seeking to make good the purchase. The terms are self-sacrifice, faithfulness to God at any cost, and patient endurance under adverse conditions, even unto the end.

These peculiar people are seeking to accomplish this work in themselves, because they see that these are the most gracious characteristics and qualities that can be imagined. Hence they are doubly solicitous; they are *zealous of good works*. They love to see others good and happy, and they love to spread the knowledge of God. They love the things that God delights in, because they have the Spirit of Christ. They are interested in reforms—social reform, temperance reform, every kind of reform; but this does not mean that they will engage in these reforms. The same man cannot be a great preacher, a successful farmer, a successful lawyer, etc. If he be a great farmer, he must give up the other things to a large extent. Or if he be a great preacher, he will have to give up, for the most part, other things. Yet he may have *pleasure* in them *all*.

And so with these peculiar people: they have one particular work given them of the Father. They recognize that this work is most important to be done, hence they cannot give their attention to political reform, social reform, or other reform, outside of their own work. For this reason they are called *theorists* instead of *practical* people. Nevertheless they have the most practical plan of all; for *God's Plan* is of all plans the *most practical*. These people, in becoming co-workers, are taking the wisest course. But they do not find fault with others. They see that the only ones who can grasp these things are those who have the eyes to see and the ears to hear; they know that others cannot go beyond what they see. The peculiarities of these "peculiar people" extend to all the affairs of life.

WHAT CONSTITUTE GOOD WORKS

This class of people are wise enough to know that all the Truth even should not be mentioned at once. The Master said to those who had been His close followers for three and a half years, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." (John 16:12.) The Lord's people are eager to do good, but in the way that will be the most effective, and in the way that will not stumble others. The good works, then, that this

peculiar people are zealous of are the works of God. As Jesus said, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me."—John 9:4.

The world cannot appreciate this, not having the Spirit of God, but more the spirit of the Adversary. The world are walking in the way of slander and hypocrisy, more or less. Jesus said, when speaking to the Pharisees, "Ye are of your father, the Devil." (John 8:44.) And when Jesus walked in the way of God, His course was a condemnation to them. Therefore Jesus declared, "The darkness hateth the light," and He forewarned us that it would be the same all the way down through the Age. He warned His followers that they would suffer the same persecution He had suffered. But the Master urged that they be zealous for the Truth—solicitous for it.

Since God has called us to good works, we are to show great zeal, even though it bring upon us the envy and hatred and opposition of others. We are to rejoice, even if we are called to suffer persecution for His sake. And though the world does not appreciate these good works now, they will see and understand by and by, in their day of visitation. (1 Peter 2:12.) They will see that God's Plan was the best plan. The Church glorified will be the channel for blessing the world in general.

Only this peculiar people can now understand these things. Jesus said unto His disciples, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them [the multitudes who went to hear Him] it is not given. ... Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand." (Matt. 13:11, 13.) Only those who have come into this special relationship *can* understand. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His Covenant."—Psa. 25:14.

We find a great many who gladly accept the Truth, and then seem to forget that the only way they can make *progress* in the Truth is to consecrate themselves to God. If they fail to make consecration, they *must* fail to make progress. We should be sure that we give people the right thought along this line. Only those who thus become God's "peculiar people, zealous of good works," can *inherit the Kingdom*.

MAY 1

The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister—Matt. 20:28.

If the consecration be to the Lord, then every sacrifice of our just rights and interests on behalf of ourselves as Christians, on behalf of husband or children, father or mother, neighbors or friends, brethren in Christ, is counted of the Lord as so much done to Him; whereas if the very same services were rendered from any other standpoint—by anyone unjustified, and not consecrated to the Lord, or merely done to the individuals and not as a sacrifice unto the Lord—these things would not count to us as His followers, as our sacrifices—Z '03, 407 (R 3265).

How eminently proper that the Son of Man, Adam's pre-eminent descendant, should come not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and how greatly superior therein is the Son of Man to the man Adam, in that the latter by serving self wrecked the hopes of the race, while Jesus by serving others worked out salvation for the entire race. He was as superior to the first Adam as unselfishness is superior to selfishness, and is our example, the following of which will make us fit for the Kingdom—P '30, 77.

Parallel passages: 2 Cor. 8:9; Matt. 1:21; 4:23; 5:17; 9:13; 15:24; 18:11-14; 20:25-27; Mark 1:38; Luke 1:78; 4:18; 22:27; John 4:34; 10:10; 13:4-17; 18:37; Acts 10:38; Gal. 5:13; Heb. 2:9, 14, 15, 18.

Hymns: 275, 15, 28, 132, 212, 325, 326.

Poems of Dawn, 163: *He That Scattereth Increaseth.*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 6 (R 5375).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? How did I use it? Why? What did it effect?

HE THAT SCATTERETH INCREASETH

IS thy cruse of comfort failing?
Rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine
It shall serve thee and thy brother.
Love Divine will fill thy storehouse,
Or thy handful still renew;
Scanty fare for one will often
Make a royal feast for two.

For the heart grows rich in giving;
All its wealth is living grain;
Seeds which mildew in the garner,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain.
Is thy burden hard and heavy?

Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear thy brother's burden;
God will bear both it and thee.

Numb and weary on the mountains,
Wouldst thou sleep amid the snow?
Chafe that frozen form beside thee,
And together both shall glow.
Art thou stricken in life's battle?
Many wounded round thee moan;
Lavish on their wounds thy balsams,
And that balm shall heal thine own.

Is thy heart a well left empty?
None but God its void can fill;
Nothing but a ceaseless Fountain
Can its ceaseless longings still.
Is thy heart a living power?
Self-entwined, its strength sinks low;
It can only live in loving,
And by serving love will grow.

R5375: THE GREAT PRIVILEGE OF TRUE SERVICE

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a Ransom for many."—Matthew 20:28.

THE word *minister* has the same import as the word *serve*. The Master tells us that the purpose of His coming into the world was not a selfish one. He had been quite content with the glory and honor which He had with the Father before the world was. (John 17:5.) While it is true that the Savior is now exalted to a position very much higher than His previous one, yet He assures us that it was not with the spirit, the desire, for exaltation that He came into the world. On the contrary, He wished to *serve*. He said, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God! Thy Law is written in My heart."—Psalm 40:8.

In obedience to this Divine will, our Lord left the glory which He had with the Father, came down to earth and gave Himself up to death, even the death of the cross. On the night of His betrayal and arrest He said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" He was obedient even unto the end.

Before coming into the world, our Lord had perceived that mankind was in need of a Savior, and no doubt this had to do with His gladly accepting the Divine arrangement. He saw something of the Father's purpose in regard to fallen humanity. And when, during His earthly life, He saw these poor creatures in sin, degradation and weakness, He did not try to make them slaves. He did not try to use His power, His intelligence, selfishly for

His own comfort; but He laid down His life unselfishly. He set Himself to work out the Plan which the Father had arranged.

Our Lord came not to be ministered unto. He did not come into the world to have servants and to get all that He could in return for the expenditure of a small amount of His own energy. He came not from any selfish motive whatever, but to serve others—to do good. As He Himself testified, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man *lay down his life* for his friends." This He did in harmony with the Father's Plan.

We do not understand, however, that our Lord refused to have any one serve Him. He accepted service from others. The thought of our text is that He came to render a service; not that He might be served; and in order that He might carry out His purpose it was necessary for Him to become a servant. Had there been no need for that service, we cannot think that the Lord would have humbled Himself and taken the bondman's form, or have undergone the severe trials of His earthly existence. But He came to render a service that was necessary to the well-being, happiness, yea, the very life of the entire human family.

Through Adam's disobedience sin had entered into the world. God's Law pronounced the penalty of death for that sin. Thus the whole race of mankind was perishing; and if they were ever to be rescued, so that they would not perish like brute beasts, they must be redeemed. According to the Divine Law, there must be a Ransom-price for the first perfect man, who had sinned. The Only Begotten was willing to meet this necessity. He rejoiced to do this work, to be the servant, the minister of God for this purpose, because of the need of the service, because it would bring blessing to others.

This is the spirit that should actuate every one of us. We should desire to incorporate into our character this principle of service. We should not serve merely because we like to work, like to be busy, but because we perceive there is a work necessary, and we are glad to lay down our lives in this blessed service.

THE ATTITUDE OF TRUE CONSECRATION

There are some who think it necessary to wash the feet of others. But since there is no real good to be accomplished by such a ceremony—nothing desirable—there is no reason why it should be performed. We cannot think that Jesus would have washed His disciples' feet unless they had needed washing. But if at any time we can thus render a *real service*, any of us should be glad of the opportunity to serve a fellow-member of the Body of Christ—by washing his feet, or in any manner. The thought is to appreciate the privilege of real service, rather than the opportunity of doing something merely because it is *menial*. Jesus did what He did because it was helpful service, and was the Father's will. He wished also to teach His disciples that they should not be above doing the humblest service for each other as brethren. In addition, Jesus' words on this occasion seemed to emphasize the thought of the need of daily cleansing of the Lord's disciples from earth-defilement. See John 13:6-10.

The laying down of our Lord's life was accomplished moment by moment, day by day, in teaching, in healing the sick, the deaf, the blind, and in instructing His disciples. In nothing did He seek to serve Himself. Therefore the record is, "He went about doing good." We should make application of this principle to ourselves; for "as He was, so are we, in this world." The attitude of true consecration is that we walk in Jesus' steps, and that we seek to know the Father's will in order to do it. This implies that we be Bible students, like the Bereans of old, who "searched the Scriptures daily."

If we have the Master's spirit, we shall be desirous of "doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto them who are of the Household of Faith." (Galatians 6:10.) And this is the advice of St. Paul, who urged that we be followers of himself, even as he followed Christ. The lives of Jesus and the Apostles stand out very distinctly on the pages of history as notable for their unselfish service of others.

Many have lorded it over God's heritage. The context shows that our Lord had this class in mind. He declares that the rulers of the Gentiles exercised authority over their people; and that this was at the expense of the ruled, and was very rarely accompanied by a desire to serve the people.

SELFISHNESS UNFITS FOR THE KINGDOM

We see how our Master came to use the words of our text. The disciples were afflicted with a common ailment—love of honor of men and also love of honor of the Lord. Two of them had made an earnest request to have a place of special honor in His Kingdom. Their request aroused a spirit of indignation among the other ten, and a controversy resulted. They had the thought fixed in their minds that Jesus had promised them a share in the Kingdom. (Matthew 19:27-29.) If it had been wrong for them to have this promise in mind, it would have been wrong for the Lord to give them the promise. But they failed to see that the Father would give that place to none who would not manifest fullest loyalty to Him and to His Word.

The disciples had at that time a certain amount of false dignity, or pride, that would have made them unfit for a place in the Throne. Hence the Lord reminded them that the conditions upon which a seat in the Throne would be given to any one were that such a one should manifest so great loyalty to the principles of God's Government, and so great humility of spirit, that he would be glad to render service to any one in need. And He set Himself forth as an Example.

We paraphrase our Lord's words: Do you think that I left Heaven and came down to earth that people might serve Me? No. The conditions to which I have come are very inferior to those which I left. But the Father gave Me the privilege of service in this matter, and I am glad to have this service, because it is the Divine will. I have come to minister, to serve, to give My life as a Ransom-price for all.

This thought, then, He set before them—that they should rejoice in the privilege of service—rejoice in having the privilege of doing something really helpful to others,

especially the brethren in the Body of Christ. As we apply this principle broadly, we see how it is exemplified in the world, in the affairs of every day life. The whole human family are servants. One man serves as a jeweler; another as a manufacturer of woolen goods. He serves by buying wool, converting it into cloth and into garments. Another serves as a grocer and supplies food. Some are chiropodists; some, barbers; some, tailors; some, physicians; etc. In every case it is a service to others.

Bringing the matter still lower, we see that the principle extends even to service of the dumb brutes. A horse cannot curry himself; and even a hog needs to be served—needs a trough, a bed, and food. We in turn are served by the brute creation. Whoever separates himself from this arrangement of service is getting away from his own good, and violating a Law of the Universe. Whoever gets to the place where he does no service, but has others to serve him, is to be pitied. He will be unhappy, be he ever so wealthy. Whoever would take this attitude would be arrogant and selfish, and his life would be devoid of beauty or of worth.

SERVICE A DELIGHT TO THE CHRISTIAN

The true Christian enters into the spirit of service, as did his Master, and delights to do a good turn to any one as he has opportunity. If there are those who are helpless, who are sick, these are calls upon his services as he has ability and is able to lend a helping hand. We are to serve all men "as we have opportunity, especially those who are of the Household of Faith."

Where shall we draw the line? The answer is that we must use moderation. We find ourselves every day passing by services that others have needed, but that we have not been able to perform. How then shall we regulate the matter, since we cannot do all that we would? Our own family should be our first charge, or responsibility. He who neglects his own is worse than an unbeliever. Charity begins at home. If we have responsibilities there, we could not give so much comfort, so much time, so much money, to others as we would to those of our own family.

LAZINESS NOT TO BE ENCOURAGED

Those who have money have a talent that they can use in doing good. They will not find very much opportunity so far as the world is concerned. Even if we had millions of dollars, the spirit of a sound mind should govern us in its expenditure. To give money to encourage anybody in wastefulness, slothfulness and idleness would be to misuse it, and not to do good. God Himself declared, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." The happiest people are those who are employed; the most unhappy are those who have nothing to do, those who have no ambition.

We cannot do even for our own families all that we would wish to do; for in the case of our own there is often a lack of appreciation. Some of our relatives would never have enough. We could never do sufficient for them. We should exercise the spirit of a sound

mind, then, in deciding what to do. Let us ever remember that when we have entered the service of the Lord we are given a new commission, a special work to do in the world.

What kind of service are we then given? It is the service of ambassador of the Lord. We are to preach the Truth wherever there is an ear to hear and an eye to discern. Those who have not the hearing ear and the seeing eye might rend us, as the Master foretold. (Matthew 7:6.) We are therefore to use the spirit of a sound mind in discriminating between those who are good subjects for the Truth, and those who are not.

We say to the Master, Lord, we will give all of our time to Thee and to Thy Truth. Then He replies, But you are not to go ragged or naked, in order that you may preach the Gospel. It is proper that you provide the things needful. But do not think to get a certain amount of money laid up for yourself first, and then afterwards go and proclaim the Kingdom.

We may ask, Does this excuse us, Lord, from doing anything for our fellowmen and for our own families? He answers that we should not neglect our own families, but should care for them according to their necessities. We are, however, to guide our affairs with economy. If our family fail to do their part, and will not put forth any effort when of sufficient age and able to earn a livelihood for themselves, then we are to do nothing for them; for having their own strength, they do not need our assistance. We are to do for them only the things that are needful. We believe this is the mind of the Lord.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS STEWARDS

While we are to do good to all men, yet our special service is to be rendered in the Lord's work, the work of the Father—in dispensing the Truth. But while we are so doing, we may be able to speak a kind word to those with whom we come in contact. If we have money we may help in that way. But we should remember that we do not own even a penny of what we possess, or a moment of our time. All belongs to the Lord and should be spent along the lines of spiritual things, except where there is real necessity along earthly lines. To be sure, the world will not esteem us so much as if we would do more along earthly lines; but we have not received our commission from the world.

We perceive that the spirit of the Lord Jesus has had great influence in the world. It has made a deep impression upon noble souls, and has led them to the establishment of Orphans' Homes, Hospitals for the blind, Homes for the incurable, etc.; and these institutions are provided for by the public. It is recognized today to be proper to provide for those unable to provide for themselves. Since the world has settled this matter from a business point of view, the Lord's people are excused from personal responsibility which they have as God's ambassadors. It is the proper thing to care for the sick and the maimed; but because the city and state have provided, individual responsibility is largely lifted.

There are wealthy people who say, I prefer to look after my sick friends myself, and send them to a high-priced institution. If any do so, this is their own business. They may

also say, I prefer to live in a million dollar house. This, too, is their own business. They have a right to do so; and they may also have their automobiles and private yachts for pleasure, etc. But with the Christian it is different. All he possesses belongs to the Lord. He therefore is in a different position from any others. He is not to be like the world. All that he does is for God—because of his relationship to Him as a son. "*Now are we the sons of God.*"

THE HUMBLE TO BE EXALTED

In the words of our text, the Master was instructing His disciples that they should not desire to rule—that He desired as His followers those who had most of His spirit of humility and service. If any man were to exalt himself, they were to have correspondingly a lower esteem for him; for "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The Lord will send the experiences which will exalt or abase, and it is for us to show our appreciation where we see the right principles in operation. Whoever manifests most of the Spirit of Christ is to be highest in our esteem. Whoever has less of the Spirit of Christ is to be lower in our esteem. These characteristics are to be quietly observed by us.

The basis upon which the world operates is selfishness. This is the secret of war, rebellion, revolution, etc.—one party and another seeking selfishly to control riches, honor, power or authority. We are delighted, as Christians, to note the difference in the spirit which we are of. We are to remember that we are by nature "children of wrath even as others." We are not to suppose that we shall be changed instantly; but the mind will be changed, we shall grow more Christlike. And as New Creatures in Christ we are to keep a diligent watch lest the service we are so desirous of rendering to the Lord become vitiated more or less, after the fashion of the spirit of the world.

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN A SERVICE

Our Lord, when He takes His great power to reign, will not have the same motive as have the rulers of the present time—merely to assume power for His own glory and for vaunting Himself. He will, indeed, have great power and authority, but it will be in harmony with what the Heavenly Father has arranged. It will be a manifestation of glory and power, not to crush the world, but to bless and uplift it. This work will be accomplished from the standpoint of service, with a view to helping mankind to be the real rulers of the world; for the Messianic Kingdom will cease when the world shall be able to take care of itself.

We perceive that this is the way it was purposed from the first. The Heavenly Father made man the king of earth. God crowned man with glory and honor, and set him over the works of His hands. (Psalm 8:5, 6; Hebrews 2:7.) It is not His purpose to keep mankind under the iron rod forever. The rod will be merely for temporary service, for man's true development, that the race may be brought back to the full blessing of their original privilege as kings of earth.

The Lord's Kingdom, we see, will be very different from any other ever instituted. Our service, as members of Christ's Body, will be the same as His. We shall share with Him in the uplifting of humanity. "God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."—Ephesians 2:6, 7.

MAY 2

All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution—2 Tim. 3:12.

Opposition is to be expected, and will, doubtless, continue until we finish our course in death. To submit patiently to this opposition is to sacrifice our own *natural* preferences for the friendship and the pleasures of the present life, and to endure hardness as good soldiers for the Truth's sake, in whatever shape that hardness may come, in our effort to do the Lord's will and work of advancing the interests of His Kingdom. To be really in the Lord's service involves, first, the careful and continual study of God's Plan; second, the imbibing of its spirit; leading, thirdly, to an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment, and to activity to the extent of ability in its service, at whatever cost or sacrifice it may require—Z '03, 164, 165 (R 3199).

Those in Christ Jesus are the consecrated. Their consecration makes them sacrificers for righteousness amid a world wherein the advantages are on the side of unrighteousness, and the disadvantages are placed on the side of righteousness. Their course cannot be otherwise than one of persecution from those whose selfishness seems antagonized by the course of the consecrated. Thus all the faithful will be persecuted—P '35, 62.

Parallel passages: Gen. 49:23; Job 12:4, 5; Psa. 11:2; 37:32; 38:20; 44:15-18, 22; Prov. 29:10, 27; Isa. 29:20, 21; 51:12, 13; 59:15; Jer. 20:8; Matt. 5:10-12, 44; 10:16-18, 21-23, 28; 24:8-10; Luke 6:22, 23; John 15:18, 19; 16:1, 2; Acts 28:22; Rom. 8:17, 35-37; 1 Cor. 4:9-13.

Hymns: 304, 47, 114, 134, 302, 312, 322.
Poems of Dawn, 121: *Hymn Of The Waldenses*.
Tower Reading: Z '12, 323 (R 5116).

Questions: Has godly living brought me persecution this week? What helped or hindered therein? How did I bear it? What were its results?

HYMN OF THE WALDENSES

HEAR, Father, hear Thy faint, afflicted flock
Cry to Thee from the desert and the rock,
While those who seek to slay Thy children hold
Blasphemous worship under roofs of gold;
And the broad, goodly lands with pleasant airs
That nurse the grape and wave the grain, are theirs.

Yet better were this mountain wilderness,
And this wild life of danger and distress—
Watchings by night, and perilous flight by day,
And meetings in the depths of earth to pray—

Better, far better than to kneel with them,
And pray the impious rite Thy laws condemn.

Thou, Lord, dost hold the thunder; the firm land
Tosses in billows when it feels Thy hand.
Thou dashest nation against nation, then
Stillest the angry world to peace again.
Oh, touch their stony hearts who hunt Thy sons—
The murderers of our wives and little ones.

Yet, mighty God, yet shall Thy frown look forth
Unveiled, and terribly shall shake the earth;
Then the foul power of priestly sin and all
Its long-upheld idolatries shall fall.
Thou shalt raise up the trampled and opprest,
And Thy delivered saints shall dwell in rest.

R5116: PERSECUTION AND FIERY TRIALS THE CHRISTIAN'S EXPERIENCE

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

GODLINESS IMPLIES a character which is actuated by principles of righteousness. In all our dealings we are either just or unjust, kind or unkind, not according to what some people may think of us, but according to the standard of righteousness found in the Scriptures. Therefore, in order to develop that character which is pleasing to God, we should in every detail of life consider carefully what is right and what is wrong, according to that standard. This course is Scripturally termed meditating in God's Law. When we reach that development of character in which thought, word and deed are measured by the principles of righteousness, we shall have attained godlikeness.—Psa. 119:97.

What the Lord desires to see in His people is not merely an outward manifestation of devotion to Him and to His brethren, but a development of love in our hearts and our dispositions. If we profess to love one another and yet pursue a course of self-seeking, wherein do we manifest love? So St. John admonishes to love not in word only, but in deed and in truth.—I John 3:18.

Primarily, the godly are those who are in Christ Jesus, members of His Mystical Body, having presented their human bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through the merit of the great Advocate. Secondly, the term godly includes those who live righteously, in sympathy with Christ Jesus, even though they may not live up to the full standard which the Lord has set, because they shrink from the suffering that results from godly living. Thirdly, the term godly includes some in the remote past, who, believing in the promise of the Lord that the "Seed" should some day come, separated themselves from the rest of the world and, having obtained new aims, new ideas, were

out of touch with the remainder of the race because of having a different standard.—Heb. 11:13-16.

The Ancient Worthies composed this third class, who had a share in the suffering of the godly and a participation also in the blessing. Moses, for example, preferred to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to participate in the honors of the Egyptian Government. Although adopted into the family of Pharaoh, he had respect to the promise that the Messiah would come. Hence he suffered on account of his faith in the promise. So all the patriarchs desired to be in harmony with God, in accordance with His promise made to Abraham, and because of belief in that promise they suffered more or less persecution.—Heb. 11:24-26;36-38.

Some one may ask, "Why should the godly suffer?" The Bible answers that sin has brought the world into opposition to God. Whoever, then, would have all men speak in commendation of him would not be in harmony with the Divine arrangement, for the masses of the world are pursuing a course that the Lord does not approve. We are not saying that everything which the world does is sinful, but that the standards of God are so high that because of their fallen condition the masses of the world are not subject to the Law of God, neither, indeed, can they be, for they are carnal, sold under sin. (Rom. 8:7; 7:14, 15.) Those who wish to have influence with the world must cater to popular prejudices. On the contrary, those who would be God's people must be loyal to the principles of righteousness and consequently must go in the opposite direction to that of the world. Hence they are opposed by the world.

From the standpoint of God the course of the world is sinful. There is a tendency in our flesh to go with the world, who are laboring under false views of various kinds, because that course is in sympathy with the desires of our own fallen flesh. Hence to live godly is to live in opposition to the course of the world and of our own flesh. This would include not only living uprightly and avoiding sin, etc., but also the making of sacrifices as well, where principles are not involved. We are to beware, however, lest we be deceived along this line. Not only are we contending with the world, but we are wrestling with wicked spirits in high positions.—Eph. 6:12.

ILLUSTRATION OF SATAN'S DEVICES

Sometimes Satan's arts seem to be employed to get those who are trying to live godly into contention with each other. One of his devices is to make unimportant things seem important, and in this way to make people think that they are contending for righteousness' sake, and that the sufferings that they bring on themselves in this manner are for righteousness' sake. Another device is to deceive people into "busy-bodding in other men's matters." (I Peter 4:15.) It behooves us, therefore, as the Lord's people, not to try to straighten out all the affairs of the Church or of the world, and not to get into conflict with the brethren. They, like ourselves, are laboring to counteract the influences of the world, the flesh and the Devil.

Our influence upon each other should be uplifting; we should not cause others to grieve, except where suffering is absolutely necessary. Hence the Lord's people should cultivate the fruits of the Spirit increasingly—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. The cultivation of these fruits of the Spirit is a law in respect to the Lord's people. All who would live godly in Christ Jesus are to see to it that they are not the *cause of suffering* to others—especially to those of the household of faith.

SUFFERING AS A CHRISTIAN

While it is true that all who will live godly in this world will suffer to the extent to which they are out of harmony with the present evil conditions, yet the promised blessings of the Scriptures are to those who live godly *in Christ Jesus*, those who are *Christians*. Of these St. Peter says, "If any man suffer *as a Christian*, let him not be ashamed."—I Peter 4:16.

A Christian is a follower of Christ, one who has cast in his lot to suffer with Christ, that He may be also glorified with the Lord. (2 Tim. 2:12.) From the Apostle's standpoint, therefore, no one could *suffer* as a Christian unless he had become a Christian.

Every painful experience which our Lord had was suffering for righteousness' sake—not only the great sufferings, not only the great fight against sin, but also all the little, unpleasant experiences common to the world. Being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26), there was no reason why He should suffer. We do not understand that the Heavenly Father has provided sufferings, trials and difficulties for the angels who are in harmony with Him. Nor do we think that Jesus, being a Son in full accord with the Father, would have suffered were it not for His Covenant of self-sacrifice. All of His sufferings were because He had come into the world to be man's Redeemer. They were all parts of His necessary experience.

The sufferings which our Lord endured were the result of His activity in the service of the Father. These were His weariness, His weakness after giving out His vitality to heal others, His bloody sweat, His ignominious buffetings, and all the reproaches, the sneers and the bitter words incurred on account of His faithfulness, to all of which He meekly and quietly submitted until His sufferings on Calvary terminated His human existence.

SUFFERINGS RESULTING FROM HEREDITY, NOT SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

There is no question that suffering in general is not suffering with Christ, but with Adam. Our physical infirmities which are of heredity, are not sufferings of Christ. Rather we should speak of the sufferings of Christ as being *voluntary* and not involuntary. When the Apostle says that if we suffer with the Lord we shall also reign with Him (2 Tim. 2:12), he means the suffering which we bring on ourselves through faithfulness to our Covenant. St. Paul speaks of filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for His Body's sake, which is the Church. (Col. 1:24.) These experiences are not for Adam's sake.

In St. Paul's own case he had, we believe, weak eyes as a result of his wrong course in persecuting the Church; and that wrong course was, no doubt, largely the result of heredity. When the Apostle speaks of the sufferings he endured on account of his eyes, he does not speak of them as the sufferings of Christ, but says that his affliction was a messenger of *Satan* to buffet him. (2 Cor. 12:7.) We might then say that all physical sufferings resulting from heredity are ministers of Satan opposing us, causing us much difficulty. However, we believe that the Lord is pleased with us if we resist these ministers of Satan.

If we should think of all our physical pains and aches as sufferings for Christ, then we should be obliged to think of our mental defects also as sufferings for Christ. For instance, a man who had a disabled hand might have a comparatively even temper; another might have a perverse temper, leading him into trouble, leading him to busybody in other men's matters, etc. Thus his disposition causes him to suffer as a *busybody* and not for Christ. St. Paul tells us that our defects in character are works of the fallen flesh. (Gal. 5:19-21.) If the sufferings that come to us because of imperfect mental conditions are sufferings of heredity, the physical sufferings which result from imperfect physical conditions, cannot be counted as sufferings for Christ.

In the case of a Christian, inherited weaknesses and those brought upon himself by the violation of the laws of God previous to his entrance into the family of God as a son, while not sufferings with Christ, will be made advantageous to him. These weaknesses our Father sees fit to leave with us, but assures us that His grace will be sufficient for us. (2 Cor. 12:9.) While the realization of such care for our interests is humiliating in that it forces conviction of our weakness, yet it is refreshing and inspiring in that it proves our Father's love for us. "The Father Himself loveth you."—John 16:27.

SUFFERING TURNED TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW CREATURE

But when one has undertaken to follow in the footsteps of Christ and has been begotten as a New Creature, whatever affliction that *New Creature* undergoes because of following the Lord, is suffering as a Christian; and whatever our experiences in suffering may be, these are not necessarily the portion of the sons of God, for the angels do not suffer; but He permits the Church to have them in order to develop and crystallize character. If we rejoice that we are found worthy to share in the sufferings of the present time, every trial will be turned to advantage as a part of our Christian experience. "They are not of the world." (John 17:16.) Therefore all of our experiences must be regarded as Christian, for correction in righteousness and for educational purposes.

But this is taking a broader, deeper view than ordinary. Certainly a Christian is not to be ashamed of what he may suffer because of his loyalty to the Lord, to the Truth and to the brethren. In these sufferings he is to glorify God and to be thankful for them. He is to be glad for the opportunity of enduring something, to show not only the Lord, but himself also that he has endured something for Christ's sake. Every sacrifice that we make is for

the purpose of suffering as a Christian, and we are not to be ashamed so to suffer.—I Peter 4:16.

SUFFERING FOR CONSCIENCE NOT ALWAYS SUFFERING FOR CHRIST

There are others who suffer more or less as Christians suffer, but they are suffering from a worldly standpoint. People sometimes say, "This worldly man has his trials and sufferings, and shows such patience, such resignation, that surely he is suffering as a Christian." But we do not understand that anyone can suffer as a Christian unless he takes the steps necessary to make him a Christian. We are to view matters from God's standpoint. Doubtless many have suffered as Christians from a human viewpoint who were not Christians. In the Dark Ages many were put to death for the sake of principle. In our own day there are people who give no evidence of being Christians, but who would rather die than have the Bible taken out of the public schools. Although they do not understand the Bible, yet if these were times of persecution, many would die at the stake in order to keep the Bible in the public schools.

We cannot always tell whether suffering is for Christ's sake. But where people have suffered for conscience' sake, they have thus cultivated character, and will get a blessing in the next Age for that suffering. At present there is only the one door into membership in the Body of Christ—obedience even unto death. Suffering with Christ, as we have seen, is not the ordinary suffering common to all in the fallen state, but only such experiences as are the result, more directly, of following Christ's example in advocating unpopular truths and in exposing popular errors. Such were the causes of the sufferings of Christ; and such will be the causes of suffering, persecution and loss to all who follow in His footsteps. Such will have fellowship in His sufferings now, and in the end will be counted worthy to share in the reward given for faithfulness to principle.

Throughout the Gospel Age this course has meant self-sacrificing labor and endurance of reproach in the sowing and watering of Christ's doctrines. Now, in the end of the Age, it means a similar fidelity and endurance in the Harvest work now in progress—faithfulness even to the laying down of life itself, whether it be required by the gradual process of working it out in the Master's service, a dying daily, or by being brought more abruptly to a martyr's death.

SHRINKING BACK FROM SUFFERING

Our Lord forewarns us that in the end of the Gospel Age, many who have a love for Christ will allow their love to grow cold because of the iniquity and sin in the world. (Matt. 24:12.) It will be a test for such to decide whether they will follow the Lord in self-sacrifice as His disciples or whether they will partake of the worldly spirit. We see this test in operation now. A great many people who name the name of Christ, who really love the Lord, who appreciate much of His character, who would like to see the right prosper, nevertheless have no thought of making a spectacle of themselves before men. They would like to do right, to walk honorably, and to have the favor of men as good

citizens. But as to being warm and faithful followers of the Lord—through "evil report and good report" (2 Cor. 6:8)—their faith and zeal are not sufficient to endure the test.

The Lord Jesus gives us the invitation to become joint-heirs with Him. He has very clearly informed us that to follow in His steps will mean trials and difficulties in the flesh. He says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (John 16:33.) St. Paul repeats the sentiment, saying, "We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God"; and again in our text he emphasizes the thought, saying, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution.*" (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12.) There is no other way to enter the Kingdom than by self-sacrifice, deadening of the flesh, mortifying it. In proportion as the New Creature grows, the old creature perishes, until the sacrifice shall have been completed in death.

The Lord's people should thoroughly understand the terms and conditions upon which they have been called. They should therefore not think it strange when trials come upon them, no matter how fiery, no matter how severe. The Apostle Peter lovingly counsels the Church: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some *strange* thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on *their* part He is evil spoken of, but on *your* part He is *glorified.*" (I Peter 4:12-14.) The Lord is to be not only the Instructor, but also the Refiner to purge out the dross, that we may be made ready to share with Christ in the Kingdom of "glory, honor and immortality."—Rom. 2:7.

TRIALS FROM FALSE BRETHREN

The Scriptures plainly teach that special trials may be expected in the Church, amongst the brethren. And we find it to be true that our severest trials come not from without, but, as the Apostle in substance says, "From among yourselves shall arise false brethren," to injure the flock in general through personal ambition. (Acts 20:30.) This becomes a test not only to the Church, but to all those who are in contact with us, for if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.—I Cor. 12:26.

We are not, therefore, to think it strange if there are trials and difficulties, and if more or less dispute arise in the Church. We are to cultivate gentleness, meekness, patience, loving-kindness toward all. Nevertheless, if a dispute arise amongst the Lord's people, we are to recognize that such things are unavoidable amongst those who have the Truth. Our heads are imperfect, and consequently it requires some time to come into line with the teachings of the Lord's Word. Even disputation makes life an activity, and is better than a dead condition—not to care what is spoken or not spoken. Nevertheless, those who have zeal should be careful that they manifest the Spirit of the Lord, as above indicated—gentleness, patience, meekness, brotherly kindness, love, humility.

Think it not strange that there are fiery trials *amongst yourselves*, arising from one cause or another, that will make it particularly severe for you. Those among whom you

are thrown in contact will cause you suffering, because of your zeal and their misunderstanding, their imperfection, etc. Similarly, you may be a cause of trial to others. All of these fiery trials will work out good for you. It is far better to be amongst those who are fervent in spirit than to take a place amongst those who are lukewarm and thus lose the privilege of being one of those who are footstep followers of Christ. Perhaps those who are lukewarm will, in the Time of Trouble, learn a lesson. But the Little Flock are to learn their lesson in the present time—allowing the experiences of life to work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. 4:17.

Our knowledge of God is limited; yet it is only what we should expect of the Heavenly Father, that any whom He accepts as His children will have Divine love and care in the supervision of their affairs, which will make all things work for good to them. Since the Lord is our Shepherd, no one is able to pluck us out of His hands. (John 10:28, 29.) We are as dear to Him as the apple of His eye. He that began a good work in us is able to complete it in the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6.) So the more faith we have the more we appreciate the text, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) This includes even the things that seem to be very contrary, very evil, very disadvantageous.

Our Lord said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." (John 17:3.) To know the Father means to be in fellowship with Him, to have an intimate acquaintance with Him. Experience corroborates this fact. The more obedient we are as children the more intimate is our acquaintance with Him. And if we are unfaithful, even for a little space, we shall fail to make development along spiritual lines. But in proportion as we are seeking to walk in His ways, we become intimate with Him in the particular sense in which a child knows his father. This knowledge gives us the trust that He cares for us as His children, and makes all things work together for good to us.—Rom. 8:28; I John 1:6, 7.

CO-OPERATION WITH GOD TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY

We note, however, that St. Paul says that all things work together for *good*, not for *best*. God has something to do in the way of His choice of His reward and of our possibilities. The angels of God, however obedient to Him, could not become archangels nor cherubim. Their obedience brings their highest welfare on their own plane. So with us. We cannot get the best for the reason that He has already given it to Jesus Christ, whom He has set next to Himself at His right hand in power and glory and honor.—I Peter 3:22.

Again, this promise is not a guarantee that all things in life will work together for the very best to us as though we had neither will nor choice in the matter. We should not say, "I positively resign myself; the Lord has said that all things will work together for the best, and if I miss opportunities in the service I shall say, 'Oh, well, it is all for the best.'" Thus to think would be a mistake, for it is evidently not at all the thought.

After we have become New Creatures in Christ and children of God, He leaves us with a certain amount of choice. It is very largely in our own control what we shall do, whether we shall make progress or stand still or go backward. We cannot say that if one had lost the High Calling his experiences would be the very best possible; and that if he went into the Second Death, his fate was the best. But we can say that this Scripture means that God stands ready to give us the best that He may have under the terms and conditions of the Covenant which He has made with us.

Ours is a Covenant of sacrifice. There are certain laws and principles which are not to be broken. Along these lines the Lord Jesus tells us that the Father will appoint those next to the Lord who have demonstrated most of the Spirit of the Redeemer. He will not put anyone in such a position or into the Kingdom arbitrarily. His Character, His Words, stand pledged that He will make the best of us that He is able to do, while at the same time recognizing our wills as paramount.

Jehovah does not seek those as His children who need to be forced. Our Lord said that the Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:23.) We are to work to the best of our ability. But with all of our stumbling the Lord stands pledged that He will not leave us if we are faithful, and that He will make even our stumbling work out for good to us. Those who lose the crown may come up through great tribulation with the Great Company class. This is the best thing possible for them under the Divine arrangement. For those who go into the Second Death, their fate will not be the best for *them*; but it will be best for the entire universe that those should be blotted out of existence who are out of harmony with righteousness.

MAY 3

Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil—Heb. 5:14.

Those who have real and sincere faith in God are willing to take Him at His word; and with these the first principles of the doctrine should long ago have been established; much of the superstructure of gold and silver and precious stones should already be erected, and the work be steadily progressing. Such are able, if they are loyal and true to God, to discern between truth and error. We ought to *know* what we believe and why we believe it, and then should be bold and uncompromising in declaring it; for "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle?"—Z '03, 167 (R 3199).

As the natural babes have not physical organs sufficiently strong to digest strong meat, neither have the spiritual babes organs sufficiently strong to assimilate strong spiritual meat. One must be well developed in Christ properly to assimilate the deepest truths, and such a development is attained, only by a constant exercise of the mental, moral and religious faculties in spiritual respects. Like the natural, the spiritual muscles are strengthened by exercise—P '34, 62.

Parallel passages: Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 3:3; Amos 8:11-13; Rom. 16:19; 1 Cor. 2:6-16; 13:11; 14:20; 1 Pet. 2:2; Psa. 119:99; 131:2; Eph. 3:5; 4:13-15; Col. 3:16; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 6:1; 2 Pet. 3:16, 18; Jas. 1:18-25.

Hymns: 296, 154, 49, 22, 311, 315, 332
Poems of Dawn, 8: *How Readest Thou?*
Tower Reading: Z '15, 151 (R 5688).

Questions: How have this week's experiences corroborated this text? What good did I get from them?

HOW READEST THOU?

LUKE 10:16

'TIS one thing now to read the Bible through,
Another thing to read, to learn and do;
'Tis one thing now to read it with delight,
And quite another thing to read it right.

Some read it with design to learn to read,
But to the subject pay but little heed;
Some read it as their duty once a week,
But no instruction from the Bible seek;

Whilst others read it without common care,

With no regard to *how* they read or *where*.
Some read it as a history, to know
How people lived three thousand years ago.

Some read to bring unto themselves repute,
By showing others how they can dispute;
Whilst others read because their neighbors do,
To see how long 'twill take to read it through.

Some read it for the wonders that are there,
How David killed a lion and a bear;
Whilst others read—or rather in it look—
Because, perhaps, they have no other book.

Some read the blessed Book—they don't know why,
It somehow happens in the way to lie;
Whilst others read it with uncommon care,
But all to find some contradictions there.

One reads with father's specs upon his head,
And sees the thing just as his father did;
Another reads through Campbell or through Scott,
And thinks it means exactly what *they* thought.

Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,
Thus understand but little what they read;
And every passage in the Book they bend
To make it suit that all-important end.

Some read the Book to find that God is love,
Whilst others read—the opposite to prove.
Some people read, as I have often thought,
To teach the Book, instead of being taught.

R5688: DEVELOPMENT AS NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST

"Strong meat belongeth to them who are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."—Hebrews 5:14.

THE Apostle here seems to have in mind some who are babes in Christ, some who have immature conceptions of God and His Plan, who lack spiritual development, contrasting them with others who are more developed, who have become men in Christ Jesus—who are "of full age," as St. Paul expresses it, mature in Christian attainment. "Strong meat" belongs to these. The Apostle has given a reproof to some who, considering the length of time they have been in Christ, should have been strong in the

faith, in doctrine, in spiritual life, and should be qualified to teach others. Yet still they were children, needing others to teach them again the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, needing still to be fed on milk, even yet not able to assimilate "strong meat."

Beginners who have not long known Christ, who are new in respect to the truths of God's Plan, are not to be choked with strong meat. These may be fed upon the simpler truths, which they can assimilate. They need "the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby." Some of the Lord's people, who have been longer in the way, in talking with the newly consecrated unwisely begin to tell them the truths regarding immortality, trinity, etc., before they are able to digest them. These are giving strong meat to babes, and are liable to drive them away from the table of the Lord, giving them spiritual dyspepsia, so that they are unable longer to eat even of the simpler food furnished by the Lord.

For those who are only beginners in the good way, there is plenty of food in God's Word of the more easily digestible sort; food which should be helpful to New Creatures in Christ who are just beginning to walk in the narrow path. We are not to understand, however, that they are to continue for quite a period of time to live exclusively on milk. As they begin to grow and develop on a milk diet, they may be given somewhat stronger food, until after a time they will be able to digest the strongest features of the Truth, and to draw nourishment from them. Some develop and are able to digest the strong meat much more rapidly than others. Those who have not been falsely taught regarding Scriptural doctrines, who have not been steeped for many years in the errors brought into the Church during the Dark Ages, are often much more ready and able to grasp the truth on these subjects than are those who have been long under the blinding influence of error along these lines.

SYSTEMATIC STUDY NECESSARY

Those who are of humble, teachable mind, seeking a "thus saith the Lord" for all they accept, not trying to uphold any theories of their own, but to follow only the Lord, can generally, by taking the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and their Bible, and taking up the Plan step by step, in a systematic, orderly manner, as it is presented, proving every statement by the sure Word of God, see the truth regarding these fundamental doctrines with little difficulty. In this way they gain a comprehensive view of the whole Plan of God, and can see how its various features fit and dovetail into one another; this would be impossible if they heard first only a portion of the Plan, disassociated from the rest.

For this reason it is well to urge the newly interested one to read and prove for himself, and not endeavor to explain too much through conversation. Much harm is often done thus by well-meaning friends, in their zeal to have the beginner grasp it all at once, which is impossible; and often their efforts result in confusing the mind of the one seeking the Truth.

SPIRITUAL EYESIGHT A MATTER OF GROWTH

As we look at a little babe, we see that it can crow, can kick a little, can cry somewhat, and to a certain extent can see objects. It has a certain amount of appreciation of things beautiful, of things terrorizing, of things happifying. But it does not see things very clearly nor comprehend them. If we pass our hand before its eyes, it apparently has not a focus. As with young kittens, which cannot tell what is near and what is far off, so with beginners, babes, in spiritual matters. The younger ones in their attempt to study God's Word, are apt to go tripping along through it, and think they see this or that. They cannot be entrusted with important truths at first; for they would be pretty certain to be stumbled.

But as these grow older, they can "rightly divide" the Truth, they can distinguish Truth from error, they can tell what would be hurtful and what would be helpful. Even a child that burns itself at the fire learns to look out for that which will burn, and learns to approach the fire very carefully, very judiciously. As all this is true as relates to temporal matters, and as the sense of appreciation and comprehension develops in the babe, so in babes in Christ, there is a development of the sense of appreciation and ability to comprehend the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of God's Wisdom and Love, and the fulness and grandeur of His great Plan with all its varied features.

NECESSARY FOOD ALWAYS IN "DUE SEASON"

To gain this appreciation, it is necessary, not only to read the Truth, but to think upon it, to make it our own, to strive earnestly to conform our lives to it. It is better, of course, for one to merely read so many pages or chapters of the Bible than to read some worthless thing; but to simply read a certain amount in the Bible without understanding accomplishes little. The Bible needs to be studied; and the Lord has never left His people without teachers of His own choosing, who were able to lead the dear sheep of the great Shepherd's Fold into the green pastures where they could obtain whatever food was needed at that time. As the gradual unfolding of Truth in its times and seasons has added to the quantity and variety of food required by the flock of God for their proper nourishment, it has been supplied by Him through instrumentalities which he has raised up for the purpose in due season.

The real saints of God have never been left without all needed supplies in every age. In our own day more Truth has unfolded than at any previous period of the Church's history. More and richer food is now necessary, to strengthen the Church for the peculiar conditions and testings of this day; and more has been supplied. But as we have stated, and as the Apostle in our text shows, there are various degrees of development in the Church of Christ; and some have been accepted from the world in these latter days to take the places of some who have through unfaithfulness lost their crowns. Hence the wisdom that cometh from above is required to feed and nourish these weaker ones properly.

FIRST LESSONS IN SCHOOL

In a school there are lessons arranged according to the ability and comprehension of the pupils. When the primary lessons in spelling are given, the teacher begins with small, simple words, instead of long words. Such words as c-o-w, cow; c-a-t, cat, are given first.

A teacher who is wise and understands her business would not think of starting little children out with such a word as "prognostication," or "hippopotamus." The pupil would first be given more simple and easily comprehensible words. Object lessons, by pictures, etc., are also used at first to attract the eye, and thus to assist the child mind.

And so with religious matters. Those who would give proper instructions to others must be qualified to teach. The Lord has placed the various members in the Body of Christ "as it hath pleased Him." To some He has given Apostles and workers of miracles; to others evangelists and teachers and pastors. In the early history of the Church, in its infantile condition, miracles—object lessons and proofs to the eye, to the ear, the outward physical senses—were necessary, and hence were supplied. As the Church became established, these outward evidences in connection with the Truth passed away.

The Apostle Paul says, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I thought as a child, I understood as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things." (1 Corinthians 13:11). And so with every true follower of Christ. As he grows and develops, step by step, as his senses become exercised to discern good and evil—what is true, what is right, what is profitable, what is comprehended in the glorious High Calling of the Church, what is included in full consecration to Christ—he more and more puts away his childish views, his immature conceptions, and becomes educated and advanced in the things of God—the deep things. A beginner, who had not learned to study the Word of God, could take it and get out of it things that would be really harmful to him. One must learn to take Bible truths *in their setting*—to see what they *mean*, *how they apply*, to *whom* they apply, etc.—or all will be confusion and contradiction. One can bring sweet music from an instrument only when he learns how to manipulate the keys, how to combine the various chords; otherwise only discord is the result.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THOSE LONG IN THE WAY

There are certain principles laid down in the Bible. We need to get a grasp on these principles and apply them in our daily lives. There is the principle of *Justice*—a *foundation* principle. This principle must be recognized and practised before we are in a proper condition to build upon this foundation the principles of Love, Mercy, Gentleness, etc., all of which must be incorporated into our lives, our characters, as children of God. We need to learn what *justice* means, what *true love* means. The standards of the world along these lines have become much perverted, and we need to be properly taught from the only authoritative source—the Word of God. We must learn *how* to apply these principles.

Those who have been for some time drinking from the Fountain of Truth, and feeding at the table of the Lord, where the food is pure, unadulterated, nourishing, should be fully established in the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. Much of the superstructure of "gold, silver and precious stones" should be already erected, and the good work of character-building should be progressing steadily day by day. We should be firmly rooted and grounded in Christ, so that nothing can move us. We should be able to discern clearly between truth and error on every important point. We should be so loyal to the Lord and

His Word that we shall rejoice in the glorious privilege of proclaiming it at every suitable opportunity. We should know *what* we believe and *why* we believe it, and be courageous and uncompromising in declaring the Truth which has so blessed our own hearts and lives.

MAY 4

The LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart—1 Sam. 16:7.

If we lose sight of the fact that God regards us from the standpoint of the will, if we get to thinking of ourselves and God's estimate of us according to the flesh, we are sure to get proportionately into darkness and confusion and discouragement. But let us not forget, on the other hand, that the spirit, or will, is counted alive because of its righteousness, because it is in harmony with God. Let us, therefore, never be slack in respect to the will, or intention governing the conduct of our lives, but remember that any laxity will mean the proportionate loss of spiritual life. To will right is always possible to us, and nothing less than an absolutely loyal will could be acceptable to God in Christ—Z '03, 171 (R 3200).

One's standard of judgment reveals much of his character—the superficiality and errancy of the average man's character is evidenced by his judging from outward appearance. Jehovah's character is manifested by His rule of judgment. Instead of estimating by surface indications, He penetrates into the reality of things, and forms His estimate from what is, and not from what seems; and all things are naked and open to His all-seeing eye. As far as possible let us judge, not by appearance, but by the reality of things—P '33, 78, 79.

Parallel passages: Deut. 10:17; 2 Chron. 19:7; Job 34:19; 37:24; Matt. 22:16; John 7:24; Acts 10:34, 35; Rom. 2:16; 2 Cor. 10:7; Gal. 2:6; Eph. 6:8, 9; Col. 3:25; Jas. 2:1-6.

Hymns: 196, 198, 293, 47, 67, 74, 99.

Poems of Dawn, 139: *If We Only Understood*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 88 (R 5656).

Questions: Have I this week judged according to appearance or according to reality? Why? How? With what results?

IF WE ONLY UNDERSTOOD

COULD we draw aside the curtains
That surround each other's lives,
See the naked heart and spirit,
Know what spur the action gives—
Often we would find it better,
Purer than we judge we would;
We would love each other better
If we only understood.

Could we judge all deeds by motives,
See the good and bad within,

Often we would love the sinner
All the while we loathe the sin.
Could we know the powers working
To o'erthrow integrity,
We would judge each other's errors
With more patient charity.

If we knew the cares and trials,
Knew the efforts all in vain,
And the bitter disappointments—
Understood the loss and gain—
Would the grim external roughness
Seem, I wonder, just the same?
Would we help where now we hinder?
Would we pity where we blame?

Ah, we judge each other harshly,
Knowing not life's hidden force;
Knowing not the fount of action
Is less turbid at its source.
Seeing not amid the evil
All the golden grains of good,
Oh, we'd love each other better
If we only understood.

R5656: DAVID ANOINTED KING

—1 Samuel 16:4-13.—

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART—ANOTHER PHASE OF SAMUEL'S CHARACTER—SAMUEL SENT TO BETHLEHEM—ANOINTING THE SUCCESSORS OF PRESENT INSTITUTIONS—DAVID A TYPE OF THE CHURCH IN THE FLESH—DIVINE METHOD OF SELECTION OF THE ELECT.

"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the Heart."

—1 Samuel 16:7.

KING SAUL'S rejection by the Lord because of disobedience meant not only his own ultimate removal from the throne, but that his sons should not succeed him in it. Furthermore, it meant also the Lord's selection of another man, another family, for the office of ruler in Israel and representative of the Lord upon the throne. The Lord's choice was David, to whom the Prophet Samuel had indirectly referred, saying, "The Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over His people, because thou [King Saul] hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee."—1 Samuel 13:14.

At the time of the events of today's Study, David was about twenty years old; consequently the Prophet's words must have been uttered about the time of David's birth. Thus we have another illustration of God's foreknowledge and design in respect to those whom He especially uses in His service. Similarly God's choice of Jacob was declared before he was born; and similarly the Apostle Paul was chosen from before his birth. We are to separate from this declaration any false thought respecting the Divine choice, and note that none of these was chosen to eternal life, but each of them, all of them, chosen and fitted for special service.

This gives us a suggestion of the possibility of paternal and maternal influence affecting the natural disposition of a human being from before his birth. He still has a will, however; and even though favorably endowed, it remains with himself to determine, to will, whether or not he will walk in the Lord's ways and to what extent he will be obedient. There is no coercion of the will; for the Lord seeks such as worship Him in spirit—willingly, heartily—and in truth.

David's great-grandmother was the gentle Ruth, who gleaned grain probably in the very field with which David was familiar. His great-grandfather's name was Boaz, a page of whose history is recorded in the Book of Ruth. Like Boaz, David's father Jesse was doubtless one of the Elders of the city of Bethlehem, respected and honored as a noble man. Of his mother we know little, except that David twice mentioned her as a handmaid of God.

SAMUEL'S FAITH TESTED

The Prophet Samuel mourned and prayed for King Saul, and apparently was disappointed that this man, of whom he had expected such great things and under whose guidance he had anticipated great prosperity for Israel, should be rejected. Quite probably fearful forebodings of a civil war to result from the installation of a new king perturbed the Prophet's mind. He knew that Saul would not quietly submit to laying down the scepter which he had taken up with so great modesty, in obedience to the Divine arrangement. The Prophet's mental eye could see the probability of civil strife, which might rupture the nation and cause great trouble. He should have had greater trust in the Wisdom and the Power of the Almighty, but his trouble was more or less like that which assails all of the Lord's people even today.

The lesson to our hearts should be that we will implicitly trust the Lord to manage His own affairs; that we will trust Him where we cannot trace Him and will be obedient to His directions; and that so far from mourning at the execution of His plans we will rejoice, knowing that all things are working together for good to them that love God—that all things will ultimately work blessings for those who are in accord with the Lord—blessings for the future life, if not for the present.

When sent to anoint David, the Prophet Samuel exhibited a fear not elsewhere noticeable in his character. He did not hesitate to perform the Lord's bidding, but

intimated that he clearly understood that it meant the risk of his own life—that King Saul would kill him as a traitor if he should anoint a successor to the kingdom. The Lord made it clear to him that it was not the intention to make the matter known at once, and directed him to go to Bethlehem and make a sacrifice there and, incidentally, to improve the opportunity of finding and anointing the one who in due time would be made known and exalted to the throne. At the time, he was merely to perform the initial work, which David's father and brethren would not understand, thinking perhaps that the anointing meant a special blessing or a commission from the Lord to engage as a member of the school of the prophets or something else of this kind. Quite probably, however, the Prophet informed David privately of the meaning of the anointing, just as he had privately informed Saul when he secretly anointed the latter to the office of king of Israel.

GOD'S CHOICE OF KING

Our Study begins at the point when the Prophet Samuel had arrived at Bethlehem. The Elders were in fear, thinking that his presence signified some sin on their part, or on the part of some of their fellow-citizens, which God had sent him to reprove and to punish. Hence they inquired whether or not he came peaceably—whether or not his presence meant a blessing or the infliction of a penalty. Their fears were allayed when they heard that his mission was a peaceable one—to offer a sacrifice unto the Lord.

Some time before this, the Ark of the Covenant had been captured by the Philistines. The Tabernacle services, thus discontinued, had not yet been reestablished, and for this reason this sacrificing was performed by the Lord's especially appointed servant. The command to the people of Bethlehem to sanctify themselves if they would be participators in the blessings of the sacrifice signified that they should wash their persons, put on clean clothes and draw nigh to the Lord with their hearts. Thus they typically represented that justification and sanctification which the Church of this Age has enjoyed.

The Prophet seems to have taken supervision of the family of Jesse to the intent that he might without public display find the man whom the Lord had chosen, and might anoint him to the office and give him the Divine blessing in preparation of it. Jesse properly introduced his sons to the Prophet according to the order of their birth—his eldest, Eliab, first. As he was of fine appearance the Prophet naturally assumed that he was the Lord's choice; but as he looked to the Lord for direction in the matter he got the response—in what manner we know not—which constitutes the Golden Text of this Study.

Judged from the human standpoint of appearance, age, ability, etc., Eliab was the most suitable person in Jesse's family to be the king over the nation, but not so in the Lord's sight. The Lord was looking at the heart, and had already selected David as a man after his own heart, although, at this time being under age, his father had not thought worth while to send for him to be present at the feast. As one after another of Jesse's sons appeared, the Prophet found not him whom the Lord's Spirit indicated as the one to be

anointed. Then he inquired, "Are all thy children here?" Jesse suddenly remembered that he had another boy, his youngest, who was in the field with his sheep, and sent for him.

THE ANTITYPICAL LORD'S ANOINTED

Our Golden Text appeals to all Christians in connection with the High Calling of the Gospel Age, and year by year experience shows us its general applicability. We, too, as the Lord's messengers, are seeking for those to be anointed with the oil of gladness, the Holy Spirit, that they may be kings and priests unto God in the Kingdom which He is about to establish and which will supersede present kingdoms. We too, like the Prophet Samuel, might feel afraid to proceed with this work of anointing the successors of present institutions, did we not realize that the work of sealing the Elect of the Lord, which is now in progress, is a secret work, which the world cannot understand. Indeed, none understand this matter of the sealing, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, except those who have received it; and they are all of the David class.

The name David signifies Beloved; and as it applied especially to our Lord and Master, of whom it was said by Jehovah, "This is My beloved Son," so also it applies to all the members of His Body, each of whom must be beloved, else he cannot be acceptable as a member. Of such the Head says, "The Father Himself loveth you"; and again, He says that we should love one another as He has loved us. It is not too much to say that all who receive this anointing of the Lord must ultimately be of this David, or beloved, character. The spirit of love must be in them—love for the Lord and love one for the other; else they are none of His.

In seeking the Lord's anointed, who shall by and by reign in Millennial glory for the blessing of the world, as antitypes of David, we notice that as he was counted by his brethren as too insignificant to be considered in this connection, so also are those whom the Lord is choosing and anointing for His Heavenly Kingdom. Our Lord Jesus was disesteemed of His brethren, and when the suggestion was made that He should be the Lord's Anointed, His people hid, as it were, their faces from Him—disdained Him, despised Him, and considered Him hopeless respecting anything great or glorious—"a root out of a dry ground." The same has been true respecting the members of His Body, the elect Church. They also have been despised and rejected of men; and of them the Apostle declares, "We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things"—for Christ's sake, for the Truth's sake.—1 Corinthians 4:13.

WHO CAN READ THE HEART?

Again he declares, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." St. James asks, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him!" This principle of the Divine selection of things that are not esteemed amongst men, to bring to naught the things that are esteemed by men, is noticeable throughout this Gospel Age. Often have we, like the Prophet Samuel, looked about amongst men seemingly eligible to a place in the Kingdom—socially,

intellectually, morally, educationally—and in the esteem of men, and have expected that surely the Lord would sanction their anointing with the oil of gladness and grant them a knowledge of the Truth pertaining to the Kingdom, only to find ourselves mistaken and to get a fresh lesson on the fact that God looketh not on the outward appearance, but on the heart.

We concede that we are unable to read the heart; but we are fully satisfied to accept the Divine decision in such matters and to trust that when in due time all the secrets of this present life shall be disclosed we shall then be able to understand the meaning of the Lord's selections more completely than we do now. We shall then be able to see what a difference there was between the hearts of those whom the Lord accepted and the hearts of those, outwardly humble, whom He did not so highly favor in respect to the Kingdom call. Meantime, we must simply wait and trust the Lord and accept His decisions, as expressed by our dear Redeemer when He said, "I thank Thee, Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

Instructed respecting the Divine methods, we are not to despise the least, the most ignoble or illiterate of those who give evidence of a purity and honesty of heart toward God, and to whom He seems to give the anointing of His Spirit and the "ear to hear." Rather, while making known the Message to all as we have opportunity, we are to rejoice especially with those upon whom the Lord's favor is manifested, regardless of their earthly surroundings, etc. ("The Lord knoweth them that are His"); and it is for us to recognize, to honor and to co-operate with all such, as the ambassadors and representatives of our Lord and Master.

Often have we thought, as we have looked over a congregation of the Lord's people and beheld some not prepossessing in personal appearance, some not well educated or refined, some ignoble—but nevertheless bearing the marks of the anointing of the Lord, the light of the Truth shining in their faces, the confidence and hope of the Truth inspiring them, and their lives indicating a transformation from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son—often have we thought that had the Lord sent us forth to seek His Bride, we might have ignorantly passed by some of His choice jewels and have gathered in some whom He rejects as unworthy—because we are unable to read the heart. This thought should make us very humble, gentle and meek toward all, and very trustful of the Lord and very much inclined to look for His leading in respect to our labors as His servants—just as the Prophet Samuel looked to the Lord in connection with the anointing of David.

A PICTURE OF THE MILLENIUM

Samuel's words, "We will not sit down until he come hither," referred to the feast of which they were about to partake. It was the custom that, after the sacrifice had been offered, the sanctified persons present and those in spirit sharing in the sacrifice might join in a feast, eating the flesh and thus celebrating a communion with the Lord. It was this feast that the Prophet decided should not be commenced until David's arrival. Indeed,

by reason of being the Lord's anointed, he would be the most important person present at the gathering.

Perhaps in this also we can see a figure of the Lord's blessing in the Divine Plan. A feast of fat things has been designed for the whole world of mankind. But the feast cannot be participated in until the justifying and sanctifying sacrifice has been killed. More than this, the feast cannot be commenced until first the Anointed One shall come and shall receive the anointing. The anointing began with our Lord, the Head of the Church, and throughout the Gospel Age has been flowing down upon the members of His Body, the Church. The Sacrifice has been killed; and we, as members of Christ, have been participating in the sacrifice. Shortly the whole matter will have been accomplished; and then, as the Lord's anointed, the feast of fat things will be spread—the Anointed One, Head and Body, being the principal in that great antitypical feast.

The blessing and power of the Lord accompanied David's anointing in some manner—just how we may not understand; for the manifestation of the Spirit was not the same then as it is with the Church, since Pentecost. (John 7:39.) However, in some manner God's blessing and power were with David, enabling him to progress in knowledge, etc., and preparing him for the duties of the office to which he had been anointed. May we not consider as an antitype to this, the anointing which comes upon the Church from the time of her acceptance with the Lord? Ours is not a physical anointing nor are the blessings conferred of a temporal character. It is as New Creatures that we are anointed, that we grow in grace, knowledge and love; and it is as New Creatures that by and by we shall be perfected in the First Resurrection and come to the Throne with our Lord and Master as our Head.

MAY 5

If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live—Rom. 8:13.

The conditions upon which we may continue our relationship to the Lord, and our hope for a share in the glories of the resurrection are thus definitely stated to include mortification of the deeds of the body—restraining the fleshly inclinations, putting them to death, crucifying them, using them up in the service of the Lord and His cause. Such mortification of the deeds of the body, such a battle against the weaknesses of the flesh, is what the Apostle elsewhere speaks of as the "warfare," when he tells us that the flesh warreth against the spirit, and the spirit in turn warreth against the flesh; for the two are contrary, and will be opponents to the end of life; and if the spirit has been willing, and has fought to the best of its ability against the weaknesses of the flesh, the Lord will count the victory complete, through the merit of the Redeemer—Z '03, 172 (R 3200).

By the spirit the new heart, mind and will is meant; by the body the humanity is meant. By the deeds of the body the selfish, worldly, erroneous and sinful tendencies and their expressions are meant. The deeds of the body are mortified especially in two ways, by their displacement through their opposite good qualities and acts and by their restraint through good qualities and acts that are not their opposites. He who so does will gain life—P '32, 48.

Parallel passages: Gal. 4:6; 5:16, 17, 22-25; 6:8; Eph. 3:16; Col. 3:10; 1 Pet. 2:21; 3:4; Rom. 6:6-23; 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Eph. 4:22-32; Col. 3:5-9; Deut. 30:6; Ezek. 18:21; 33:15, 16; Zech. 4:6; Matt. 16:25; 19:12, 16, 21; Luke 18:29, 30; John 12:25.

Hymns: 192, 90, 91, 130, 136, 145, 20.

Poems of Dawn, 144: *Take Time to be Holy*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 356 (R 5805).

Questions: What were this week's experiences relating to this text? How were they used? What were their results?

TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY

TAKE time to be holy! Speak oft with the Lord;
Abide in Him always, and feed on His Word;
Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak,
Forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.

Take time to be holy! The world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret with Jesus alone;
By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be;
Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.

Take time to be holy! Let Him be thy guide,
And run not before Him, whatever betide;
In joy or in sorrow, still follow the Lord,
And, looking to Jesus, still trust in His word!

Take time to be holy! Be calm in thy soul,
Each thought and each motive beneath His control;
Thus led by His spirit to fountains of love,
Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above.

R5805: PROPER MORTIFICATION OF THE BODY

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Romans 8:13.

MANY times have the children of the Lord read these words of the Apostle. Many times have His true saints pondered over their solemn import. Many times, too, have those less saintly read them, and instead of taking the lesson to themselves, have applied it to their worldly neighbors and allowed the lesson to lose its force upon themselves. But the most saintly of God's people need, as the Prophet declared of Israel of old, "precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little." (Isaiah 28:10, 13.) Our poor earthen vessels are very leaky and fragile, and need constant replenishment from the great Fountain of Truth and Life.

So let us again ponder over these gracious words of the Lord's mouthpiece and have their lesson impressed more deeply upon our minds. St. Paul is here addressing the Church of Christ only. He is not addressing the world. The Church have entered into a solemn Covenant with the Lord to lay down in sacrifice earthly things, the earthly nature. The Apostle assures us that if we succeed in faithfully laying down our earthly life with all its hopes and prospects, we shall live. It is not merely that we shall covenant at the beginning of our Christian course to do this, but we must carry out to its completion this mortification of our body—the deeds of the body.

The body with its deeds represents *all the human interests*—not merely the weaknesses and infirmities of our fallen condition, and our sinful tendencies. Those, of course, we are to mortify. We are to deaden these at once, as far as is possible. But we are also to sacrifice the earthly interests which are not sinful, but which would prevent our attainment of the glorious hope set before us, which would in any degree handicap us in the Heavenly race. Are we all doing this day by day? As we mingle with others and come into contact with the world and its influences, as we engage in the affairs of life, are we continually mortifying the deeds of the body? Are we crucifying the flesh? Are we dying daily to the things of earth? Are we living more and more fully each day as New Creatures in Christ?

IMPROPER MORTIFICATION OF THE FLESH

Day by day we shall find opportunities to mortify the deeds of our flesh; and this we must do, if we would live and grow as New Creatures. Some very mistaken notions are held by many in the world as to the proper mortification of the body. Some of our Catholic friends make a mistake in their zeal to do what they consider mortifying the flesh. For instance, many of them lie on a stone floor instead of on a bed; some will lie down to be walked upon and to be made a mat for others to wipe their feet upon; some will whip themselves until they have lacerated their flesh and then wear a hair jacket, with all the torture that means. These have certain sins in their minds of which they have been guilty, and for which they think they should do penance. With others this penance is not voluntary, but of compulsion by those who are in authority over them. The difficulty with these individuals is that their heads are wrong; they lack the spirit of a sound mind. They mean right; but they have been mistaught, and their consciences are perverted and falsely trained.

The heathen also practise such mortification of body. Some of the zealots among them will hold up their hands for hours at a time, or sit or lie down upon spikes to mortify their flesh. Some imprison themselves for years in a cramped position in a box, being fed through an aperture. This they do to show that they are very holy, and they think thus to appease their god, or to bring themselves into a condition where their individuality and sensibilities will become lost and that they may in this manner be absorbed into the Diety—a condition of Nirvana, as it is called. They want to be pleasing to their deities; but we know that the true God is not pleased with any such sufferings and tortures. He is not a God of that kind. What manner of God would it be who would delight in seeing His children lying upon spikes or doing any other such senseless thing? Such is not the God of the Bible. Such a disposition could belong only to a demon, and practises of this nature are actuated by demons or are the vagaries of a disordered, untutored or misdirected brain.

SELF DISCIPLINE FOR A PURPOSE

The God of the Bible has, during the Age now closing, been calling out of the world a very special class of mankind. We have faith in this God because the instructions of His Word are reasonable, and because the results of following these instructions are in every way most satisfactory and gratifying. The wonderful fulfilments of its prophecies in the past and in the present are most convincing. The manifestations of His providences and His guidance in the lives of those who have served Him—this God of the Bible—are likewise so marked as to be unassailable. He has given to these "exceeding great and precious promises," which relate to the life which now is and also to that which is to come, and which sustain and strengthen the children of God in all their pilgrimage through this vale of tears to the Heavenly City, "whose Builder and Maker is God."

We are assured in the Holy Word that if we are faithful to our God under present unfavorable conditions and environments, if we are loyal to the principles of Truth and righteousness and to our Covenant of Sacrifice made with Him, we shall have quite a conflict with ourselves and with the sins that are entrenched in our mortal bodies. He tells

us, too, that such loyalty to Him will bring persecution and misunderstanding, because of the condition of darkness which now envelops the world of mankind. Yes, we well know that our faithful endeavor to serve the Lord and His Truth will now bring opposition from the world, from our own flesh, and from the great Adversary and all his hosts of darkness; for all these are leagued against us as followers of Christ—our Savior, our leader, our Pattern.

We are to mortify the *deeds* of the body, but not the *body* itself without a *purpose*. There must be a reason, a Scriptural reason for so doing, a definite and worthy object before us in all our work of mortification. We might just as well go out and commit suicide at once, drink some poisonous acid, and think, "Now I have mortified my body," as to inflict torture upon ourselves, thinking through it to correct our sins or weaknesses. Only a greatly perverted mind and conscience could entertain such a wild idea. Whatever mortification is practised by the child of God should be actuated by the Spirit of God, the mind of God. "If ye *through the Spirit* do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

There is today a meaning in the word *mortification* as ordinarily used, which is altogether different from the sense of the word as used by the Apostle. We sometimes say in speaking of a certain experience, "I was greatly mortified"; meaning that the experience produced humiliating or embarrassing results. But the deeds of the body are not thus dealt with. We are to *mortify* in the sense of *putting to death* the deeds of the flesh. This is the primary meaning of the word.

We are striving day by day to develop the fruits of the Holy Spirit—fortitude, meekness, gentleness, patience, self-control, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. It is while endeavoring to put these qualities of character into practise, to increase this blessed fruitage in our hearts and lives, that the mortification, the killing, of the deeds of the body is accomplished; for all the conditions about us are unfavorable. If conditions were favorable, if every one about us should encourage us in the good way and commend us for our course, the mortification of our flesh could not so well be brought about. It is in struggling against *adverse influences*, in encountering *opposition* and by conquering its power over us, that we gain strength and development as New Creatures in Christ. There will be no mortification of the flesh in the Millennial Age. But there is now. And it is this mortification of the deeds of the body, the crucifying of the flesh with all its earthward tendencies, that will, if persevered in, bring us the eternal life—the glory, honor, immortality—promised to the overcoming saints of the Gospel Dispensation. But if we take any other course we shall not gain the prize which has been offered to us in this Age.

NO SECOND PROBATION FOR THE CHURCH

There is in our text no intimation of a second probation for any of those addressed. These words were spoken to those who in the present existence are on trial for *life*. The Apostle does not say, If ye live after the flesh ye will lose the prize now offered, but you will have another trial for life later on. Neither does he say, If ye live after the flesh ye shall suffer endless torment. But his words speak of a present probation, the issue of which will be *life* or *death*, an eternity of existence in bliss and happiness or an endless

cessation of existence. Nor is the Apostle here discussing the terms of salvation by the exercise of faith in the atoning blood of Christ. All this is taken for granted. He is speaking here, not of what we *believe*, but solely of how we are to *live*.

Shall we, because of this, spring to the conclusion which many take, that it is immaterial what we believe, so long as we live well? By no means; and those who would so construe these words of the Apostle take but a very shallow view of his teachings, one which would rob them of all their import. But noticing that his words were addressed to those who have already exercised saving faith in Christ, and not to the *world* in any manner, we can get a proper understanding of what he meant. The heedless Christian who applies this warning to everybody, allows it to lose all its force upon himself. This is the very reverse of the Apostle's intention. He is talking to the *saints*, to *consecrated believers* in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, those who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit of God to a new nature, even the Divine. It is for this reason that he says nothing here about the Ransom nor about the Millennial Age of trial for the world. Those who are addressed here are having their trial *now*, and the decision in their cases will be rendered before the world comes into judgment.

The Apostle's warning, therefore, is not at all applicable to the world, but is full of solemn import to the Church. These, having presented their bodies a living sacrifice with Christ, acceptable through Him, having made a sacred covenant with God to live henceforth after the Spirit and to seek those things which are Above, are not at liberty to annul or ignore that covenant. They can never again claim the human nature which they have laid down, for to this they have relinquished all claim and title. If they make any such endeavor, either by ignoring or despising their covenant with God, they forfeit all right and claim to the spiritual nature and reward, which can be attained only by faithfulness to our Covenant of Sacrifice even unto death.

It is therefore logically manifest, even if the Apostle had not so declared, that if *we*, consecrated believers, turn back again to live after the flesh, we shall *die*; that for us to be carnally minded is *death*, while to be spiritually minded is *life* and peace. Our Master's words in Matthew 16:24, 25 are to the same effect—"Whosoever [of My disciples] will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it."

THE WORKS OF THE FLESH

An important question then is, What is it to live after the flesh? Our reply is, to live after the flesh is to live in gratification of even the legitimate cravings of the human mind and the human body, when such gratification will prevent our necessary progress in the narrow way and take time which we should use in our development as New Creatures or in the laying down of our lives for the brethren. And this is a very easy thing to do. Let us just cease our efforts to crucify the flesh, to mortify the deeds of the body, and listlessly abandon ourselves to the natural inclinations of the flesh; and at once we begin to gravitate downward, and soon we find resistance more and more difficult, and the path more and more slippery. Then, unless we make heroic and prayerful efforts to regain our lost position, we shall continue to go downward; and the end will be *death*.

St. Paul defines the works of the flesh thus: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like." (Galatians 5:19-21.) What moral filth and pollution this describes! But such is the tendency of fallen human nature. Just cease to strive against the old nature, and presently some of these noxious weeds will be flourishing and crowding out the good that remains.

"Ah, well," says one, "I have not all those mean qualities." Well, we are very glad you have not; very few have them all. But, beware, you may not know what manner of spirit you are of, naturally. Be sure that your old nature is not free from inherited, and perhaps a formerly cultivated, tendency in some of these directions. The only safe way is to watch and pray against them, to fill the mind with the things of the Spirit of God, lest ye enter into temptation.

Consider the blessed fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, goodness, faith, self-control. "Against such there is no law." To live in the cultivation of these fruits and graces is to "live in the Spirit," and to "walk in the Spirit." Thus do we not only possess our souls in safety, but we constantly progress in the development of the character of Christ. Indeed, we are only safe while we are growing; there is no safety in standing still. If we cease to grow, we begin at once to retrograde.

THE USES OF DISCIPLINE

We see, therefore, that the Christian life is of necessity a warfare, a battle, between our new nature and the tendencies of the flesh, supplemented by the attacks from the outside, from the world and the Adversary with his hosts. It is a conflict which we dare not relinquish; for not only is the prize of our High Calling dependent upon it, but also the issues of life and of death are in it. How solemn a thing it is, therefore, to live under these circumstances; for daily and hourly we are standing before the bar of judgment! "If we live after the flesh, we shall *die*; but if we through the Spirit, do mortify [put to death, refuse to gratify] the deeds of the body, we shall live." All true sons of God will so live; for, says the Apostle Paul, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Romans 8:14.

If we wilfully *refuse* the leading of God's Holy Spirit, we forfeit the blessed relationship of sons. If we listlessly *disregard* this leading, we greatly endanger that relationship; and as surely as we are sons we shall receive chastisement for our correction and discipline. But while we should be grateful for such a restraining hand, for this rod of correction, if we need it, yet we should be very careful to require as little of it as possible. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 11:31.) However, with the most careful and prayerful watching against the uprisings of the old will and of the flesh, we will doubtless make many mistakes and need some chastening experience from the Lord; "for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?"—Hebrews 12:5-12.

Let us, then, remember the exhortation, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him. For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." (Hebrews 12:5, 6.) In the difficult course before us, and in view of all the dangers that beset us, the pitfalls laid for our feet, the weakness of our own unaided efforts, how blessed is the promise of our Father in Heaven to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him; how precious the assurance that if we are filled with the Spirit we shall not fulfil the desires of the flesh, but shall be enabled to mortify the deeds of the body that we may live! How necessary it is to live very near to the Fountain of all grace, to pray without ceasing and to watch with perseverance!

If at times we know not whether to turn to the right or to the left, know not wherein to walk, let us lift our hearts to the Lord, and wait before Him, remembering the Divine assurance, "Delight thyself in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass." "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." (Psalm 37:4, 5; Proverbs 3:6.) Thus His dear voice brings comfort, strength, rest, in the midst of all the cares and perplexities of the way. "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God!"—Galatians 6:16.

MAY 6

As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God—Rom. 8:14.

This, then, is the guide by which we may know our true position, not only at the beginning of the race, but to the end of it, namely, if we are led by the Spirit of God—if that is the direction in which we are following, if that is what we are seeking—then we are sons of God; He owns and accepts all who have come unto Him through Christ, and who are trusting in the merit of the Lord Jesus and who continue in this attitude of heart—Z '03, 173 (R 3200).

By the Spirit of God here the disposition of God in His children is meant. His disposition blends wisdom, justice, love and power in perfect harmony. Those whose motives, thoughts, words and acts are actuated and sustained by this disposition, are sealed by God as His own. Therein they have the strongest possible witness of their sonship with God. What a noble family this is whose family sign and seal are God's character!—P '26, 61.

Parallel passages: Ex. 33:13, 14; Num. 9:15-23; 2 Chron. 5:13, 14; Psa. 5:8; 23:2, 3; 25:5, 9; 32:8; 143:10; Prov. 8:20, 21; Isa. 48:17; John 16:13; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Gal. 4:6.

Hymns: 90, 1, 11, 279, 91, 334, 95.

Poems of Dawn, 113: *Father, Take My Hand.*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 355 (R 5582).

Questions: Have I that witness of the Spirit contained in this verse? How did it manifest itself this week? What were its effects?

FATHER, TAKE MY HAND

THE way is dark, my Father! Cloud on cloud
Is gathering thickly o'er my head, and loud
The thunders roar above me. See, I stand
Like one bewildered! Father, take my hand,
And through the gloom
Lead safely home
Thy child.

The way is long, my Father! And my soul
Longs for the rest and quiet of the goal;
While yet I journey through the weary land,
Keep me from wandering, Father, take my hand.
Quickly and straight
Lead to heaven's gate
Thy child.

The path is rough, my Father! Many a thorn
Hath pierced me; and my weary feet, all torn
And bleeding, mark the way. Yet Thy command
Bids me press forward. Father, take my hand.
Then, safe and blest,
Lead on to rest
Thy child.

The throng is great, my Father! Many a doubt
And fear, and danger, compass me about,
And foes oppress me so. I cannot stand
Or go alone. O Father! take my hand,
And through the throng
Lead safe along
Thy child.

R5582: SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN SONS OF GOD AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT

"If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Romans 8:13, 14.

ONLY those who have the right spirit, disposition, will or intention, can keep the Divine Law, and only those who are in perfect harmony with God will He recognize as sons. The holy angels are sons of God on the angelic plane; cherubim are sons of God on their plane of being; and Christ and the Church in glory are sons of God on the Divine plane. All these are sons of God, yet they exist on different planes. They are all governed by the Spirit of God; and unless they had that Spirit, they could not be recognized as sons; for no one can keep the Divine Law except those who have the Divine disposition.

Before Adam fell he was a son of God. (Luke 3:38.) He had the Spirit of God, in the sense of having the right spirit, disposition, will, intention. But after he had become a transgressor of the Divine Law, he was considered a sinner. All of Adam's race are still sinners except those who have come into Christ. In the Millennial Age, however, Adam's race will have the privilege of coming into Christ. He will be The Everlasting Father, the Father who will give everlasting life to all those who will obey the instructions given under the Messianic Kingdom.

In order to reach that condition of Divine approval, mankind must have the spirit of the Truth, and must be developed along that line. Before they will be counted, or recognized, as sons, they must have the spirit, or disposition, of righteousness. Until they attain that spirit, they will not be able to render acceptable service; for the Lord seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth. In their fallen condition mankind are not able to keep the Divine Law. Even during the Millennial Age they will keep it only in part, until they shall have been brought back to the image of God in the flesh.—Genesis 1:26.

WHO ARE THE SONS OF GOD?

Thus far there has been a very limited number of sons of God on earth, according to the Scriptures. Throughout the Jewish Age God was the Instructor and Guide of His people through Moses and the Prophets; but the Israelites were not sons of God, and they did not have the Spirit's begetting to sonship. On the contrary, they were only a House of Servants. (Hebrews 3:5.) The Holy Spirit of God was not yet given to any of the fallen race; for Jesus was not yet glorified.—John 7:39.

The Scriptures speak of the Spirit of God as a special influence coming from God upon a special class, in a special manner, since a particular event—and not *before* that event. This coming of the Spirit was made manifest at Pentecost, so that it might stand out separate and distinct from anything that had ever before occurred. This power, or influence, is variously called the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of a sound mind, the Spirit of sonship. The various qualities described by these appellations are all applicable to the same class; namely, those who are begotten of the Spirit.

These spirit-begotten ones are a particular class who have taken up their cross and become followers of Christ, and who are on this account recognized of the Father by the begetting of the Holy Spirit. This Spirit of Truth so illuminates the Bible that the Revelation of God may be better understood by those who have the Holy Spirit. They are able to comprehend the deep things of God, which cannot be comprehended without it. While others not having this Spirit of God might get some truth from the Scriptures, this special class have the very essence of the Truth.

SOME NATURALLY DRAWN TO GOD

We call to mind certain Scriptures which speak of a leading of God's people prior to their begetting of the Holy Spirit. Speaking of a kind of drawing that came to those who afterward became His disciples, our Lord said, "No man can come to Me, except the Father who hath sent Me draw him." (John 6:44.) This drawing is not the work of the Holy Spirit of begetting, which comes to those accepted of God through Christ and received as sons. On the contrary, that which the Scriptures speak of as a drawing of God, and which we have all experienced, seems to be a natural drawing along the lines of the flesh, not toward things sinful, but toward holiness, yet along lines which belong to the natural man.

For instance, when God created Adam, naturally he would love God, naturally he would desire to serve God, naturally he would desire to be obedient to God and to worship Him. These desires were all natural to him because he was in a natural condition—the condition in which he was created—*pure*. Sin has made mankind *unnatural*. But even after sin had entered in and had perverted the original character which God gave, certain longings for God remained in the human heart—even amongst

depraved people. They would rather be in harmony with Him, be related to Him, have Him as their Protector and Friend.

God does not draw mankind by any other means than that original power which He implanted and which has not been altogether lost through the fall of the race of Adam. All mankind have degenerated from the image of God; but the desire for worship, for righteousness, for harmony with God, is much stronger in some people than in others. In proportion as one desires righteousness, in that proportion that one is drawn toward God, feels after God, if haply he might find his Creator. He is feeling after God because he wishes to *find* Him.

HOW THEY ARE DRAWN

This is the drawing, we believe, that comes to every one of us. Before we gave ourselves to God in consecration, we had a desire to come to Him, and that desire was something awakened in us. But it was there before it was awakened. Then something occurred that turned the thoughts toward God. Perhaps it was some great sorrow, some calamity, which drew the heart to God; and with it came the feeling that our grief should be taken to Him. Along with that desire, probably came the thought, "God will not hear me." This is a very proper conclusion, for there is no way of approach to God except through the Redeemer, who said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

Just as the Roman centurion Cornelius needed instruction as to how to approach God, so the soul feeling after Divine assistance also needs instruction. We verily believe that thousands upon thousands have been turned away from God because of the credal misrepresentations of His righteous character. When people begin to realize that our God is loving, just, merciful, they will turn to Him. We find that some are now being attracted toward God through the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION. Recently we heard of a lawyer who felt that he had lost his hold upon God altogether; but, as a result of seeing the DRAMA, he drew nigh to God and made a consecration of himself.

This, we believe, is the way in which we are drawn to the Father, whose influence is related to everything beautiful and harmonious in nature. Not until we have the desire to go back to God are we ready to be directed by the great Advocate; for when we come to the Advocate, He very pointedly says, "I cannot receive you except upon one condition." That condition, He tells us, is that we take up our cross and follow Him. (Matthew 16:24.) Consequently it would not be wise to tell any one about the narrow way unless he had some drawing toward God.

We see, then, quite a clear distinction between the drawing of the Father—that drawing which persists everywhere—and what in the Scripture is called the Spirit of God. That Spirit is given only to the sons of God. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Romans 8:14.) That Spirit takes hold of them, guiding them in various ways—sometimes by putting property into their hands, sometimes by taking it away from them, sometimes by permitting sickness to come. The experiences of these

sons of God enable them to grow in grace, in knowledge and in love, that thus they may be fitted and prepared for positions on the spirit plane.

THE SPIRIT POURED UPON ALL MANKIND

During the Millennial Age things will be somewhat different from what they are now. Christ will have representatives in the earthly phase of the Kingdom, and through them the Word of God will go forth to the people. As many as will then be drawn toward God will be privileged to come into relationship with Him through consecration. They will then receive the Spirit of God in the sense of *blessing*, but not in the sense of *begetting*, as the Church receives it now.

The Ancient Worthies will be the earthly representatives of the Messianic Kingdom. The Christ, however, will be the great Teacher in glory, from whom all instruction will come through these earthly representatives. As people begin to get the true, the real knowledge about the glorious character of God, they will begin to see how inferior they are. Then they will be in condition to receive instruction.

No one will be compelled to have instruction, however; but whoever is out of accord with the Kingdom will have restrictions put upon him. The Prophet Zechariah, speaking of earthly affairs under the Kingdom, says, "And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain." (Zechariah 14:17.) If we interpret the word *rain* symbolically, we perceive that the thought is that upon such nations there will be no Divine blessing—if there were no rain, there would be no fruitage. But the rain, the blessing, would be upon those who would be in harmony with the Lord.

When people come into harmony with God, they will consecrate their lives and their bodies to His service. Then they will begin to get the blessings in their minds and bodies; and in this sense of the word they will get more of the Spirit of the Lord—the Spirit of His mind. So through His Truth and through the Divine judgments of that time, the Lord will "pour out His Spirit upon all flesh." (Joel 2:28.) In proportion as they receive His Spirit, they will come into the attitude of sonship.

But even then they would not be sons in the full sense of the term. We might say that the Church are not sons in the full sense of the word, but that we shall be sons indeed when we shall have experienced our resurrection change. So in the Millennial Age, as people come into harmony with the Divinely arranged Messianic Kingdom, they will be coming nearer and nearer to the standard of sonship. By the end of the Millennial Age they will have attained that condition of mentality which Adam had when he was perfect. All this blessing they will get through Christ and His associated Church.

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH

Because our Lord will give everlasting life to the world of mankind, He is called "The Everlasting Father," the Father who gives everlasting life. (Isaiah 9:6.) All the willing and

obedient will become His children during the Millennium. Then at the close of the Messianic Kingdom the children of The Christ will be introduced to their Grand-Father. Since they are to be sons of Christ, who is the Son of God, the Heavenly Father will be their Grand-Father. Then the whole world will be back into harmony with God as the sons of Christ.

During this Gospel Age, however, God is not operating upon the world. Whatever there is in the world of natural beauty is the result of the operation of the Power of God in a general way. Our text does not refer to this operation of God's Power, or Spirit, but to His influence upon the hearts of men. In the New Testament writings it refers to those who have become His people by making a full consecration of themselves and then being begotten of the Holy Spirit as New Creatures in Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17.) All such are recipients of special Divine care.

The Scriptures speak of the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of Christ. All these are synonymous terms, which represent the Divine influence exercised upon the people of God. Having been begotten of the Spirit, we should remember that, as the Apostle suggests, we are to be perfected. We must make a certain development. We progress until finally we are born in the First Resurrection. Perfection will be attained then, not before. Meantime, in order to be ready for that resurrection, a certain development *must* take place.

MAKING READY FOR SPIRIT CONDITIONS

In our context the Apostle is telling how we may attain to this life condition, how to make ready for the birth of the Spirit in due time. He says that such a development will be attained through the Spirit, or Power, of God. This Spirit operates in various ways. For instance, God's Message applies to the Church. Therefore the more we understand the Plan of God, the greater will be that Power in our hearts; and the deeper our consecration to the Divine will, the more sympathy will we have and the greater will be our desire to do the Divine good pleasure.

The change going on within our hearts is neither by men nor of men. God began this work in us. Therefore we must look to Him to complete the work which He has begun in our hearts by the Message He has given us. So we go to Him in prayer, and we study His Word, to know the meaning of that Word and thus to be enabled to put it into expression in our lives. Just as we require food to strengthen our mortal bodies, so we must also have spiritual food to strengthen the New Creature. This spiritual food God has given us abundantly, in order that we may get spiritual strength to understand His will better than before.

This operation of God through the Holy Spirit is a gradual work. So beclouded are we by the errors of our former beliefs that we are not prepared to see the deep things of God at the first glance. Therefore we need to study, to meet together with those of like precious faith. Thus we are helped to see the deep things.

GOD'S WILL CONCERNING US

As we come to understand the matter more clearly, our thought on the subject changes gradually. When we first came to God, we had the thought that God's will toward us was that we should enjoy ourselves, live good, moral lives, and take care of our bodies; and that if we are God's people, we should have abundance; and that those who could not live in harmony with God would be destroyed. This would be the thought of the natural man. The Apostle says that the natural man cannot see the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. But this is not at all God's way of dealing with us.

By and by we begin to discern that our Heavenly Father prepares us for the spiritual things by showing us how to destroy the earthly condition and how this will be brought to an end. This is a new thought to us; and we ask ourselves, Does God wish me to mortify, deaden, destroy, the earthly condition? Am I not to seek to cultivate my talents and to live a natural life?

The natural man says, Follow natural things; do as you please so long as you are not interfering with the rights of others. But the New Creature is not to heed the natural inclinations of the flesh. We have asked the Lord to transform us, to renew our mind, and ultimately to give us what He has promised. Therefore we do not belong to the world at all, and our course is to be that which is marked out in the Scriptures.

THE WORK OF THE NEW CREATURE

Our text does not mean that we are to mortify our bodies in the way that some have thought. According to history, there have been earnest souls in the past who have used whips on their bodies until they produced severe pain, and then have worn hair jackets, etc. Sometimes these bodily tortures have been carried so far that the skin would be covered with sores. Others have undertaken to mortify their bodies by lying down to be literally walked on, etc. We cannot question that whoever would do these things must have a motive for so doing, and we cannot think it a bad motive; nevertheless, we believe that those who do such things have a wrong conception of the meaning of our text.

By the expression, "Mortify the deeds of the flesh," the Scriptures mean that the people of God are to put to death in themselves all natural practises that are not in harmony with the Spirit of God. We are all born sinners, the Bible declares, and therefore we are not to follow the bent of our fallen nature. We are to have the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, which will guide us in the way in which we should go. We are to mortify every inclination of the body that is not indorsed by the new mind.

There are certain qualities of the mortal body that are to be destroyed, and therefore are to be warred against at all times. Then there are other qualities which are to be utilized in the service of righteousness. Once we were under sin; but now we have a new mind. Henceforth we are to treat the old creature as an earthen vessel merely. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, we are to know how to do this. The first step in the process is to reckon our body dead. Having reckoned it dead toward sin and toward everything of an

earthly nature, we are then to reckon it alive in the sense of awakening, quickening, all the tendencies, attributes, that can be brought into the service of God. This is the second step.

THE DAILY BATTLE OF THE SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

After we have been begotten of the Spirit, we are New Creatures. In every sense of the word we are free from our body. Whatever parts of our human nature we find to be in opposition to God and His will we are to mortify, deaden, as soon as we discover them. This process is a continual warring against, fighting against, the old nature. The Apostle distinctly calls it a warring between the flesh and the Spirit. But while warring against certain elements which are legally dead, we find that the *flesh* is not *dead* actually. But if we live according to the Spirit, and not according to the flesh, God will not recognize the flesh, nor shall we. We shall recognize only the New Creature.

The battle is a daily one. All our members must be brought into harmony with God and His will. We are to endeavor to see everything from the Divine standpoint. The thought is not that we shall ever perfect these mortal bodies, but that while we are living on the earth and have to do with these bodies, it is our duty and our privilege to make the body do the will of the New Creature.

Our bodies were slaves to Sin. Now we say, "I have the right to control this body. I am a New Creature, but this is my body. I shall increase my power over this body, and use it more and more in the service of the Lord. It is not my intention to do foolish things—to leap from a pinnacle to see whether my body will remain alive; but under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I am to get out of it the most that I can, in the service of the new Master."

All this is necessary to our development in character. God has called the Church to glory, honor, immortality and joint-heirship with Christ. If we do not prove overcomers, we shall never be ready for so great an exaltation. This exalted position will not be given to any mortal merely because he says that he desires to be something different from what he is. On the contrary, we must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. Those who profess entire consecration to God must demonstrate this by putting away everything that is contrary to the Divine will. As these seek to build character, they will be growing "strong in the power of His might." Those who will pursue this course to the end are the class that He is calling for, and those alone will prove worthy of the place to be given to the "more than overcomers."

REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

The world will have a thousand years during which to bring their bodies into harmony with the will of God. Gradually mankind will come to the place where they will be thoroughly loyal to the Lord. The stony heart will be taken away. To all those who through obedience reach this condition God will be pleased to give life everlasting.

But with the Church it is different. During this Gospel Age the Lord is selecting and directing those who of their own will desire to lay down their lives in His service. They love Him, and He is pleased to call them His holy ones. No good thing will He withhold from this class. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, what God hath in reservation for those that love Him—those who have through consecration been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and who are going forward from grace to grace, living not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For this class God has provided His very best things.

To this class the Scriptures declare that "through much tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God." Some might say that these have a hard time. But all Christians can agree that it is possible to reach that degree of development where one can rejoice in all these experiences in which the flesh is being mortified, deadened. This is not because we are so different from other people that we like what they dislike, but because we see a reason why this tribulation is permitted. We know that this is God's plan for us; and by these evidences of mortification of the will of the flesh, of the things of the flesh, we see that we are growing in the favor of our Heavenly Father.

These have the peace of God ruling in their hearts. They know that all of their affairs are under Divine supervision. The world have their troubles and fears and forebodings. But those who have put their trust in the Lord have a peace which the world can neither give nor take away. But we cannot explain this to the world; for they cannot understand it.

MAY 7

Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel—1 Cor. 9:16.

We should be prompt to tell to others the best tidings we have; sympathy with the groaning creation in the various trials of life should lead us to point to the Lord's promises respecting the coming Kingdom and the blessings that should then be to all the families of the earth. Whoever does not thus proclaim daily, on every suitable opportunity, gives evidence either of lack of knowledge or of faith in the revelation or of selfishness, which the Lord cannot approve, and which, persisted in, will ultimately debar him from a share in the Kingdom—Z '03, 174 (R 3204).

By the Gospel the good tidings of salvation in and by Jesus is meant. The highest privilege of any human being is to be invested with the office of preaching the Gospel; and those who have the spirit of this office fully are at heart in a woeful state when unable to carry out their mission. So thoroughly ingrained into their characters does the exercise of this office become that when deprived of it their hearts are unhappy—P '36, 64.

Parallel passages: Psa. 40:9, 10; Eccles. 11:6; Mark 8:38; 2 Tim. 1:8; Jer. 1:17; 20:7, 9; 23:29; Amos 3:8; 7:15; John 18:37; Acts 4:20; 9:6, 15; 26:16-20; 1 Cor. 1:18; 15:58; 2:4; 15:2; Col. 1:5, 6; 4:17; Rom. 1:14-16; 1 Thes. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 4:12.

Hymns: 70, 44, 116, 210, 260, 275, 309.
Poems of Dawn, 138: "*Instant in Season.*"
Tower Reading: Z '16, 140 (R 5893).

Questions: Have I this week preached the Gospel? How? Why? What hindered or helped? What were the results?

"INSTANT IN SEASON"

IF while I walk the busy mart,
I find there one whose fainting heart
By some kind, sympathetic word
To new life might be stirred,
Lord, help me say it *now!*

Or, if upon the thorny road
I meet another 'neath a load
Of *sorrow*, which my tears might share,
And thus the burden bear,
Lord, help me shed them *now!*

If any ointment, rare and sweet,
I long to pour upon "His feet,"

To rest and soothe them by the way,
My hand let nothing stay,
Lord, help me bring it *now!*

R5893: PREACHING THE GOSPEL A NECESSITY

"Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel."—1 Corinthians 9:16.

WOE is a word not so often used today as formerly. It was a common word in the old English; but there is a meaning attached to it at present, we think, that was not in the original word. Nearly all who read the parable where the Lord speaks of "weeping and gnashing of teeth" seem to have the thought that it means eternal torment. *Woe*, when used in the Bible, means the same to some minds. So these construe our text to mean, "I shall go to eternal torment if I do not preach the Gospel." This is because of the creeds, traditions and customs that have come down from the Dark Ages, when the people were forbidden the Bible.

We understand the Apostle to mean here: "I should be very unhappy if I could not preach the Gospel; it would be a cause of great distress to me. In view of my former course of persecution, and the Lord's great mercy to me, it would mean a loss of His favor and blessing should I refrain from proclaiming His Message." The context seems to bear out this thought. So it should be a great distress to those to whom the Lord has granted the illumination of His Truth, if the opportunity of preaching this glorious Gospel were taken from them.

From one standpoint, the Apostle's words would apply only to the public ministry of the Word. From another standpoint, any one of God's consecrated people is a minister, ordained to preach; for ordination means commission, right, authorization. This commission to preach the Gospel is mentioned by the Prophet Isaiah. (Isaiah 61:1-3.) There the Church is brought to our attention through the great Head of the Church, Christ Jesus, who is represented, primarily, as the speaker. We read: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the Day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that He might be glorified."

MANY WAYS OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL

Here the commission of the Holy Spirit to Messiah was prophetically announced, long in advance. The Body members of the Messiah, who have received the same anointing through Him, have also received this commission to preach the Gospel. If the disciple of Christ properly appreciates the privilege of being a messenger of God, an ambassador for

God, it would be a woe indeed to him if he could not proclaim the Message, to the extent of his ability and opportunity.

There are some who have the thought that there is no way to preach except by a public discourse from the platform. But this seems not to be the Bible thought of preaching. Jesus talked to the people by the seaside, and along the way; sometimes He sat upon the edge of the well and preached the Message of salvation; He preached to His disciples up in the mountain; sometimes He journeyed with them and talked. And so with us. Whatever way or time we may have for preaching the Good Tidings we should use.

The word Gospel means glad tidings, good news. We are to tell the "good tidings of great joy." This may be done in the daily walk of our life, as we meet the butcher, the baker and the grocery man, or our neighbors and friends. It may be done by literature sent through the mails, or by handing out a tract, a book, or by preaching from the platform. All of this is preaching the Gospel, making known the Good Tidings; for preaching means merely to make known, and does not relate to the manner in which the knowledge is imparted.

BASIS AND SUPERSTRUCTURE OF THE GOSPEL

Many tracts contain no Gospel; they contain tidings of great misery. These we would not wish to circulate; for the more we spread such tidings the less preaching of the Gospel we would do. We are to remember that our Lord Jesus especially identified the *Gospel* with the Kingdom. Therefore we should preach the Good Tidings, the Gospel of the Kingdom. This has been God's method for gathering the Church, and is to be the witness to the world. We still have the opportunity for making known this good Message of the Kingdom. The Basis of this Gospel is the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as a Sacrifice for sinners, His resurrection and His ascension to the right hand of the Father. Its superstructure is the salvation of the Church and of the world—"whosoever will." The blessings of God are all through Christ.

The rich blessings of the Lord for both Church and world are to follow the Second Coming of Jesus. Then the Church is to be glorified and exalted; and the world will enter upon the Era of Blessing God has promised shall come with the full establishment of His Kingdom.

Whoever, therefore, understands this real Gospel, and appreciates his own ordination to preach it, must necessarily feel unhappy if he should be hindered from preaching it. Some can preach in several ways. Others can preach in nearly every way. Some can preach in very few ways; but *all* can preach in *some* way. The more we do, the more happy we should be. So we thank God that we have so many helps in our day—books, free literature, Bible Concordances, etc. We greatly appreciate all these and are seeking to make good use of them to the blessing of others as well as for our own upbuilding.

MAY 8

And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life—1 John 2:25.

We all should understand that we have something to do in realizing the gracious promises of God to us. In connection with the affairs of this present life He has promised that our bread and water shall be sure, but this does not imply that we shall neglect reasonable opportunities for securing these. He has promised us also a share in the Kingdom by and by; but it is for us to make our calling and election sure. God is thoroughly capable and thoroughly willing to perform all of His part in connection with every matter, but it is to our advantage that He calls us to show our faith by our works—by our cooperation with Him in all reasonable ways—Z '03, 175 (R 3204).

Eternal life is not a natural inherent possession of man but is a gift of God, bestowed on those whose characters will be in harmony with God's character. This promise is unconditional to the faithful, bound by Jehovah's oath. If we are faithful, our faith may rest with immovable steadfastness on God's fulfilling His promise. What an inspiration to loyalty such a promise should be!—P '30, 77.

Parallel passages: Psa. 21:4; 133:3; Dan. 12:3; Matt. 19:29; Luke 20:36; John 3:14-17; 4:14; 5:24, 25, 29, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 50-58, 68; 10:10, 28; 12:50; 17:2, 3; Acts 13:46, 48; Rom. 2:7; 5:21; 6:22, 23; 1 Cor. 15:53, 54; 2 Cor. 5:1.

Hymns: 208, 5, 9, 15, 62, 246, 255.
Poems of Dawn, 251: *Eternity*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 12 (R 5608).

Questions: How has this text influenced me this week? Why? With what results?

ETERNITY

WHAT is Eternity? Can aught
Paint its duration to the thought?
Tell every beam the sun emits,
When in sublimest noon he sits;
Tell every light-winged mote that strays
Within its ample round of rays;
Tell all the leaves and all the buds
That crown the gardens, fields and woods;
Tell all the spires of grass the meads
Produce, when spring propitious leads
The new-born year.

Be this astonishing account
Augmented with the full amount

Of all the drops the clouds have shed,
Where'er their watery fleeces spread
Through all Time's long-protracted tour.
Tell all the sands the ocean laves;
Tell all the changes of its waves,
Or tell, with more laborious pains,
The drops its mighty mass contains.

Were there a belt that could contain
In its vast orb the earth and main;
With figures were it clustered o'er,
And not one cipher in the score;
And could thy laboring thoughts assign
The total of the extended line;
How vast the amount, the attempt how vain,
To read duration's endless chain;
For when as many years have run,
Eternity is but begun!

Then think of life thou mayst attain,
Through years eternal to remain,
And the love which bought it all for thee
When thou wert doomed no life to see;
And grace which to its boundless store
Adds endless blessings evermore:
And when thy cup of joy runs over,
Let songs of praise rise to the Giver.

R5608: THE LIFE PROMISED TO THE CHURCH

"This is the promise which He hath promised us, even eternal life."—1 John 2:25.

FROM the standpoint of Christian thought in general, the words of our text would be practically meaningless; for the great majority of people believe that everlasting conditions are forced upon all humanity from the moment of birth, and that all must live forever somewhere. Therefore they argue that whoever does not merit Heaven must, at death, of necessity go to a Hell of eternal torment. This erroneous conclusion is based upon the assumption that every human being possesses everlasting life and cannot possibly rid himself of it, even if he tried. We are born, they declare, with a deathless nature, and whoever comes into being must continue to live somewhere to all eternity.

The Scriptures, however, teach to the contrary. They declare that no one can have life except as God gives it to him. When God created man, He gave our first parents perfection of life and organism. Then He informed them that they might have that life forever if they would obey His Laws; but that if they were disobedient He would put

upon them the penalty of sin—death; that as soon as they had transgressed, the sentence, or curse, of death would go into effect—"Dying, thou shalt die." They disobeyed, and the penalty came upon them.

After nine hundred and thirty years of dying, Adam was dead. During all that period the penalty was coming upon him gradually. Daily he was dying, until finally he ceased to breathe. We see that the children of Adam could not share his perfect life; for he had lost it before any of them came into the world. Thus the world has been misshapen in sin and iniquity—a dying race.

NO LIFE EXCEPT THROUGH CHRIST

The Scriptures tell us that there would have been no future life for the human family had it not been for God's provision in Christ. "God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish"—lose life altogether. Even before God sent our first parents forth from Eden, He promised that eventually there would be a Redeemer. The Seed of the woman would at some future time bruise the Serpent's head.

Although death reigned from Adam to Moses, nevertheless there was a hope held out to mankind that one day the curse would be removed. This hope was transmitted through the family of Seth, afterwards through the family of Noah, and later through Abraham and his posterity, the children of Israel. This hope was merely a suggestion; no definite revelation was made respecting God's purposes. True, the Prophet Enoch, the seventh from Adam through the line of Seth, had prophesied, "Behold the Lord cometh with myriads of His saints, to execute judgment upon all," and thus had intimated that one day righteousness would be established in the earth. Even the Promise made to Abraham, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," was not a clear, positive statement of everlasting life, although it implied a resurrection from the dead.

When the Israelites found that they could not gain life everlasting by keeping the Law of God, the Lord promised to send them a Deliverer, who would take away their stony heart and make a New Covenant with them. Their experience under the Law Covenant taught them that nothing they could themselves do would deliver them from the power of Sin and Death. Messiah would be their Deliverer.—Romans 11:26.

THE IMPORT OF JESUS' TEACHINGS

When Jesus came, He brought the words of eternal life, everlasting life. As St. Paul declares, Jesus Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." (2 Timothy 1:10.) The fact that our Savior brought these to light demonstrates that they were not seen before. Although there had been an intimation of God's Plan given to Abraham, yet everything looked contrary to this. The death penalty which God had pronounced in Eden seemed to preclude all hope of life everlasting. Although God had stated more or less vaguely that He would one day deliver humanity from the curse of sin

and death, no one could tell how this could be—how God could remit the death penalty and still be just.

But when Jesus came, He brought the whole subject to light. He showed that His redemptive work, provided by God's gracious arrangement, would eventually give life everlasting to all who would accept of it upon the Divine terms. He also brought immortality to light. He revealed the fact that God purposes not only to give the world of mankind life everlasting, but to give the faithful followers in Jesus' footsteps a higher kind of life—immortality. Thus a new thought was brought out—one never even dreamed of before.

Our Lord's statements respecting life everlasting and immortality are not so clear as are the statements made by His Apostles. We recall that these Apostles were promised that they should be especially guided in their utterances. Whatsoever they would bind on earth would be binding and obligatory in the sight of God; and whatsoever they would loose would not be considered binding in God's sight. But in what our Lord Jesus said there was a basis for all that the Apostles said and taught.

There was a reason why Jesus did not clearly specify things in respect to Himself. This He declared when He said to His disciples, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." To have attempted to tell them all about the glory, honor and immortality to which the Church was being called would have been to give them more than they could have borne. The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God—the deep things. Hence it was best for our Lord to leave those deep spiritual subjects. After Pentecost the spirit-begotten would be enabled to understand.—John 16:12-14.

HOPE FOR THE WORLD

The whole subject matter of Jesus' teachings was this everlasting life. He had come for the very purpose of giving His life a Ransom for many, that men might have restored to them the favor originally enjoyed. The Scriptures nowhere teach that all have life inherently; on the contrary, they teach the very reverse. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

The Promise mentioned in our text we understand to refer particularly to the Message brought by our Lord Jesus: "Which salvation began to be spoken by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him." (Hebrews 2:3.) When Jesus came, He threw light upon the entire subject of God's Plan for human salvation from sin and death. He showed that there was to be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust—of those in a justified condition and of those not justified. He would raise them up at the Last Day, at the beginning of the great Seventh Day of a thousand years, during which His Messianic Kingdom would prevail and the blessing would be world-wide. As the

long-promised Seed of Abraham, He and His Church would bless all the families of the earth.

SPECIAL PRIVILEGES OF THE CHURCH

Our text refers to a certain class only. It does not include the world. "This is the promise which He hath promised *us*." (1 John 2:25.) The promise is now to the Church, and to no others. All the promises for the world are made along the line of general principles. All the world are to be blessed, and the blessing that will come to them is an opportunity to gain life everlasting. God made everything dependent upon the Son: "He that hath the Son hath life"—no others. So only believers can have life now—and these not in the complete sense—only the beginning of that life which will be perfected in the resurrection. The world have no life in them, and cannot have it, except under God's arrangement.

Those who now come to Christ are the Church, the Bride class, and are an especially privileged class. They come into the life that is incorruptible. But there is a promise for the world, and only believers know about this provision for mankind. All shall have opportunity for attaining everlasting life. God has provided a trial Day, a Judgment Day, to demonstrate whether, when mankind shall have been brought to a knowledge of the Truth, they will accept His terms and thus attain everlasting life.

The Lord will make it quite possible for the world to gain life everlasting on the human plane, just as He is now making it possible for the Church to attain life on the Divine plane. The thing for the consecrated people of God to do, then, is to strive to be of the "us" class. This term applies to those who become disciples, those who believe in the Kingdom glory and honor offered them, and who, so believing, devote their lives to walking in the footsteps of Jesus, even unto death.

This "us" class includes not only the antitypical Priests, but also the antitypical Levites. But while both classes will have eternal life, everlasting life, "the crown of life" (immortality) is only for those who will prove themselves to be "more than conquerors." The Scriptures hold out a special promise to all who will walk carefully in the footsteps of Jesus. This class are promised joint-heirship with Him, the privilege of sitting with Him in His Throne.—Revelation 3:21.

On one occasion our Lord said to the Jews, "For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." (John 5:26.) In this statement, doubtless, He touched upon the subject of immortality. As the Father has inherent life, so He gave to the Son to have this life; and as the Son had the promise of this life during His earthly ministry, so He had the actuality of it in His resurrection. This same promise is given to the Church which is His Body.—John 10:27, 28.

On another occasion He said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." (John 6:53.) This would be inherent life—life in themselves. The difference between this life and ordinary life is that the former is

inherent, and the latter maintained. All the angels have a life not forfeited, an eternal, everlasting life. It can cease if God so choose, but it is not a life that has a terminating period. We do not know how the angels are supplied with life, but the fact that the Scriptures declare that some of them will die is a proof that they do not possess immortality.

A WORD OF CAUTION

We should be very careful in our use of language. If we were to say to the majority of people that we believe that only the elect Church will have immortality, they would misunderstand us altogether—they would misunderstand us to mean that all the remainder of humanity were to perish like brute beasts. Therefore we should be sure that we make the thought clearly understood. Everlasting life is a life that needs to be sustained; immortality is that Divine degree of life that needs not to be sustained.

Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10.) It was *life* that Adam lost. That life was everlasting in the sense that it might have lasted forever. It was not a life granted for a fixed period—a year or even a million of years—but was to last so long as it was not forfeited. In this Scripture our Lord refers to two classes—the obedient of the world, who will have sustained life everlastingly, and the Church, who with Jesus will share the Divine nature will have life "more abundant" in the sense that it will be inherent life, not requiring to be sustained.

This is the promise, then, which He has promised us. If we would make our calling and election sure to glory, honor and immortality, we must exercise great carefulness indeed. Those who attain the prize will get the grandest blessing God has to give. All should understand that we have something to do in realizing the gracious promises of God to us. While God is both able and willing to perform His part of the contract, yet we must make sure that we co-operate in every reasonable way.

"And can we hope to gain, dear Lord, such wondrous bliss—
To dwell with Thee in light ineffable?
Oh, can we e'er attain such joy as this—
The life immortal, incorruptible?
Ah, yes! for Thou hast promised, and Thy Word is sure,
And thus inspired we press along the way;
The path is lonely, but the end is sweet,
And openeth into realms of perfect day."

MAY 9

As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving—Col. 2:6, 7.

The general sentiment among the teachers of false doctrine, who think it is neither necessary nor advisable to be established in the faith is ... that to be established is to be a bigot. And so it is, if one is so unfair in mind as to accept and tenaciously hold that which he has never proved either by sound logic or Bible authority. But he is not an unreasoning bigot who, in simple faith, on the authority of God, accepts the Word of God. And such, and only such, as do so are established in the Truth. The difference between a strong and steadfast Christian and a bigot is that the one is established in the Truth, while the other is established in error—Z '03, 199 (R 3215).

We receive Christ Jesus as Lord by surrendering our wills and accepting His will as our own. This beginning should be persevered in. We are rooted in Him when we draw our supplies from Him alone. We are built up in Him when we construct a character like His. We are established in the faith according to the Word when we remain firm therein; and we abound therein with thanksgiving when we gratefully increase therein—P '35, 62.

Parallel passages: John 1:12; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thes. 4:1; Jude 3, 20; Eph. 2:20-22; 3:17; 4:1; Col. 1:23; 3:17; Isa. 61:3; 1 Cor. 3:9, 11; 1 Pet. 2:5; 2 Pet. 2:12; Acts 20:32; 2 Cor. 1:21.

Hymns: 267, 6, 87, 113, 172, 37, 324.

Poems of Dawn, 23: *Our Master*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 311 (R 5557).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? In what did they result?

OUR MASTER

NO fable old, nor mythic lore,
Nor dream of bards and seers,
No dead fact stranded on the shore
Of the oblivious years;—

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He,
And faith hath still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

The healing of His seamless dress

Is by our beds of pain;
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.

O Lord and Savior of us all!
O blessed Christ Divine!
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine.

We faintly hear, we dimly see,
In various phrase we pray;
But, dim or clear, we own in Thee
The light, the Truth, the Way.

Our Friend, our Brother, and our Lord,
What may Thy service be?
Not name, nor form, nor ritual word,
But simply following Thee.

To do Thy will is more than praise,
As words are less than deeds,
And simple trust can find Thy ways
We miss with charts of creeds.

R5557: "TREES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS"

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and established in the Faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."—Colossians 2:6, 7.

THE context from which our text is taken seems to show that the Apostle is contrasting with the Gospel hope the various hopes which might go to establish one in some kind of faith, some kind of belief, some kind of course in life. But he is addressing those especially who have already accepted Jesus Christ as God's Representative—those who believe that God has sent His Son into the world to be the Redeemer of the race of Adam, and by and by to be the Deliverer of mankind from the power of sin and death. All those who are in Christ Jesus have received Him with this understanding. This is the only Message which God has sent; this is "the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

DIVINE VS. HUMAN MESSAGE

The Apostle Paul urged those to whom he wrote to continue in this faith, and not to try to combine earthly philosophy with this Heavenly Message. As they had received Christ as God's Anointed and their Sufficiency in all things—the One "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Deity

bodily"—so they were to walk. As they had recognized Him as the Heavenly Teacher, so they were to continue to make progress in the same way—the path that leads to glory, honor and immortality. They were not to think for one moment that any human teaching could be mixed with the Divine Message; for any other doctrine would serve only to confuse the Heavenly Message in the minds of the hearers.

This would not mean, however, that the teachings of the Apostles were to be ignored, for the Master especially informed the Church that His Twelve Apostles would be His mouthpieces. It would, however, guard us against any supposition that there would be any other teaching or any other Church to take the place of Jesus and His Apostles. To these He declared that whatsoever things they would bind on earth would be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever things they would loose on earth would be loosed in Heaven.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL PLANT

Having stated the matter in this way, the Apostle then uses a forceful illustration to show how we are to progress in Christ. Turning from the figure of a man walking in Christ as a member of His Body, St. Paul gives us the picture of a tree, the root of which goes downward and the trunk of which reaches upward, to obtain that nourishment which will give it strength and stability. As the roots of a tree push themselves downward and imbibe the nutriment of the soil, while at the same time the trunk and the branches reach up into the atmosphere to obtain through the leaves the necessary elements of growth, so the mentality of the Christian takes hold of the great and precious promises of the Word of God, while at the same time he is building character through his heart appreciation of these promises, in connection with the experiences of life. The roots of faith push down deep into the knowledge of the Divine Plan, while the tree of character grows higher and higher, developing and maturing the rich fruits of the Holy Spirit of God; for instruction is a form of *construction*.

While the Christian is thus growing up in character-likeness to our Redeemer, and his roots of faith are reaching deep down into the deep things of the Word of God, he is becoming established, settled. A tree that is well rooted in the earth is hard to uproot. It has a wonderful strength, a wonderful hold upon the earth, and requires years to die out. So it is with the Christian whose faith has been properly established; he should be so fixed, so established in the promises of God's Word, that no wind of doctrine could overturn his faith.

Whoever is continually looking around for something new is thus demonstrating the fact that he is not established in the Faith. Having once made sure that the Divine Plan is the Plan of God, we should not permit ourselves to be moved away from that position. On all Christians who are thus rooted and grounded in the Scriptures the theories of our day—Evolution, Christian Science, New Thought, etc.—have no effect whatever. No Christian growth will be developed nor spiritual life retained unless the soul becomes fixed and settled in the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

ONE CAUSE OF SPIRITUAL DECAY

When once we have seen the Plan of God as revealed in Jesus, and have given ourselves to God and the study of His Word, the only way to retain our spiritual life is to continue in this doctrine, to root ourselves in this soil and remain there. We are not to seek other fields with the thought that we can receive additional nourishment there, and that an admixture of other elements with what we have will be advantageous. No theories will mix with the Lord's Plan. It is *complete*; it needs no assistance from other systems of belief. Any attempt to incorporate with it theories and ideas of men will only destroy its value. We can never become rooted and built up in Christ by such a course; our spiritual decay, and finally our spiritual death, would be the result.

No child of God can be carried about by every wind of doctrine; nor can he indulge in a morbid curiosity as to what this or that new theory may teach. To do so is very dangerous to the spirituality of a Christian. For one who has never known the Truth there might be some reason for such a course, but for one who has once thoroughly proven what is the Truth in Christ to go hunting around for new pastures in which to feed, there is no excuse. Either he has never been established in Christ, or else he has fallen into a spiritual decline. There is an exhaustless field for thought and for mental and spiritual activity in the Plan of God in all its varied features.

We believe that God purposed to have a Seed of Abraham through whom a blessing would come to all the families of the earth. Those who look for the fulfilment of this Promise realize that Christ is the Seed of Abraham and that His work is to fulfil this Promise. For this purpose He came into the world. Later on, the Church learn that not only Christ Jesus, the Head, but also the Church, His Body, are sharing in the same faith, the same Promise made to Abraham. Each individual called has the opportunity of coming in, of exercising his faith, and of being built up as a member of the Body of Christ. By this time the Body of Christ must be nearly complete. The hour is at hand when this glorious Seed of Abraham is to take hold of the affairs of earth and bring in "the Restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the Holy Prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21.

As a tree does not breathe the same element at all times, and as it is not always flooded with sunshine, but needs also the rains and storms for its development, so the child of God needs varied experiences and sometimes change of environment to best develop all the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The great Husbandman knows just what experiences and surroundings each one of his "trees" needs—how much sunshine, how much rain, how much cold and how much heat, how much pruning—and He will supply just what is best adapted to each case. He knows how to vary these conditions, environments, etc., without disturbing the process of rooting and upbuilding, but developing it. This we do not know how to accomplish, but would bring upon ourselves spiritual disaster. So we need to keep ourselves continually under the care of the skilful Husbandman and earnestly co-operate with Him, that we may grow and become strong and immovable—firmly established.

DEPTH OF ROOT SHOWN IN VIGOR AND FRUITAGE

The depth and the spread of the roots of a tree are shown by the vigor and the fruitage of the tree. A tree that is not deeply and firmly grounded can neither bring forth rich, luscious fruit nor furnish cool, refreshing shade to man. Depth of root is absolutely essential. So the Christian's faith must be deeply grounded in Christ; and thus shall we also *grow up* into Him, learning more and more what is the Divine will as expressed in Him. The rooting process is unseen, and can be judged only by its outward manifestations. When there is luxuriant foliage there is good rooting. But the growth must not stop there; fruit must be borne. And so the spiritual life of the child of God will manifest itself more and more in its likeness to Christ. To vary the figure, the Christian will not only be a branch in the Vine, but will bear rich clusters of fruit, which should become more choice in quality and size year by year.

We sometimes see Christians who have little knowledge of worldly things and yet have deep spirituality, very deep rooting and grounding in Christ, a clear insight into the deep things of God, and a rich Christian experience. Perhaps their knowledge of the usages of polite society is less than that of many others of their brethren; they may have had fewer opportunities to learn all these details; and yet their ripe attainments in Christ may shame some who are more outwardly correct according to the social standards of the world. How careful we should be that our standards of judgment and our estimates of character are fashioned after the pattern of the Master; that we look beneath the surface; that we note rather the real, the essential traits, than any outward peculiarities of the flesh which in the sight of the Lord would have no weight in deciding the quality of the character or the place in the Kingdom.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

If we are to be the judges of the world in the next Age, how shall we be fitted for this position, if we do not learn now how to take the proper viewpoint, the Lord's viewpoint, in our estimates of our brethren? If our love and our esteem for them is gaged by trifles, yea, by matters even unworthy of notice in the eyes of the Lord, are we developing the qualities of character which will fit us to be the judges of the incoming Age? How are we growing up into Christ in all things? Let us judge ourselves rigidly along these lines, that we may indeed become like the Master and win His final approval.

The Apostle urges that we become established in the faith. This term refers to "the faith which was once delivered to the saints"—the one Faith. This is to hold at all costs. Satan will attempt to divert our minds into other channels, to draw our attention to some new thing. But the Plan of God, the Truth of God, as revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, is but one. It is given us for our instruction in righteousness, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." (2 Timothy 3:17.) It is not the truth of Geometry or Trigonometry or Geology or Astronomy or any other science that we are to be diligent to study and be grounded and built up in, but God's Word. (John 17:17.) These other truths are very well in their way, but we have little time to study these now. We shall have all eternity in which to learn all the wonders of creation, but now we are to apply ourselves especially to the mastery of spiritual Truth, the deep things of the Mystery of God, revealed to His saints for a specific purpose.

AN ESTABLISHED CHRISTIAN NOT A BIGOT

The Truth embraces all the Scriptural teachings relative to Christ and His work, to our relationship to Him as members of His Body, and to the brethren as fellow-members. We are to abide therein with thanksgiving. We should familiarize ourselves with the different features of this Truth more and more. We should be clear in regard to what our Lord taught and why He taught it, and should know how to connect the different parts of the Truth into a harmonious whole. We are to be *thoroughly* furnished. We are heartily to appreciate the loving kindness of our God in revealing to us these glorious things, and to realize that we did not originate them ourselves, nor was any man the originator of them, but the Lord Himself. They are the Gift of God to us, and we are to be most thankful for this great Gift, to guard it jealously as a priceless treasure, and to let our light shine to the glory of God's name.

The general sentiment among the teachers of false doctrine, and even among the world in general, who do not believe in the necessity or the advisability of being established in faith, is that to be established is to be bigoted. Those who are so unfair in mind as to receive and tenaciously hold what they have never proven, either by sound logic or by the authority of the Word of God, are rightly called bigots. But one who in simple, childlike faith accepts and firmly holds to what God has inspired, what He has caused to be written in His Word for our instruction, is not a bigot, but a strong, established character, and will stand when all the structures built upon the numerous theories and imaginings of men shall have fallen. The great Day now upon us is trying every man's character-structure, of what sort it is, and but very few, even among professed Christians, will stand the test.

The few who will pass safely through this crucial trial without loss are those only who have become established in the Truth of God, "rooted and grounded and built up into Christ." The difference between a strong and steadfast Christian and a bigot is that one is established in Truth, and the other is established in error. The "fire" of this Day will continue to burn and to manifest the great difference between the two classes, until all have been tested and tried and found worthy or unworthy.

IMPORTANCE OF SELF-SCRUTINY

The Apostle's words in our text lead each child of God back to the time when he first made his own consecration. Under what conditions did we come into Christ? We recall that it required much humility on our part to acknowledge that we were sinners, utterly unable to save ourselves. Some seem to forget the way in which they started. They started with faith and humility and meekness, and with the desire to be truly built up into the Master's likeness. But they seem by degrees to lose sight of this, and begin to grow in another direction than straight upward into the fulness of Christ. They like to make some show before the world. They come to neglect the first principles of Christian development, while still talking about the doctrines, or making up doctrines of their own.

Thus gradually these get away from the doctrines and the Spirit of Christ. The Apostle puts us on guard against these dangers: Are you sure that you ever really received Christ? Are you sure that you ever actually made a full consecration to God and became a New Creature? You should know this. If you did, then make sure that you are progressing in His likeness. Without careful scrutiny, you might think you are progressing when you are not. The Narrow Way remains narrow unto the end of the journey; a mere profession of faith and a certain round of observances are not sufficient. Remember that we are to confess the Lord by our looks, by our manner, by all the acts and words of life.

Only by continual scrutiny of ourselves in the light of God's Word can we make real progress in the narrow way in which our Master walked. Truth is to become brighter and fuller and more luminous as we go onward. To this end, we must keep close to the Word and in line with His Program. The Lord will not accept little, undeveloped sprouts for the Kingdom, but He wants those that have grown and matured—strong, sturdy "trees of righteousness."—Isaiah 61:3.

GOD'S WORD ALONE WILL UPBUILD

Delve into the promises of God more and more. As you do this, the roots of faith will draw up the nutriment and send it out into your life, and you will grow, just as a tree grows, because nourished, fed. Thus alone will you become established in *The Faith*, and not in your imaginings nor the imaginings of others. Our faith is to grow stronger and more vigorous day by day. It is not to be a faith in ourselves or in anything apart from the Lord. Faith is what we started with in the beginning, and we shall need it in increasing measure as we go on in our upward way—faith in God and in His sure Word. All that we know as children of the Lord has come to us through the channel of Jesus, His holy Apostles, and the Prophets of old, and we are to continue feeding at this same table with thanksgiving.

We are not to feel a spirit of bondage, and say to ourselves, "I would like to ramble outside; I do not like to confine myself merely to what the Bible teaches. I would like more liberty." This disposition is not the spirit of a true son of God. Such sentiments encouraged would lead to utter spiritual disaster. All such temptations, if they come, must be promptly and positively resisted. Our spirit should be one of deepest gratitude and thankfulness that we have been granted this glorious Divine Revelation. Following thus in the Lord's way, we find the only true joy, and can make the only true progress. "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Peter 1:10, 11.

MAY 10

Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over—Psa. 23:5.

The fullness of the cup, running over, has a double significance. It is a cup of joy and a cup of sorrow, and in both respects it overflows. He who would partake of the joys of the Lord must also partake of His cup of suffering; we must suffer with Him if we would reign with Him. But we count the sufferings of this present time as not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed in us, and hence we are enabled to rejoice in tribulation, so that as the tribulations will overflow, the rejoicing likewise overflows, and with the Apostle we can say, Rejoice, and again I say, Rejoice!—Z '03, 413 (R3268)

The Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ, was anointed with the holy Spirit without measure and this anointing has flowed down upon the Body. The experiences Divinely arranged for this class have been an overflowing cup—abounding in blessing from the Lord in its measure of both sorrow and joy; its heights of joy have been higher than its depths of sorrow have been deep, which is as should be expected—P '34, 62.

Parallel passages: Psa. 45:7, 8; 92:10; Isa. 61:1-3; Matt. 3:16; Acts 10:38; John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26; 16:7; 15:11; 16:20-24, 33; 17:13; Acts 13:52; Rom. 14:17; 15:13; 2 Cor. 12:10; Heb. 10:34; Jas. 1:2; 1 Pet. 4:13; 2 Cor. 1:8, 9; 4:7-12, 16-18; 6:4-10; 11:23-30; Heb. 12:6-9; 1 Pet. 5:9.

Hymns: 299, 96, 139, 90, 92, 222, 273.

Poems of Dawn, 26: *Jesus Only*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 90 (R 5653).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What was hindering and helpful in them? In what did they result?

JESUS ONLY

JESUS only! In the shadow
Of the cloud so chill and dim,
We are clinging, loving, trusting,
He with us and we with Him;
All unseen, though ever nigh,
Jesus only—all our cry.

Jesus only! In the glory,
When the shadows all are flown,
Seeing Him in all His beauty,
Satisfied with Him alone;
May we join His ransomed throng,
Jesus only—all our song!

R5653: "JEHOVAH IS MY SHEPHERD"

THE INFLUENCE OF THE PSALMS—THE MOST TOUCHING OF THEM ALL—DAVID A SHEPHERD—HIS INTEREST IN HIS SHEEP—SUGGESTIVE OF THE HEAVENLY SHEPHERD'S INTEREST IN HIS FLOCK—HIS SHEEP SHALL NOT LACK—HE GIVES THEM REST—HE FEEDS THEM—HE REFRESHES THEM WITH THE WATER OF LIFE—HE RESTORETH MY SOUL—HE LEADETH ME—EVEN THROUGH THE DARK VALLEY I WILL FEAR NO EVIL—HIS ROD AND HIS STAFF—HIS TABLE FOR HIS PEOPLE—THE ANOINTING HE GIVES—GOODNESS AND MERCY EVER.

"Jehovah is my Shepherd."—Psalm 23:1.

IT IS safe to say that no other collection of poems has accomplished as much good as the Book of Psalms. Its sentiments seem to touch the soul at every turn—in joy, in sorrow. Referring to the Twenty-third Psalm, Beecher wrote, "It is the nightingale among the Psalms. It is small, of a homely feather, singing shyly out of obscurity; but it has filled the air of the whole world with melodious joy"; and Spurgeon said, "This is the Pearl of Psalms, whose soft and pure radiance delights every eye."

Only the people of God, in covenant relationship with Him, can properly appreciate this Psalm and apply its gracious sentiments to themselves. The Psalmist David could do this, because he belonged to the favored nation which God had taken into covenant relationship with Himself at Mount Sinai. The Israelites had covenanted to walk in the Lord's way and to obey His statutes; and God in turn had covenanted with them that He would, in proportion as they would do this, bestow His blessing upon their every interest. And perfect obedience to that Covenant and its Law would have been rewarded with everlasting life. We see, as the Apostle explains, that such a complete obedience was impossible. "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in Thy sight."

Comparatively few of the Jews even did their best to live up to the requirements of the Law; but the Prophet David evidently was one of these, however far short he came of perfection; for the Lord declared him "a man after His own heart." If he made failures, he confessed them, repented, received his punishment, and rejoiced in restoration to the Lord's favor, striving the more in the future to maintain his fellowship with God. It is interesting for us to note the kind of man with whom the Lord is well pleased—the kind of sheep in which the Great Shepherd is interested. And of this same class, of course, were others—the Prophets and lesser personages—all who endeavored to live godly.

THE GREAT SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK

In an important sense this Psalm is applicable to our Lord Jesus and His Church. All the features of the Psalm are applicable to our Redeemer Himself as well as to His followers, whom He styles the sheep of His flock. To His Church He is the

Representative of the Father, so fully, so completely, that He could say truthfully, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." No human being could see the Heavenly Father and live, as the Scriptures declare; and those who saw and understood Jesus to be the Son of God, caught the best possible glimpse of the Heavenly Father. And so we all see Jesus as the Representative of the Father, the Son of the great King, the Son of the great Shepherd, Jehovah.

Jesus and His Church are more particularly the sheep of Jehovah's flock than were the Israelites of the Jewish Age; for the relationship of the Jews was through Moses, while the relationship of the Church is through Christ and the superior Covenant which centers in Him. It is well that we see this clearly; else how could we know whether or not we might apply the gracious sentiments of this Psalm to ourselves? It would not be right for a worldly person to apply this Psalm to himself. He would be deceiving himself; for he is not one of Jehovah's sheep. Nothing is more clear than this. Jesus declared that there is only one way of entering the sheepfold; namely, through the door. And He declared Himself to be the Door.

HOW TO BECOME A TRUE SHEEP

By nature we are sinners under Jehovah's sentence of death, and not His sheep. He has purposed a great Plan for the world in general, which will begin to operate as soon as Messiah's Kingdom is established. However, in the interim He is receiving special sheep—during this Gospel Age; and Jesus tells how, saying, "If any man will come after Me [be My disciple, My follower, My sheep], let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." Self-denial is the first step—self-renunciation, giving up of the will to God. The Covenant reads, "Gather My saints together unto Me; those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." All who would be the Lord's sheep must make this Covenant of Sacrifice; it is the condition under which they may be accepted.

Moreover, as the Jews could come only through their appointed mediator, Moses, so we can come into this higher sheepfold only under the antitypical, greater Moses, Christ. There is none other name given. Once having taken this step, once having come into the sheepfold by the Door—in the approved manner—we have the Message of God, saying, "All things are yours; for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." What this means is described in this Psalm.—1 Corinthians 3:22, 23.

ALL WANTS ABUNDANTLY SUPPLIED

The Lord's sheep, abiding in perfection of relationship with Him, will lack nothing. Their every need will be supplied. This may not mean greater earthly wealth or name or fame or luxury. The Lord's sheep are New Creatures, spirit beings, who are temporarily dwelling in the flesh like other people, but who really are waiting for their change, to be completed by a share in the First Resurrection. The Lord's blessings to Natural Israel were earthly blessings, supplying their every earthly need; but His blessings to Spiritual Israel are spiritual favors. "No good thing will He withhold" from these—yea, even

chastisements and sorrowful experiences that may be necessary for their spiritual development.

The Psalm assures us that, as the Lord's sheep, we shall be provided with green pastures and the cool, refreshing waters of Truth. Moreover, while thus being spiritually fed and refreshed, we shall have the peace of God, as is implied in the suggestion that the sheep will lie down in the green pastures. But alas! Not all of the sheep have full confidence in the Shepherd and are fully resigned to have no will but His. Some are continually getting into difficulty, because they neglect the green pastures and cool, refreshing waters of Truth found in the Word of God—because, goat-like, they sometimes wander off into the desert, straying far from the Shepherd and attempting to feed themselves on the indigestible things of the present life, on which no spiritual nature can thrive.

Yet even such straying sheep the Shepherd will not leave, if they have become truly His. He goes after them, as the Psalm represents. His rod and His staff are their comfort. With the rod he beats off their enemies, the wolves that would injure; and with the crook of His staff He wisely and carefully assists the entangled sheep out of its difficulties—out from amongst the cares of this life, the entanglements and deceitfulness of riches, and the besetments of sin and of Satan. Many of the sheep of the Lord's flock thus can sing, "He restoreth my soul"—He brings me back to Himself; He makes me again to know, to appreciate, to enjoy His provision for me and to see how much better it is than anything I could have provided for myself.

A further experience is next brought to our view—the Shepherd's leading. "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." He causes me, even by my own stumblings and difficulties, to learn to appreciate the desirableness of His ways and the undesirableness of every other way. All His ways are perfect, are righteous. He leads us not contrary to our wills, but in harmony therewith, to prove what is the good, next the acceptable, and finally the perfect will of God.—Romans 12:2.

THE VALLEY OF DEATH'S SHADOW

All of our lives we have been in the shadow of this great Valley of Death. Only father Adam was ever on the mountain-tops of life. He lost his footing there, and descended gradually the slopes into this Valley of the Shadow of Death. We, his children, were all born here. We are dying daily; we are surrounded by dying conditions. We have merely the hope that the Lord will lead His sheep back to the heights of life. He is now leading His sheep of this Gospel Age—the Church, the Body of Christ. By and by He will lead the world, during His Millennial Kingdom; as He declared, "Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also must I bring, ... and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."—John 10:16.

"Oh, sometimes the shadows are deep,
And rough seems the path to the goal!"

The end of this Valley of Shadow is near, not merely in the sense that we shall soon reach the end of life's journey, but especially in the sense that the New Day is about to dawn, of which the Lord, our Shepherd, declared the result: "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams." (Malachi 4:2.) The final result will be that there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying; but the whole world will begin to emerge from the Valley of the Shadow of Death. For a thousand years they will be rising again to the glorious heights of human perfection from which Adam fell, and the right to return to which is secured for all by the death of Jesus, "the Just for the unjust."

THE CHURCH'S BETTER TABLE

But this precious Psalm seems especially to apply to the Church, as we have said. Thus we appropriately read that the Lord's people of the present time have an especially prepared table, where they may partake even in the presence of their enemies. That will not be true in the future; for no enemies nor anything to hurt or injure shall then be permitted. (Isaiah 11:9.) But how true it is that the Lord's consecrated people, even when misunderstood, misrepresented, defamed and opposed, are still privileged to feast at the Lord's Table! The table represents God's provision for their needs—the promises of God, the assurances of His favor, etc.

Another evidence that the Psalm belongs especially to the Church of this Age is the statement, "Thou anointest my Head with oil." Jesus, the Head of the Church, was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. That holy anointing oil used on the priests and kings of Israel typified the Holy Spirit, which came upon the Church representatively in Jesus. And this same anointing oil has come down over all the members of the Church, which is the Body of Christ, as we read in Psalm 133:2.

THE CUP BOTH SWEET AND BITTER

"My cup runneth over." The word cup is used in the Scriptures to represent a draft, sometimes sweet, sometimes bitter, sometimes both. The intimation is that the Lord's Cup signifies bitter experiences and trials in the present time; as Jesus said, "The Cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" And this was the Cup—His Cup—which He offered to His disciples and which we, in becoming His disciples, propose to share with Him, and which is symbolically represented in the Communion Cup.—1 Corinthians 10:15-17.

It is sweet and precious, in many senses of the word to be privileged to participate in the sufferings of Christ, in any sacrifices or services for the Lord and His Cause. The sweet mingles freely with the bitter. But the Lord promises that in the future the Cup of new wine in the Kingdom shall more than compensate for any bitterness of the present time. Our Cup is full, but we would not wish it one drop less.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." How precious the thought—God's goodness, God's mercy, with all those who are truly His in Christ—following us day by day, moment by moment, and according to the Scriptures making all

things work together for our good! Then the grand finale is signified, "I shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever"—in the Heavenly House, of which the Redeemer said, "In My Father's House are many mansions; ... I go to prepare a place for you," and "I will come again and receive you unto Myself." Then, at His Second Coming, with our glorious change, we shall enter the Father's House in the fullest sense of the word, on the spirit plane, which flesh and blood does not inherit.

This shall be the everlasting portion of God's Elect—the Church. The great blessings subsequently to come to the world—earthly blessings—will in no sense interfere with, but enhance, the glory of the Church; for she will be engaged with her Lord in dispensing blessings to the earthly sheep.—Galatians 3:29.

MAY 11

For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter—Psa. 44:22.

We are to remember that we have but one sacrifice; that it is to be rendered to the Lord day by day in the improvement of every opportunity, as it comes to us, to serve Him and His. We are to remember that while it consists of many little sacrifices, some of them too small to mention or even to consider, nevertheless it will require all of these to complete the one sacrifice which we made at the beginning of our induction into His family. When we gave our wills, we gave our all; and any holding back in any of the little affairs of life—any refusal to sacrifice that which we think would please the Lord—is a keeping back of that much of what we have devoted to Him—Z '03, 408 (R 3265).

From loyalty to the Lord's Person, Character, Word and Cause, faithful followers of Christ have been persecuted throughout the Gospel Age. Their lives have been counted of as little value as the life of a sheep, and they have been as unfeelingly slaughtered. However, as Jehovah had pleasure in the sacrificial death of Him who was slain as the Lamb of God, so the Lord has pleasure in the sacrificial death that the faithful endure for His sake; for "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psa. 116:15)—P '33, 79.

Parallel passages: Rom. 8:35, 36; Matt. 5:10-12, 44; 10:16-18, 21, 22, 26, 28; 20:22, 23; 23:34, 35; Luke 21:12-19; John 15:18, 19; 16:1, 2; 1 Cor. 4:9-13; 15:30-32; 2 Cor. 4:8-12; John 12:23-26; 2 Thes. 1:4; 2 Tim. 2:9-12; Heb. 10:32-34; 13:12, 13; 1 Pet. 3:14-17.

Hymns: 146, 134, 150, 25, 93, 279, 326.
Poems of Dawn, 176: *Sometimes I Almost Wonder*.
Tower Reading: Z '13, 35 (R 5172).

Questions: Have I this week suffered persecution? How? Why? With what effects?

SOMETIMES I ALMOST WONDER

SOMETIMES I almost wonder if my Lord doth
really know
About the many little things that wound my poor
heart so.
I can but wonder if He knows the anguish of my
soul,
When tempests beat upon my head, and surging
billows roll;
I wonder if He hears at night my weary, longing
sighs,

I wonder if He sees the tears that tremble in mine
eyes!
I wonder if my burdens weigh upon His tender
heart,
And in my many sorrows, if His great love shares a part!

* * *

Ah! no, I will not wonder, I will silence every
fear,
I've read that "in His bottle He doth treasure up
each tear;"
I know that He who heeds the smallest sparrow when
it falls,
Will surely, surely hearken when *His own child*
feebly calls;
I know that He who stilled the waves on Galilee's
dark sea,
Will bid the storms of life, "Be still," that rudely
threaten me.
Ah! no, I do not wonder, *I am sure my Lord doth*
know
About the many, many things that wound my poor
heart so!

R5172: THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

"Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it."—1 Cor. 4:12.

SINCE GOD HIMSELF is Love, the very highest ideal of perfection which He has given to His people is the standard of Love. We cannot imagine a higher standard than this, nor one more difficult to attain. It is the special characteristic without which none will get the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This mark of perfection was stamped on our Lord. He delighted to do the Father's will in *all* respects, even to the extent of *laying down His life* for those who, on account of Adam's sin, were under the sentence of death.

Our Lord did not, however, need to run toward this mark of perfect love; for He was *always perfect*—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) The Church, on the contrary, are naturally imperfect and fallen by heredity; but we have been washed from all stain of guilt in the blood of the Lamb. The mark of perfect love *we* attain *gradually*. We first reach perfection of heart intention, and then we pass through experiences which crystallize our characters in righteousness. In all of these trials and difficulties, we must demonstrate that, if our physical organism were perfect, we would always do God's holy will.

As we see this quality of love in our Lord Jesus, we appreciate it, even though we realize that we are not up to the standard which God requires. Nevertheless, our great desire is that we have perfect love for everything in harmony with the will of God. After we have reached perfection of heart intention, the test is no longer upon us of *attaining* the mark, but of *pressing down upon* that mark *until our character has been crystallized*. As the Apostle Paul says, "Having done all, *stand*." (Eph. 6:13.) We do not progress beyond *perfect love*; for no one can do more than to have a full desire that God's will be done in him. He could do no more, whether he lived five years longer or fifty years. Perfect love is the mark toward which he pressed, and he can attain no higher standard.

While one stands at the mark of Love, the *tests* grow *stronger*. We pass through experiences—often trivial enough—which tempt us to malice, envy, anger and strife. If we are overcome by these tests, and fall away from the condition of *perfect love*, we shall lose the prize for which we are running. (Phil. 3:14.) One who thus falls away may get into the Great Company for development; but if he were to lose all love, he would go into the Second Death. In either of these cases, the person has moved away from the mark of perfect Love, the only standard for those who desire to be in the Kingdom and to participate in the glorious things which God has in store for those who love Him supremely.

GENEROSITY AND BENEVOLENCE CHARACTERISTIC OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Our Lord desires to see in His followers the disposition to overcome the weaknesses and tendencies of the fallen condition and to follow in His footsteps. Of Him it is written, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in His steps; ... who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not." (I Peter 2:21-23.) To be reviled is to be made to *appear vile*, to be evil spoken of, slandered. The natural tendency of all is to resent injustice, to render evil for evil, to give as good as we get—and a little more if possible. This is the natural inclination because we are in the fallen condition, unbalanced in our minds.

Our Lord's teaching is all the opposite of the spirit of reviling. No matter how much we are reviled, we are not to revile in return; no matter how much we are persecuted, we are not to persecute in return. This is the Law of the New Creation. Instead of reviling again, we are to *bless*. This does not mean that when one has said a slanderous thing of us, we are to say, "God bless you"; but that if the person is in difficulty and needs help, we are to overlook altogether what he has done to us, and be just as ready to help him as any other person.

This spirit of generosity and benevolence should be the spirit of the Lord's people. We are to bless those who revile and persecute us by doing them good and by explaining to them, if possible, the situation, which evidently they have misunderstood. We are to bless them by helping them, if opportunity offers, out of darkness into light.

Our faith is greatly strengthened by considering the course of our Lord and noting the similarity between His experiences and ours. Both He and His Apostles were persecuted by the Jewish household of faith. The whole Jewish nation professed to be God's people; and our Lord recognized them as His own, as it is written. (John 1:11.) Yet when "He came unto His own," they received Him not, but persecuted Him and even crucified Him. Later, they persecuted His Apostles and their followers.

Apparently the household of faith has had a monopoly of persecutions. All down the Gospel Age, those who have professed to be God's people have persecuted others. Both Catholics and Protestants have persecuted each other and the Jews, God's chosen people. The majority of persecutions have been by those who professed to be the people of God, many of whom really *thought they were*.

The persecutions of today are of the same kind. They come from those who profess to be the Lord's people. In harmony with this fact is the Scripture which says, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My Name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." (Isa. 66:5.) This statement applies also to the members of our own families, who are not in sympathy with the Truth; that is to say, any persecutions coming from the members of our families are usually from those who profess to be Christians. As a rule, their opposition is not for personal reasons, but on account of some doctrinal point, which they do not see in the same light as do those whom they persecute.

It behooves the Lord's people to look with great sympathy upon those who may be their persecutors. We recall instances where persecution has been carried on with the thought that the persecutors were doing the will of God. Those who persecuted the Lord Jesus were to some degree ignorant of who He was. In Acts 3:17, St. Peter says, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." St. Paul says, "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (I Cor. 2:8.) When Saul of Tarsus persecuted St. Stephen and others of the early Church, he verily thought that he did God service, as he himself afterwards tells us.—Acts 26:9-11.

FIDELITY TO THE TRUTH A CAUSE OF PERSECUTION

All down through the Gospel Age, those who have been faithful to the Truth of God have been put "out of the synagogue." The creeds of men have been barriers to keep out those who understood the Word of God. There was a time when many were excommunicated as heretics *because of conscience*. One of these was Michael Servetus, a brother Christian, whose horrible death at the stake was brought about by John Calvin. This course of conduct literally fulfilled the Scripture which says, "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."—John 16:2.

Those who had charge of the synagogues were not always *bad* people, but they were *mistaken*, as was Saul of Tarsus when he haled men and women to prison. (Acts 8:3.) The same conditions exist today. The darkness hateth the light. When any become enlightened

in the Word of God, they are told, "If you stay with us, you must not present these matters." Those who are loyal to God are in this way forced out of the synagogues.

Our day has a peculiarity, however, that other days have not had. The Divine Plan is so beautiful that by its light we see that others are in darkness. The voice of God, the voice of conscience, of enlightenment, calls the people of God out of Babylon, which is misrepresenting God's character, Plan and Word. Instead of feeling like bringing vengeance upon our enemies, we should feel sympathy for them—not *with* them, but *for* them. We should realize that with them it is very much as it was with the Jews of our Lord's day, who, had they known what they were doing, would have been very much ashamed of their course.

The persecutions of today are different from those of any other period of history. Many faithful followers of the Lord are reprov'd and slandered for their loyalty to the Word of God. Our Lord's words, however, warrant us in expecting that those who are faithful to Him will be evil spoken of, even as He was. With His words before our minds, we should not be surprised at false charges and false insinuations made against His true followers in proportion to their prominence as His servants.

Our Lord's warning that men "shall say *all manner of evil* against you *falsely for My sake*" (Matt. 5:11), does not imply that those who malign the true Christian will say, "We do this to you for Christ's sake, because you are one of His followers." We have never heard of any one who was thus persecuted, and therefore such a course cannot be what our Lord meant. Evidently His meaning was that His followers, honorable, moderate, truthful, honest, virtuous, possessing the spirit of a sound mind, like Himself, would be highly esteemed amongst the nominally religious, were it not for their loyalty to the Word of God. Because of faithfully pointing out popular errors, because of fidelity to the Truth, they are hated by those prominent in Churchianity.

THE GOLDEN RULE A TEST TO CHRISTIANS

These conditions are testing the adherents of Churchianity along the lines of the Golden Rule; and when they speak evil through malice, hatred, strife and opposition, they are condemning themselves under that rule; for well do they know that they do not wish others to speak evil of them—either through hearsay or through concocted lies or through malice.

These conditions are also a test to the Lord's people, to prove whether they are willing to endure these persecutions and oppositions cheerfully, as a part of the cost of being disciples of Christ. If under the pressure they revile in return and slander and backbite, they are thus demonstrating their unfitness to have a place in the Kingdom. If, on the other hand, they receive these lessons with patience and long-suffering, they will develop more of the character-likeness of their Redeemer and thus become more worthy of a share with Him in the future glory.

Our Lord's declaration, "Ye are the salt of the earth," may very properly be applied to those of the followers of the Lord who give heed to His teachings and who cultivate His character-likeness. As salt is useful in arresting decomposition, so the influence of these faithful ones is preservative. At the time of the First Advent, the world was in a condition in which it would probably have hastened to degeneracy and decay, but for the introduction of the preservative influence extending from the members of the Body of Christ. That influence is still manifest in so-called Christendom.

Even today, although the truly consecrated believers in the great Redeemer are confessedly few in number, yet the saltiness from the teachings of the Savior has a wide influence upon the world. Without it, doubtless, corruption and a complete collapse would have come long ago. In spite of it, we see very corrupting and corrupt influences at work everywhere; and the wider our horizon, the more general our information, the more we realize the truth of this statement. When the last member of the Body of Christ shall have passed beyond the veil, the salt will be gone. Then corruption will take hold swiftly, and the result will be the great time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.—Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1.

The Scriptures point out the fact that the Lord's consecrated people belong so completely to Him that in all their afflictions He is afflicted. (Isa. 63:9.) When Saul of Tarsus was persecuting the early Church, our Lord called out to him on the way to Damascus, and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME? And he said, Who are Thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am *Jesus*, whom thou *persecutest*." (Acts 9:4, 5.) Saul was not persecuting the glorified Savior directly, but he was persecuting the *followers* of Jesus—not the *New Creatures*, but the *flesh*. Since, then, our Lord adopts the flesh of His followers as His, the Church is said to be filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.—Col. 1:24.

Throughout the Gospel Age, the world has been blind to the fact that it has persecuted the Church of Christ—those whom God has chosen to be joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 8:17.) When later the eyes of mankind shall have been opened, they will realize what they have done, and will be very much ashamed of their conduct. After Saul of Tarsus saw that he had been fighting against God, his whole course of life was changed.

THE ANTITYPICAL BURNING OUTSIDE THE CAMP

As our Lord suffered in the flesh, so will also those who are members of the Church, which is His Body. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) St. Peter admonishes us to expect this, saying, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind." (I Peter 4:1.) It is the *flesh*, not the *New Creature*, that *suffers*. While we are suffering in the flesh, we are also being developed in the spirit.

In Psalm 44:22, we read, "For Thy sake we are killed all the Day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." St. Paul shows that this statement is a prophecy applicable to the entire membership of Christ, of whom our Lord Jesus is the Head. (Rom. 8:36.) The

day to which reference is made is the Gospel Age (2 Cor. 6:2), the antitypical Day of Atonement. As on the typical Atonement Day the typical sacrifices were offered, so all down the Gospel Age the antitypical "better sacrifices" have been made. (Heb. 9:23; 13:11-13.) These "better sacrifices" began with our Lord and continue with His Body, which is the Church.

The antitypical sacrificing began at the time of our Lord's consecration, which was His full surrender of His life to God, to be used in any way that the Father saw fit and that His providences might direct. The Church follows in His steps. Our consecration is our death to the world, to earthly hopes, aims and ambitions. In our Lord's case, we see that His sacrificial death not only meant the giving away of His physical strength in healing, teaching, etc., but included also the suffering resulting from the opposition of those about Him. Even from members of His own family He experienced ostracism. So Jesus died daily.

In proportion as we are faithful to our Heavenly Father and to the terms of our consecration, we shall have similar experiences. Faithfulness to our covenant of sacrifice will bring upon us opposition from the world, the flesh and the Devil. Particularly will our persecution come from those Christians who are not developed sufficiently to appreciate matters from the proper standpoint.

St. Paul, in speaking of his own case, says that he was dying daily. (I Cor. 15:31.) This statement applies to all who are laying down their lives in the Lord's service. Sometimes it is by the expenditure of physical strength; sometimes it is by a stab from some one who has hurt us, wounded us, injured us with his tongue. In the type, this kind of experience is represented by the burning of the flesh outside the camp, a place which typifies the outcast condition.

The faithful servants of the Lord will be ostracised by the world, as our Lord foretold. (Matt. 24:9; John 16:1-3.) Their attitude of full consecration to do the Father's will is not appreciated; for to the world it seems to be foolish. It is a reproof. As our Lord said, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."—John 3:20.

To be faithful unto death is a part of the covenant of sacrifice. In some instances, death may come early; in others, it may come late. St. Stephen was faithful unto death, which came early in his Christian experience; St. Peter was also faithful, but met his death after a long lifetime. The promise to the overcomer is, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10.) "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."—2 Tim. 2:12.

MAY 12

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

How many of the prospective heirs of the Kingdom find that they have defilements along this line—malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, evil speaking! It is safe to say that everyone has some, if not all, of these weaknesses in the flesh to contend with, especially at the beginning of his entrance upon the Christian vocation. How carefully all should seek to put all these away! How each should scrutinize not only every act of life and every word and every thought, but, additionally, every motive underlying his words, thoughts and actions, so that they may be more and more purified from the earth's defilements and be more and more acceptable to the Lord!—Z '03, 408 (R 3265).

By the filthiness of the flesh, the faults that root in, and are expressed by the body are meant, like the tobacco, narcotic and alcohol habits, unchastity, gluttony, bodily filthiness, *etc.* By the filthiness of the spirit, faults that root in, and are expressed by the mind are meant, like anger, hatred, malice, evil surmising, hypocrisy, covetousness, unbelief, despair, pride, *etc.* The promises that constitute the Oath-bound Covenant are the Divinely ordained means for cleansing us of the filthiness of the flesh and spirit; and the best method for the attainment of the cleansing is reverence for God, whereby we complete our consecration—P '32, 48.

Parallel passages: 2 Cor. 6:17, 18; Gen. 22:16-18; Psa. 51:10; John 15:3; 1 John 1:7-9; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 4:17-32; 5:26; Col. 3:5-9; Rom. 8:1-14; 12:2, 9-21; Gal. 5:22-25; 6:7-10; Col. 3:10-17; 1 Thes. 5:11-22.

Hymns: 130, 78, 196, 198, 1, 20, 125.

Poems of Dawn, 211: *Sweet Harmony at Last.*

Tower Reading: Z '15, 230 (R 5737).

Questions: Did I this week seek to realize the exhortations of this text? How? With what effects?

SWEET HARMONY AT LAST

I SAT alone at the organ,
At the close of a troubled day,
When the sunset's crimson embers
On the western altar lay.
I was weary with vain endeavor,
My heart was ill at ease,
And I sought to soothe my sadness
With the voice of the sweet-toned keys.

My hands were weak and trembling,
My fingers all unskilled,
To render the grand old anthem
With which my soul was filled.
Through the long day's cares and worries,
I had dreamed of that glorious strain,
And I longed to hear the organ
Repeat it to me again.

It fell from mine untaught fingers
Discordant and incomplete,
I knew not how to express it,
Or to make the discord sweet;
So I toiled with patient labor
Till the last bright gleams were gone,
And the evening's purple shadows
Were gathering one by one.

Then a Master stood beside me,
And touched the noisy keys,
And lo! the discord vanished
And melted in perfect peace.
I heard the great organ pealing
My tune that I could not play,
The strains of the glorious anthem
That had filled my soul all day.

Down through the dim cathedral
The tide of music swept,
And through the shadowy arches
The lingering echoes crept;
And I stood in the purple twilight
And heard my tune again—
Not my feeble, untaught rendering,
But the master's perfect strain.

So I think, perchance, the Master,
At the close of life's weary day,
Will take from our trembling fingers
The tune that we cannot play;
He will hear through the jarring discord
The strain, although half expressed;
He will blend it in perfect music,
And add to it all the rest.

R5737: OUR CLEANSING—INWARD AND OUTWARD

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

—2 Corinthians 7:1.

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

But some may, perhaps, be inclined to say that the words of our text are applicable to sinners as well as saints—sinners especially—even though the Epistle itself is addressed "unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints, who are in the whole of Achaia." We answer, No! our text cannot appropriately be applied to sinners in general, who have not yet come to God, who have not yet repented of their sins and been forgiven. God makes no appeals to such; He merely denounces them as sinners and refuses them all recognition, all fellowship, and tells them that there is no other name given under Heaven amongst men whereby they can be saved from their sins than that of Jesus—through faith in His blood. In other words, God refuses to have any dealings whatsoever with those who cannot or will not accept of the great Sin-Offering which He has provided. As Jesus expressed the matter, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me."—John 14:6.

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

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

SAINTS NOT NATURALLY ALL NOBLE

Not only has God made faith a necessary element of acceptance in the present time, but additionally, love of righteousness is made a part of the test. It is not enough that we should have the eye of faith which would recognize Christ's death as the Redemption-price for the sins of the world, we must additionally have hearts that love righteousness in

order to come under Divine favor. The heart that loves righteousness discerns the weakness of its own flesh, its downward tendencies. The moment that heart recognizes Jesus as the Redeemer it flees to Him, not only to be covered with His merit as respects the sins that are past, but also to have the imputed covering of His righteousness as respects the unwilling blemishes and imperfections of the present and the future—imperfections that are contrary to the will and are the result of weaknesses inherited.

This class, not in harmony with the sin of the world nor with their own weaknesses, is referred to by our Lord in His message, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden [under the yoke of sin and appreciating its penalty, death], and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me." These learners—disciples, pupils in the School of Christ—are the class to whom the words of our text are addressed. It would be useless to exhort the world in general to cleanse themselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. The world is in sympathy with this very filthiness and has no desire to cleanse itself, has no just appreciation of how filthy it is in the sight of God and those who have His Spirit of Holiness. The Lord describes the condition of the world as one in which anger, malice, envy and various lusts [desires] are the usual and normal conditions by turns. Lust, selfishness—which often amounts to brutality in its seeking of wealth, or pleasure or power—seeks to fill the natural mind, so that if it were taken away, with nothing substituted, life would lose all of its charms. Where would be the propriety in exhorting such to put away filthiness of the flesh and spirit when they have nothing as a substitute?

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

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

GOD'S BELOVED DISESTEEMED

As the mouthpiece of the Lord the Apostle addresses all believers who have fled away from sin and who are striving to be pleasing and acceptable to God, as "dearly beloved." The Apostle, a noble-minded man himself, appreciated the fact that many of these dearly beloved brethren had weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh. He did not love them *on account of* these blemishes, but *in spite of* them—because at heart they were loyal to the principles of righteousness and striving to overcome sin and its inclinations in their own mortal flesh, and—so far as their influence would go—in the world. But the world does not love these whom the Father loves, whom Jesus loves, whom the Apostle loves. Our Master's words are, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and have ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, that your fruit should be permanent."—John 15:16, 18, 19.

The world does not like these chosen ones because, confessing their own weaknesses and striving against them, they call them by their proper names—sins, meannesses, filthinesses of the flesh and spirit. Every effort made by these to cleanse themselves is a reproof to others who are not striving to cleanse themselves, and who hate to be reminded that the things in which they take their greatest pleasure are greed, selfishness, inordinate affections, strifes, pride, vainglory. Whoever is fully satisfactory to the world may be sure that he is not satisfactory to the Lord. Whoever is satisfactory to the Lord need not expect to be satisfactory to the world; for the fellowship of this world is enmity to God, and, therefore, the world is not subject to the Divine standard, neither indeed can be, as the Apostle explains. (James 4:4; Romans 8:7.) Its heart is in the other direction.

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

THE NECESSITY FOR CLEANSING

But why should the Apostle suggest that the Church should do a cleansing work in their hearts and in their flesh when we find that God has wholly covered these blemishes from His sight? If the blemishes are covered, why trouble about them further? Ah, there are the best of reasons! Those who at heart are loyal to the Lord and His righteousness are distressed by their blemishes, their sins, the weaknesses of their flesh, even though they are aware that the Lord has graciously covered all these, and is not imputing their guilt because at heart they are opposed to them. The desire of this class is to build, to

establish, character by faithfulness to principles of righteousness. They wish that their minds may become more and more established in faithfulness to the Lord and His Golden Rule of love; and that, so far as possible, the new mind shall control the fallen, imperfect flesh and bring it into subjection, into accord, with the Divine Law of Love.

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

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

"LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES"

The words, "Let us cleanse ourselves," do not have reference to our getting rid of Adamic condemnation. Such cleansing from original sin is impossible on our part, as the Apostle elsewhere explains. We cannot have it unless we receive it as a free gift from God. In what sense, then, do we cleanse ourselves? We answer that having been reckonedly cleansed by the Lord, and brought under the influence of His Holy Spirit and the enlightening understanding of His Word, we are now invited to show our zeal for righteousness and to cooperate with Him in the work. While all the condemnation is reckoned as having passed from us, we still have the opportunity of showing the Lord what our spirit, our intention, would be, by striving against sin in our minds and in our flesh. The *incentive* to this cleansing is of the *Lord*, but the cleansing *itself* is something for *us* to do—"Let us cleanse *ourselves*." The cleansing work is a tedious one; for at first we did not discern how deeply defiled we were, how nearly all the suggestions of the mind were selfish. We did not even recognize selfishness as being sin.

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

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

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

OUR GRADUAL TRANSFORMATION

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

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

But the Lord's children have this new will, this new treasure, in an earthen vessel. We have a natural disposition toward sin. Additionally, we have minds that, even though they are *putting away* the things of sin, have more or less *recollection* of the things of sin, the impurities of sin. So while we draw ourselves away from that which is sinful, we are to strive also to have our minds pure. We are to cast out everything in us that is sympathetic with sin. We are not to think of those things, we are not to permit ourselves to ruminate on what is sinful. We are to set our affection on things above.—Colossians 3:2.

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

OUR CLEANSING AND THE LORD'S CLEANSING

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

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

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

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

"THE PERFECTING OF HOLINESS"

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

But how is this holiness perfected in us? How does God work in us to will and then to do His good pleasure? Our text answers this portion of the question, too, assuring us that it is God's part to give us the promises; and that these promises constitute the incentives to those who are in the right attitude of mind. Without these Divine promises of the present and the future blessings, who would battle against his own weaknesses? Who would strenuously resist the attacks of the world and of the Adversary? Moreover, who would willingly sacrifice his life and all his natural rights to serve the Lord and His cause, if there were no exceeding great and precious promises to quicken and energize him to the service of the King, in battling against sin, in assisting all who are on the side of righteousness? Surely there would be few, if any at all. And so our text intimates, saying, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves," etc. The promises are indeed the power of God unto our cleansing—our salvation—as pointed out by St. Paul.—Romans 1:16.

"GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES"

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

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

It is to demonstrate their possession of these graces that these consecrated ones are left for a time in the midst of evil and unfavorable surroundings—to prove their love of righteousness, their opposition to iniquity, their love to God and their faithfulness to Him, their love to all who are in sympathy with the Divine arrangement. If they stand these

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

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

THE PILGRIM'S WANTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

MAY 13

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams—1 Sam. 15:22.

Our Heavenly Father wishes us to be very attentive to His Word, and not to think for a moment that we can improve thereon, or that times and circumstances will alter the propriety of our obedience to Him. Let us hearken to the Word of the Lord and keep close to it, not fearing the results, but having faith that He who keeps us never slumbers nor sleeps, and is too wise to err, as well as is competent to meet every emergency that could possibly come upon us as a result of our obedience—Z '03, 218, 219 (R 3224).

By sacrifice we understand our denial of our rights, while putting our humanity to death in God's service, to be meant. Such self-denial in efforts to serve God, though it should consume our humanity, if rendered contrary to the Lord's will, is not acceptable to God. Better are we without it, while rendering obedience, than with it in disobedience. But it is best when we render such sacrifice with obedience—P '26, 61.

Parallel passages: Num. 14:24; 1 Sam. 12:22; 1 Chron. 28:9, 10, 20; Psa. 40:6; 51:16, 17; 69:30, 31; Prov. 21:3; Eccles. 5:1; Ezek. 9:5-10; Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:6-8; Matt. 9:13; Mark 12:32, 33; John 12:26; 13:17; 14:15, 21; 1 John 2:3-6.

Hymns: 1, 114, 128, 150, 196, 208, 307.

Poems of Dawn, 167: *Service*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 100 (R 5430).

Questions: Have I this week sacrificed contrary to, or in harmony with the Lord's will? Have I refrained from sacrifice? Under what circumstances? Why? How?

SERVICE

OH, my soul is filled with its yearning,
Dear Lord, and my heart is sad,
I long, *how I long*, to be spreading
The Truth that hath made *me* glad!

And the fields are white to the Harvest,
The daylight is almost spent,
I see all about me the reapers,
On their holy mission sent;

But mine eager hands Thou hast folded,
In weakness upon my breast;
Thou hast whispered, "I *know* thy longings,
My will for thee is to rest."

Then alone with Thee in the twilight,
My poor, throbbing heart grows still,—
Since Thou closest my door of service,
I bow to Thy sovereign will.

I know "to *obey* and to *hearken*"
Ofttimes proves the *greater* test,—
At Thy feet would I lie forever,
If thus I might serve Thee best!

R5430: JUSTICE—RIGHTEOUSNESS—THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

**"To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice."
"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."
—Proverbs 21:3; 1 Samuel 15:22.**

THESE words were addressed to God's chosen people, the Jews. The nation of Israel had come into special relationship with God. At Mt. Sinai, they had entered into a Covenant with Him and had pledged themselves to do justice and judgment. This was a requirement of Jehovah. But there seemed to be a tendency to think of sacrifices as being especially pleasing to the Lord. Some seemed inclined to feel that no matter how unjust they had been, they could offer a sacrifice and make it all right. But Jehovah pointed out that this would not do. His Law was a *requirement*, and must come before all else; whereas these special sacrifices of thanksgiving for victories, etc., were *privileges*, voluntary offerings. The Law demanded full allegiance to God.

The relationship of Israel to God as His people was based upon the *Law*. This Law comprised *justice* and *judgment*. The Israelites were to do according to its commands—first Godward, then manward. They were not to steal, not to kill, not to covet, etc. The essence and substance of the Golden Rule was there embodied.

To do justice is to do that which is just, right, equitable; to do judgment would be to render righteous decisions in the mind, to decide justly. One might be very just in his business dealings with his fellows. He might be very careful not to cheat any one out of a cent; and yet in his mind he might have unkind, uncharitable views of others, and perhaps say things about them that would be very unrighteous. This counsel of the Wise Man seemed to guard not only against the *doing* of injustice, but against having wrong *thoughts*. The decisions of our minds, as well as our actions, should be in harmony with the principles of righteousness.

OUR INABILITY TO JUDGE OTHERS

We are not to judge, decide, in an unfavorable manner in the case of any with whom we have to do, without indubitable proof. If they claim to be trying to do right, we should give them credit for sincerity wherever possible. We are not to call them hypocrites, for we cannot judge their hearts. Our Lord called some hypocrites in His day; but He had a superior power of discerning the heart, and we have not that power. We are not to judge the motives of others. We are not to go beyond their declaration, for we are not competent to do so.

We may at times judge the outward action as wrong or improper, but we are not to attempt to judge the heart, where there is possibility of misjudgment. We have pledged ourselves to strive to observe the Golden Rule in our every action and word and thought, and we are to remember that God would be more pleased with us if we did not sacrifice and merely maintained our relationship to the Golden Rule, than that we should manifest ever so much zeal in *sacrifice* and yet violate the rule of *justice*. This rule requires love for our neighbor as for ourself. As the Apostle Paul reminds us in that matchless chapter on *Love*—1 Cor. 13: "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not *love*, it profiteth me *nothing*."

The proper course for us as disciples of Christ is that we observe the Golden Rule in our conduct, watching over our thoughts and our lips; and also that we present continually all that we have and are in sacrifice to the Lord. But obedience, justice, *must come first*, for this is demanded by the Law of God. Before we can make much development in the cultivation of sacrificial love, we must learn to have a love of justice, righteousness. There is a trite and true proverb that a man must be just before he is generous. It behooves the children of God, as members of the New Creation, to study with diligence this subject of strict justice toward all, and to put into practice day by day this quality of character which is absolutely essential if we would be acceptable to God; for it lies at the foundation of all Christian character.

We are not able while still in the fallen flesh, to keep perfectly this Law of strict justice in act, word and thought. But it should be our prayerful endeavor to do so as far as possible. The merit of Christ will then make up for all unintentional and unavoidable deficiencies. Those only who have this foundation of character well laid can make proper progress. A love which is built on a foundation of injustice, or wrong ideas of righteousness, is delusive, and is not the love which the Lord's Word enjoins and which He will require as a test of true discipleship. Obedience to God demands that we strive to be just in deed and word and thought.

OBEDIENCE A TEST OF LOYALTY

The lesson taught in the Lord's rebuke to Saul at the mouth of the Prophet Samuel, given in our second text, applies with much force to Spiritual Israel. How often today we see the need for this counsel amongst the professed followers of Christ! Many of these are Christian workers in the various denominations of Christendom, and many are their sacrifices of time, strength and money; but inasmuch as they are not obedient to the Lord they fail of the blessing they might have, and indeed cut themselves off from greater

privileges and opportunities. Yea, many of them, we fear, are cutting themselves off from the Kingdom—from glory and joint-heirship with the Master in that Kingdom. We should learn from this lesson given us in the experience of Saul that our Heavenly Father wishes us to be very attentive to His Word, and not to think for a moment that we can improve upon it, nor that any circumstance or condition will excuse us from obedience to Him.

Had King Saul obeyed God, and the results had seemed to prove disastrous, he would have had a clear conscience. He would have been *obedient*, and could have left the results with the Lord. God would have been responsible for the results. How many of the Lord's people in Babylon would be blessed by following the instructions in this lesson!

Many have said to themselves again and again: I see that present arrangements and conditions in the churches are contrary to the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ and the practise of the early Church. I see that much is practised and taught that is not sanctioned in the Scriptures. But what can *I* do? I am identified with this system and am engaged in sacrificing for its upbuilding. If I now withdraw myself, it will mean more or less disaster or loss to it as well as to myself. I wish I were free from human institutions and that I had my hands filled with the Lord's work along the lines of His Word, but I cannot let go; necessity seems laid upon me. This seems to be the most convenient place for me to work and to sacrifice.

The Lord is not pleased with such arguments. His message to us is that to *obey* is better than *sacrifice*, however active and busy we may be. He tells us plainly that no sacrifice we can offer will be acceptable to Him unless we are first obedient to His Word. He calls now to all the followers of Christ who are still in Babylon: "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."—Revelation 18:4, 5.

THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE

We remember that Saul's error was his failure to carry out the command of the Lord in every particular. He slew all the Amalekites, old and young, except the king, whom he kept alive, possibly thinking to exhibit him in some kind of triumphal display. As for the flocks and herds, he consented that his people spare all that were goodly and desirable, but everything that was vile and refuse he destroyed utterly.

As we study the narrative and note the indignation of Samuel, and the Lord's positive declaration of His displeasure and of the punishment to be meted out to Saul, we see clearly that the king had not misunderstood his instructions, but with considerable deliberation had violated them. Consequently we must understand his words of explanation to Samuel to have been to a considerable extent hypocritical. He first saluted the Prophet with blessings and assurances that he had performed the command of the Lord. But Samuel replied: "What means, then, this bleating of sheep and lowing of oxen

which I hear?" He understood at once that the destruction had not been complete, that Saul had only partially obeyed the Lord.

Saul, noting the displeasure of the Prophet of the Lord, began hypocritically to assure him that these fine sheep and oxen had been preserved that they might be sacrificed to the Lord. Alas, how fallen human nature ever seeks to justify itself in its course of perversity and disobedience to the commands of God! How much wiser and better would it be to obey under all circumstances! Saul reaped the result of his disobedience in being rejected as king of Israel. How bitter are the fruits of following our own course, of compromising our conscience, of seeking to evade the responsibility which rests upon us as professed children of God! It is sure to bring trouble and spiritual disaster to the Lord's people, and the hiding of our Father's face.

Ordinarily considered, sacrifice is a step beyond mere obedience. Obedience is a *duty* toward God. We ought to obey God. To His creatures God's will is *Law*. This is duty of the very highest type. But the privilege of sacrifice granted to the people of God goes beyond duty, beyond obligation. We may *give* unto the Lord what He has not *required* of us; but what we give in sacrifice is voluntary, not commanded.

The question now arises, How can we apply these texts to ourselves? In the first place, we find some who desire to be the Lord's people, who seem to grasp the thought that there is a privilege of sacrifice in the present time, but who fail to note that the Lord has given some direct commands which must be considered first. Such should come to perceive that obedience is a prime requisite. No one can perfectly keep the Law of God, but he must exhibit the true spirit of obedience, the earnest endeavor to be in harmony with that Law. Then consecration to sacrifice is in order. For all who have met these conditions full satisfaction has been made, and they are accepted in Christ. And "if any man be in Christ, he is a New Creature; old things have passed away, and all things have become new."—2 Cor. 5:17.

St. Paul says of these, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:4.) If we are not thus walking after the Spirit, we are not hearkening to the Lord; and while we are in that condition, He does not take pleasure in what we do. Even though we sacrifice some of our time for the Colporteur work, the Pilgrim work, etc., we shall not be pleasing to God if we do not keep His requirements of justice toward others.

If when one decides to make a consecration of himself to God he realizes that he has been unjust to another, restitution must be made. No one has a right to be generous with the money of another—to take another man's money and offer it in service to God. This is a form of injustice which must be very offensive to the Father—one which He would disdain altogether as a sacrifice. Yet we see that this is very largely practised. There are a great many who have gotten money in a way not altogether right, and who, to quiet conscience, give some of it to religious work. This class are overlooking the weightier matters of the Law of God. They have taken from others unjustly; then they desire to give

to the Lord that which belongs to another. God's Law demands justice, and it is no wonder that He is not pleased with this course of action.

Coming down to the ordinary affairs of life, we see that justice should be the very foundation of everything—between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, teachers and pupils, employers and employees, etc. The lesson of our text is a very important one to us of the Church. In Christian character justice, obedience to God's Law, comes first; mercy and benevolence come afterwards. We do not know of a principle that the Lord's people need to learn more particularly than this one of *justice*.

Injustice seems to crop out in many ways in the fallen human nature. Little injustices are daily practised in respect to trifles. These are thought not worth considering. But whoever cultivates injustice in even a small way is building up a character which will be unfit for the Kingdom. As justice is the foundation of God's Throne and of God's character, so justice must be the foundation principle governing the lives of His people.

THE OBEDIENCE OF THE CHRIST

The lesson of obedience is one which should be deeply engraved upon the hearts of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. It is necessary, too, that we have the *spirit* of obedience and not obey merely the letter. Whoever has the true spirit of obedience will not only obey the expressed commands of the Lord, given in His Word, but will seek to know the Divine will in everything. He will seek to note the providences of his life, that he may be guided in the way the Lord would have him go. It is such faithful, obedient children of God who exclaim in the language of the Prophet: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart!" (Jeremiah 15:16.) These can say with our dear Master: "Lo I come! I delight to do Thy will, O my God!" Let all, then, who would be wholly acceptable to our Father in Heaven be very diligent to build character in harmony with His Law, having justice in thought, in word and in deed at the foundation, justice in our relationship to God, to the brethren and to all, and then building thereupon all the various qualities of love, that thus we may grow up into Christ our living Head in all things, and be able to render up our account at last with joy and not with grief.

MAY 14

Speaking the truth in love ... grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ—Eph. 4:15.

What is it to grow in grace? It is to grow in favor with the Lord through an intimate personal acquaintance and fellowship of spirit with Him. To grow thus in grace and not grow in knowledge is impossible; for the very object of such communion is to build us up in a more perfect knowledge and acquaintance with the Lord—to bring us into closer fellowship with the Divine Plan, and to give us the privilege of being "workers together with him" in executing that Plan. If, therefore, we love and obey the Lord and desire to grow in His favor, His written Word is our daily meditation and study; and thus we grow in knowledge—Z '03, 200 (R 3215).

The Christian's mission is to proclaim God's Word; and it should be fulfilled especially from the motive and in the expression of disinterested love. He who so presents the Truth is given such experiences by Christ, our Head, as will enable him to develop in every good work, and grow to completeness in his place and as an heir of the Kingdom—P '36, 64.

Parallel passages: Zech. 8:16; 2 Cor. 4:2; Eph. 4:25; Psa. 32:2; John 1:47; Rom. 12:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2:2; 1 John 3:18; Eph. 2:21; 2 Pet. 3:18; Eph. 1:21, 22; 5:23; Col. 1:18, 19; 2:19.

Hymns: 78, 4, 47, 74, 114, 128, 150.
Poems of Dawn, 243: *Woman's Mission*.
Tower Reading: Z '16, 323 (R 5977).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

WOMAN'S MISSION

THE rights of women—what are they?
The right to labor, love and pray;
The right to weep with those that weep,
The right to wake when others sleep.

The right to dry the falling tear,
The right to quell the rising fear;
The right to smooth the brow of care,
And whisper comfort in despair.

The right to watch the parting breath,
To soothe and cheer the bed of death;
The right, when earthly hopes all fail,

To point to that within the veil.

The right the wanderer to reclaim,
And win the lost from paths of shame;
The right to comfort and to bless
The widow and the fatherless.

The right the little ones to guide,
In simple faith, to Him who died;
With earnest love and gentle praise,
To bless and cheer their youthful days.

The right the intellect to train,
And guide the mind to noble aim;
Teach it to rise above earth's toys,
And fix the heart on Heavenly joys.

The right to live for Him you love,
The right to die that love to prove;
The right to brighten earthly homes
With pleasant smiles and gentle tones.

Are these thy rights?—then use them well;
The holy influence none can tell;
If these be thine—Why ask for more?
Thou hast enough to answer for!

Are these thy rights? Then murmur not
That *woman's mission* is thy lot;
Improve the talents God hath given;
Earth's duties done—thy rest in Heaven!

R5977: HOW WE MAY GROW UP INTO CHRIST

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

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

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

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

God has given us the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of power. The Christian knows that "all things work together for good to them that love God." This is to him a source of power, of strength. Circumstances and conditions which would quite overwhelm others, he may expect to have. This spirit is not only a spirit of power, but a spirit of love—a spirit of kindness and gentleness. It is a spirit that loves to do good, to do right, to be helpful. And so the Christian with this spirit of love and of a sound mind becomes more and more Godlike. This enables him to have more and more compassion for those who are out of the way. And as God sent His Son, and as the Son came and provided the blessing of life for all at such a great cost to Himself, so all who have His spirit will strive to bless others.

EVIDENCES OF A SOUND MIND

The fall of Adam has worked ruin to mankind, so that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there are none sound. (Isaiah 1:5, 6.) None are sound of mind or body. All are out of the way. "There is none righteous; no, not one." (Romans 3:10.) But in proportion as we receive the Spirit of the Lord, and in proportion as that Spirit of the Lord works in us and develops us and influences all the conduct of life, in that same proportion we receive the spirit of a sound mind.

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

This spirit of a sound mind makes us more helpful. We know better how to deal with each other as brethren. We know better how to deal with our children, with our

neighbors, with the butcher, with the ice man and with every one else. The Truth does not come to *many* of those who are naturally soundest of mind, and it takes time for the Truth to bring in a measure of soundness. But we notice that when one receives the Truth in the love of it, it has a healing effect on his mind. He will begin to think more correctly and to act more wisely.

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

One who had received the spirit of the Truth would say, "I now see that some of the things I have been preaching for years are injurious, dishonoring to God, misrepresenting His character, and more or less turning people away from the Truth. I have been teaching error, the very opposite of what I wish to do; I cannot longer dispense these errors. I am not the ambassador of this denomination; I am the ambassador of God. I am not the servant of this denomination; I am the servant of God, of the Truth. If I should preach error, that which would be contrary to the Truth, I would be guilty before God. I must stop immediately."

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

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

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

"EXPRESSION DEEPENS IMPRESSION"

We are to exercise our function of ambassadorship—we are to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." And in telling this Message courageously and lovingly we should grow in grace and in knowledge. We are to proclaim the Truth, and at the same time to grow and develop in character. Why attain a growth of character? Because it will make us more like God. "God is love." He has other qualities; but this quality of love is the especially predominating, the overruling quality of His character. God's Justice operates in conjunction with His Love, and His Wisdom would not attempt to carry out any plans that Love would not approve.

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

NATURAL QUALITIES THAT NEED RESTRAINT

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

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

Others may have great *approbativeness*. They might have pride and wish to show off in the way of language, or in their skill in handling the Sword of the Spirit. They might give out the Message with the idea of rousing in others the thought, "See how much he knows; he is a wonderful digger in the Bible." This seems to be a temptation to many. They seem to like to be *in* the lime-light, just as others like to *keep out of* the lime-light. The one might have to *force* himself in order to go and speak the Truth in public as an ambassador; while the other would have to *curb* himself somewhat in this respect. The only way for the latter to do is to learn to speak the Truth in humility, in love—the love

of the Truth, the love of the brethren. It is *God's* Plan, we have nothing whereof to boast. We are always to present His Plan in meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love.

The Apostle Paul urges that we "consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works." The word *provoke* here means to *stimulate*, to call forth. Love is not easily called forth to anger. It is longsuffering. We might say, strictly speaking, that it is not the quality of *love* that would be moved to anger. Yet righteous anger is not incompatible with love. God is the highest representation we have of love—"God is Love." Yet the Scriptures assure us that God is angry with the wicked every day. His anger is righteous indignation against sin.

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

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

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

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

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

CULTIVATION OF LOVE ESPECIALLY NEEDFUL

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

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

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

LET US HAVE SYMPATHY FOR ALL MEN

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

So love looks out and sees that the whole world is in much difficulty through the fall. And love says, "Be gentle toward all—be meek. I am ever to remember that we are in a world of sin, pain, sickness, death." From this viewpoint love will not be easily provoked,

but will think kindly and sympathetically of others. So, dear brethren, let us grow up into our glorious Head in all things, until, made perfect and complete, we are "presented faultless before the presence of His glory, with exceeding joy."—Jude 24.

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

MAY 15

Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation—Hab. 3:17, 18.

We see that God permits evil in the world that the *world* may learn certain lessons of bitter experience as to the natural rewards of evil-doing, but we see also a ministry of evil in respect to the *saints*—in their testing and polishing and refining; making them ready, and proving them worthy, as overcomers, to inherit the wonderful things which God has in reservation for the faithful—Z '03, 94 (R 3167).

In the providence of God, He has been pleased to permit fleshly Israel and spiritual Israel to go into captivity in literal and symbolic Babylon respectively, where there was very little opportunity to develop external fruitfulness in influencing mankind in general; yet the Lord's grace has enabled the faithful in symbolic Babylon to rejoice in God and in Christ, because of their marvelous works of salvation. Certain untoward and unproductive experiences have come to God's people at the extreme end of the Age, but amid them they still find joy in the Lord's special favor, as this text prophetically promised—P '30, 77, 78.

Parallel passages: John 15:21; 16:20, 33; Acts 14:22; 20:23, 24; Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17, 18; Psa. 103:9; 126:5, 6; Isa. 54:7, 8; 61:2, 3; Phil. 4:4; 1 Thes. 5:16; 1 Pet. 1:6; 4:13, 14; 5:10.

Hymns: 63, 67, 99, 110, 293, 328, 331.

Poems of Dawn, 291: "*Yet Will I Rejoice in the Lord.*"

Tower Reading: Z '14, 19 (R 5383).

Questions: Have I this week rejoiced in tribulations? What helped or hindered? In what did it result?

"YET WILL I REJOICE IN THE LORD"

THOUGH the fig tree shall not blossom,
 Though no fruit be in the vines,
Though the fields shall yield no fruitage,
 Of the herd there be no signs—
 Yet I'll joy in God's salvation,
 As my faith in Him reclines.

While the nations reel and stagger,
 And the Dove of Peace has fled,
While the land and sea are groaning
 'Neath the burden of their dead—

Yet, amid the awful tumult,
I rejoice and lift my head!

Though the vision seem to tarry,
And the waiting time prolong,
Though my faith be sorely tested
In the conflict fierce and strong,
Yet *His grace* will be sufficient,
And the burden of my song!

Though He slay me, I will trust Him,
Though my very heart He break,
For I know with loving wisdom
He has planned the way I take—
Thus my dying breath shall bless Him,
And I'll praise Him when I wake!

R5383: A PROPHECY NEARING FULFILMENT

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."—Hab. 3:17, 18.

HABAKKUK'S entire prayer, recorded in this chapter of his prophecy, is so symbolical that it would be scarcely in keeping with it for us to give the words of our text the plain, simple interpretation that we would be otherwise inclined to give. This simple interpretation would be that although the conditions were such that famine stalked everywhere, and there was nothing of earthly hope, nevertheless God's people at any time and in any place would rejoice in God and give Him the glory.

It would seem very strange, however, if the Prophet should wind up the whole chapter, so highly symbolical, with anything so plain and literal as we have suggested. With so much imagery in his mind, it would seem but reasonable that the words should be interpreted in keeping with their context, and that we should regard it as the Prophet's expression of some deep truths. Much of the language of the Bible is figurative; and in our common conversation we also use many figures. For instance, in the Scriptures a vine is a figure used for the Church: As our Lord said, "I am the Vine; ye are the branches."—John 15:5.

The flock of God—the sheep—are common figurative expressions for the same class. Our Lord speaks of the Little Flock. We are His sheep. The Jews were also referred to as God's sheep, by the Psalmist David, in Psalm 74:1; 79:13, etc.

So with the word olive. The olive tree is mentioned by St. Paul in referring to the special people of God, His peculiar people—those in relationship with Him. He speaks of the natural olive tree—shows that the Promise applied originally to the Jewish nation: "In thee [Abraham] and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." He says that because of unbelief the natural branches were broken off. Thus we locate the vine and the olive both as representing the Church of Christ, from different points of view.

When the Little Flock shall have passed beyond the veil, there will still be the Great Company of the Lord's people left here. Many of these will apparently continue in Babylon until the time of trouble shall cause Babylon to fall. And by the fall of Babylon these will be set free. Before all this is made plain to them, they may use the language of our text, and later come to see clearly. In the 19th of Revelation this company are spoken of as rejoicing in the fall of Babylon and saying, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him; for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Wife hath made Herself ready." (Vs.7.) All things had seemed to them to be failures; and now they see that God's Plan has not failed, but has been fulfilled.

EARTHLY GOVERNMENTS A FAILURE

The Church has not yet blessed the world. The fruit of the Vine will feed the world in the coming Age. Neither the olive nor the vine will give life to the world at the present time. This will come in the New Dispensation, during the Messianic reign.

The Lord has used the word *field* to represent the world: "The field is the world." The world have been hoping to better their affairs. They have been hoping to manage matters successfully. And so the various universal empires have sprung up. First the Babylonians tried to give the world a better government, but their efforts were of no avail. Then the Medes and Persians tried, and also failed. Next the Greeks and later the Romans took the reins of universal government, and likewise failed. Finally Papacy came forward, claiming to be the Kingdom of Christ that would rule the world. She failed. Of late years Socialism has come to the front, saying that it can better the world, but the prospects for social improvement are no better.

"NO HERD IN THE STALLS"

The expression, "herd in the stalls," seems a little obscure. The Scriptures liken our Lord Jesus to a bullock—and in the coming Age mankind, on reaching perfection, will be symbolically represented by a bullock. The suggestion of the Prophet David is that mankind then shall offer *bullocks* on God's altar. (Psa. 51:19.) This cannot refer to the Church in the present time; for in the Atonement Day *type* the Church is represented by a *goat*, and our Lord—a perfect Man when His sacrifice was made—is represented by a bullock. But in the end of the next Age, when the world shall be *perfected*, they shall offer *bullocks* on the altar. This represents how mankind will make a full consecration of themselves, their *perfect powers*.

We know nothing better in the application of the bullock than that suggested by the Psalmist. At the close of this Gospel Age, when all the Church shall have passed beyond the veil, there will be no perfect men. In other words, there will be a point of time when the Church will be glorified and when the Ancient Worthies will not yet have appeared. The people will stand amazed, not seeing any way out of their troubles. Only those who have the light of the Lord's Word will be able to appreciate the condition at all.

Those who will then understand—the Great Company—will rejoice in the Lord. They will be able to trust in God, even though conditions in the world are distressing, and the Ancient Worthies not yet here to take hold of matters. They will see that the conditions are really leading up to the great blessing—that the great Time of Trouble is the necessary preparation for blessing. And they will say, Let us rejoice and give glory to the Lord, for the Bride hath made herself ready! We see in this glorification of the Church the beginning of the great blessing. Soon we may expect to see the Ancient Worthies here. Then will come the fulfilment of all God's gracious promises. So we will not lose heart, but will trust in the Lord.

Our Lord Jesus spoke of the Great Company—the foolish virgin class—in His Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 7:21-23.) After the last member of the Little Flock has gone beyond the veil, the Great Company will be thoroughly awakened and will say, "Lord, Lord, may we not come in? We are ready now, dear Lord; we see where we have made our mistake. We see matters differently; we realize what privileges and opportunities for sacrifice we once enjoyed, but missed. May we not enter even now?" But the Lord will answer, "Depart from Me. I do not recognize you." This word *depart* does not mean that they will depart into eternal torment, as we once thought. The Lord does not say, "Depart, ye cursed," for *cursed* means to be set apart for punishment. He merely says, "Depart from Me."

The Kingdom of Heaven is elsewhere (Matt. 25:1-12) likened unto ten virgins who took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. Five of them were wise and took oil in their vessels with their lamps; but five were foolish virgins and took no oil with them. When the Bridegroom came, the foolish virgins said to the wise ones, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." But they could not do so, they had enough only for their own lamps. After the wise virgins had entered with the Bridegroom, the door was shut. Then came the other virgins saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us!" But he answered, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

These words of our Lord, "I know you not," do not mean that these were not virgins. What do they mean? He means that, having recognized His Bride, He does not know any other woman. These were desiring to be recognized as a part of the Bride. And the Lord says, I do not recognize you. My Bride is complete. So the foolish virgin class are rejected from a place in the Bride class, but they are received as associates and assistants. Their rejection will give them cause for grief. Realizing that the *door of opportunity* is closed to them, they will cry, Oh, we have lost the great prize! They may become despondent. We do not know.

SORROW TURNED INTO JOY

But this Great Company are afterward pictured as saying, Let us be glad! Let us rejoice! Let us glorify God, because the Bride has been taken! Should any one say to them, But *you* are not of the Bride class, their reply might be: Nevertheless, the blessings are coming to all—even to us! The Bride class are the First-fruits of God's people. It is our own fault that we failed to get into the Bride class. If we had seen a while ago as we now see, we would have striven harder and we should not have failed. We would not have listened to what Babylon had to say, We would have "run with patience the race set before us." We were stupefied by the "doctrines of demons." (1 Timothy 4:1.) We are glad that we are now awakened. We rejoice that God's Plan is being so gloriously outworked. Our lamps are burning now. We are blessed as never before. Let us be glad and rejoice in that the Bride is glorified.

"CUT OFF FROM THE FOLD"

"The flock shall be cut off from the fold." As applied to the elect Church, this is viewed from the earthly standpoint. There is an earthly fold and a Heavenly fold. We are now in the fold on earth. We must die in order to enter into the glory that is promised us—to enter into the Heavenly fold.

Our Lord Jesus was cut off from the earthly fold when He died. And as with our Lord, so with us. We must be cut off from the fold here before we can enter into the fold above. It may appear to the Great Company for a time as though all things are *failing*, and not *coming to pass*; but from God's standpoint the fig tree will be budding and the *olive* will be bringing forth her fruit. There will be no miscarriage of God's purposes. The Church will reach her full glorification, and then the vine will bear glorious, ripe fruitage for all mankind.

MAY 16

Thou shalt be called by a new name ... thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God—Isa. 62:2, 3.

Let us never forget that we are a "peculiar people," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into His marvelous light. And if thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the worldly spirit, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us—Z '03, 164 (R 3199).

The word *name* is used in the Scriptures in the sense of appellation, nature, character, honor, office and works. The Christ class were promised a new name, especially in the sense of new nature and office, and as such to become a glorious crown of many radiant jewels in the Lord's hands, reflecting the splendors of Divine Truth, character and work, for the blessings of the whole human family—P '35, 62.

Parallel passages: Psa. 122:6; 102:13-16; Isa. 60:1-3; Rev. 2:17; 21:2, 9, 10, 17, 23, 24; Ezek. 48:35; Jer. 11:16; 33:16; Heb. 12:22; Gal. 4:26; Prov. 12:4; Psa. 132:18; Cant. 3:11; Rev. 19:12; 1 Thes. 2:19.

Hymns: 310, 8, 72, 152, 201, 204, 314.
Poems of Dawn, 203: *Our Blessed Hope*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 413 (R 4913).

Questions: How has our hope affected me this week? Amid what experiences? What was helpful or hindering therein? What were its results?

OUR BLESSED HOPE

WHAT though this earthly house of clay
Sink into ruin and decay,
Though health and vigor pass away,
Christ is *my life*.

What though fond dreams of youth be fled,
The light that shone upon my head
Extinguished and forever dead,
Christ is *my light*.

What though bright hopes now withered lie,
Like autumn leaves, all sere and dry,
Or meteors vanished from the sky,
Christ is *my hope*.

What though rude billows round me roll,
His voice the tempest can control;
They ruffle not my tranquil soul,
Christ is *my peace*.

What though dear friends I once caressed
Within the silent grave now rest,
The valley clods above them pressed,
Christ *ever lives*.

What though perplexing paths appear,
God's Word, a lamp, makes all things clear;
Onward I pass, nor evil fear,
Christ is *my way*.

What though the darkness deeper grows,
And foes more active to oppose,
God's truth provides a sweet repose,
Christ *shall appear*.

R4913: "THE ROYAL DIADEM"

"Thou shalt be called by a new name; ... thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."—Isa. 62:2, 3.

IN ONE PLACE the Prophet Jeremiah declares, "This is the name whereby *He* shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness." In another place he says, "*She* shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness [or, the Righteousness of Jehovah]." And so the Apostle declares, "That *we* might be made *the Righteousness of God* through Him."—Jer. 23:6; 33:16; 2 Cor. 5:21.

These statements refer to Zion. The *typical* Zion is the Jewish nation; and the *antitypical* Zion is the glorified Christ. Very properly, then, we may understand that the blessings which belong to the Church on the spirit plane will, naturally, on the earthly plane, belong to the Ancient Worthies, who will be in Divine favor forever.

The two expressions, "a crown of glory" and "a royal diadem," express practically the same thought, the repetition making the sentiment doubly impressive. A diadem is a crown. Crowns are generally used to add dignity and honor to the individuals wearing them; but the Scriptural expression, "A crown of glory, ... a royal diadem in the hand of thy God," does not include the thought of a diadem that is to be *worn*, as giving glory to God; but rather as representing a *beautiful ornament in the Divine hand*, as you take something in your hand to look at the beauty and workmanship.

The jewels that will make this diadem beautiful, *when properly tested by the great Master-Workman*, are the Church. The Lord will come to make up His jewels, to secure His jewels. "God hath set the members in the Body." The text refers to the final setting in the future, in the Kingdom condition. As star differeth from star in glory, so shall these jewels differ in setting and position. This also applies to the present time. The present arrangement is subject to change in proportion as the *individual* will or *will not* be *fully submissive* to the Lord's will. There has been a selection of a jewel class; and the experiences of this class during the Gospel Age have been the polishing processes; and there will be a setting in the end of this Age, when the Church is completed. This began when the First Resurrection began.

The first setting in this royal diadem was, undoubtedly, our Lord Jesus Himself. He is the first in this great diadem which Jehovah has in His hand. Next will come the members of the Body, as they shall be perfected in the First Resurrection—the Apostles and sleeping saints, each as he is granted his change, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Each jewel will be placed in that particular setting for which Jehovah has seen that it is prepared.

When the mother of James and John went with them to Jesus and requested that her sons might sit, the one on His right hand and the other on His left hand, He said that these places would be given to those for whom they are intended by the Father. Those positions will not be given through favor, but through justice. Any place will be glorious in this company. Only the Lord is competent to say who shall sit on the right hand and on the left. We shall be pleased to have His will done; and beyond the veil we shall have such a large sense of justice that we shall be glad to have the matter as the Father has arranged.

The Lord is first; we think probably St. Paul is next. And we think St. Peter and St. John have prominent places. We shall all be perfectly content and pleased with whatever the Father will decide. We shall be glad of any place. And any one who would not be of that spirit, of that disposition, will thereby indicate that he is not of that class which the Lord would have there. Any who will be of that class will be glad to accept the Father's decree and to prefer it to anything they could have devised.

So the Church in the hand of *God* is the Church in the hand of Divine power. That power will use the Church and she will be a crown of glory and a thing of beauty, *gloriously reflecting to all eternity the workmanship of our God*. How glorious it will be! How beautiful! The Lord Jehovah will have the setting of these precious jewels, one reflecting upon another in that crown of glory and diadem of beauty, with the Lord Jesus in the chief place, for the Father will not give to the Church any glory that He would not give to the Lord Himself. The Church is to be displayed before men as "a thing of beauty and a joy forever"—God's handiwork.

He is selecting the jewels now, and is providentially dealing with them. When the process of polishing shall have been completed, He will use them in a very special sense for a thousand years. As a star blazes in glory, so the Lord will make use of each one of the Church. But the use of the Church which the Lord will make at that time will be only

a part of the work which He intends to accomplish. The Apostle says, "That in the ages to come He might show the *exceeding riches of His grace* in His kindness *toward us* through Christ Jesus."—Eph. 2:7.

All who are in Christ, all who are in the "elect" Body of Christ—to these God will show His *exceeding* grace. His grace and favor will be *showered* upon the Church. And the world will eventually see in the Church the culmination of all of God's creative work. The glory of the Church will be manifested in the sight of angels and of men. And so the Lord indicates the blessings that are to be ours if we are faithful in making our "calling and election sure."

Let us never forget that we are a "*peculiar people*," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into His marvelous light. And if thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the worldly spirit, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us in the performance of the Master's will.

MAY 17

They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service—John 16:2.

The persecutions of today are more refined than in any previous period. The faithful today are not stoned with literal stones or shot with literal arrows or literally beheaded, but it is still true that the wicked shoot out arrows at the righteous, "even bitter words"; and many because of faithfulness are reprov'd and slandered and cut off from fellowship—"beheaded for the testimony of Jesus." Let all such emulate Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Let their testimonies be given with radiant faces like his. Let their eyes of faith perceive Jesus at the right hand of the Majesty on high as their Advocate and Deliverer. Let their words be with moderation as were Stephen's, and let it be true of them, as written of him, "full of grace and power" and "filled with the Holy Spirit"—Z '97, 57 (R 2108).

All the faithful have incurred the displeasure and consequent disfellowship of the nominal people of God. Misunderstood with respect to their work, teaching, character and hopes by those out of harmony with God's Plan, God's faithful people have been regarded by them as the enemies of God, His Plan and His Church, and consequently the latter have often thought they served God by killing those who really were His children—P '34, 62, 63.

Parallel passages: John 9:22, 34; 12:42; 16:3; Acts 8:1; 9:1; John 15:18-21; Rom. 10:2; 1 Cor. 2:8; 1 Tim. 1:13; Psa. 11:2; 38:20; 44:22; 56:5; 94:5; Prov. 29:10; Matt. 5:10-12, 44; 10:16-18, 21-23, 28; 23:34; 24:8-10; Mark 13:9-13; Luke 6:22, 23; 21:12-19; Acts 5:29, 40-42; Rom. 8:17, 35-37; 1 Cor. 4:9-13.

Hymns: 272, 56, 57, 216, 313, 300, 335.

Poems of Dawn, 181: *Grace Sufficient*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 323 (R 5116).

Questions: Have I been persecuted this week? How? Why? With what results?

GRACE SUFFICIENT

BEAR the burden of the present,
Let the morrow bear its own;
If the morning sky be pleasant,
Why the passing night bemoan?

If the darkened heavens lower,
Wrap thy cloak around thy form;
Though the tempest rise in power,
God is mightier than the storm.

Steadfast faith and hope unshaken
Animate the trusting breast;
Step by step the journey's taken
Nearer to the land of rest.

All unseen, the Master walketh
By the toiling servant's side;
Comfortable words He talketh,
While His hands uphold and guide.

Grief, nor pain, nor any sorrow
Rends thy heart to Him unknown;
He today and He tomorrow
Grace sufficient gives His own.

Then bear thy burden with good cheer,
Take promptly up thy daily cross;
Nor hesitate to shed a tear,
Nor reckon o'er thy present loss.

R5116: PERSECUTION AND FIERY TRIALS THE CHRISTIAN'S EXPERIENCE

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

GODLINESS IMPLIES a character which is actuated by principles of righteousness. In all our dealings we are either just or unjust, kind or unkind, not according to what some people may think of us, but according to the standard of righteousness found in the Scriptures. Therefore, in order to develop that character which is pleasing to God, we should in every detail of life consider carefully what is right and what is wrong, according to that standard. This course is Scripturally termed meditating in God's Law. When we reach that development of character in which thought, word and deed are measured by the principles of righteousness, we shall have attained godlikeness.—Psa. 119:97.

What the Lord desires to see in His people is not merely an outward manifestation of devotion to Him and to His brethren, but a development of love in our hearts and our dispositions. If we profess to love one another and yet pursue a course of self-seeking, wherein do we manifest love? So St. John admonishes to love not in word only, but in deed and in truth.—I John 3:18.

Primarily, the godly are those who are in Christ Jesus, members of His Mystical Body, having presented their human bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through the merit of the great Advocate. Secondly, the term godly includes those who live righteously, in sympathy with Christ Jesus, even though they may not live up to the full standard which the Lord has set, because they shrink from the suffering that results

from godly living. Thirdly, the term godly includes some in the remote past, who, believing in the promise of the Lord that the "Seed" should some day come, separated themselves from the rest of the world and, having obtained new aims, new ideas, were out of touch with the remainder of the race because of having a different standard.—Heb. 11:13-16.

The Ancient Worthies composed this third class, who had a share in the suffering of the godly and a participation also in the blessing. Moses, for example, preferred to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to participate in the honors of the Egyptian Government. Although adopted into the family of Pharaoh, he had respect to the promise that the Messiah would come. Hence he suffered on account of his faith in the promise. So all the patriarchs desired to be in harmony with God, in accordance with His promise made to Abraham, and because of belief in that promise they suffered more or less persecution.—Heb. 11:24-26;36-38.

Some one may ask, "Why should the godly suffer?" The Bible answers that sin has brought the world into opposition to God. Whoever, then, would have all men speak in commendation of him would not be in harmony with the Divine arrangement, for the masses of the world are pursuing a course that the Lord does not approve. We are not saying that everything which the world does is sinful, but that the standards of God are so high that because of their fallen condition the masses of the world are not subject to the Law of God, neither, indeed, can they be, for they are carnal, sold under sin. (Rom. 8:7; 7:14, 15.) Those who wish to have influence with the world must cater to popular prejudices. On the contrary, those who would be God's people must be loyal to the principles of righteousness and consequently must go in the opposite direction to that of the world. Hence they are opposed by the world.

From the standpoint of God the course of the world is sinful. There is a tendency in our flesh to go with the world, who are laboring under false views of various kinds, because that course is in sympathy with the desires of our own fallen flesh. Hence to live godly is to live in opposition to the course of the world and of our own flesh. This would include not only living uprightly and avoiding sin, etc., but also the making of sacrifices as well, where principles are not involved. We are to beware, however, lest we be deceived along this line. Not only are we contending with the world, but we are wrestling with wicked spirits in high positions.—Eph. 6:12.

ILLUSTRATION OF SATAN'S DEVICES

Sometimes Satan's arts seem to be employed to get those who are trying to live godly into contention with each other. One of his devices is to make unimportant things seem important, and in this way to make people think that they are contending for righteousness' sake, and that the sufferings that they bring on themselves in this manner are for righteousness' sake. Another device is to deceive people into "busy-bodying in other men's matters." (I Peter 4:15.) It behooves us, therefore, as the Lord's people, not to try to straighten out all the affairs of the Church or of the world, and not to get into

conflict with the brethren. They, like ourselves, are laboring to counteract the influences of the world, the flesh and the Devil.

Our influence upon each other should be uplifting; we should not cause others to grieve, except where suffering is absolutely necessary. Hence the Lord's people should cultivate the fruits of the Spirit increasingly—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. The cultivation of these fruits of the Spirit is a law in respect to the Lord's people. All who would live godly in Christ Jesus are to see to it that they are not the *cause of suffering* to others—especially to those of the household of faith.

SUFFERING AS A CHRISTIAN

While it is true that all who will live godly in this world will suffer to the extent to which they are out of harmony with the present evil conditions, yet the promised blessings of the Scriptures are to those who live godly *in Christ Jesus*, those who are *Christians*. Of these St. Peter says, "If any man suffer *as a Christian*, let him not be ashamed."—I Peter 4:16.

A Christian is a follower of Christ, one who has cast in his lot to suffer with Christ, that He may be also glorified with the Lord. (2 Tim. 2:12.) From the Apostle's standpoint, therefore, no one could *suffer* as a Christian unless he had become a Christian.

Every painful experience which our Lord had was suffering for righteousness' sake—not only the great sufferings, not only the great fight against sin, but also all the little, unpleasant experiences common to the world. Being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26), there was no reason why He should suffer. We do not understand that the Heavenly Father has provided sufferings, trials and difficulties for the angels who are in harmony with Him. Nor do we think that Jesus, being a Son in full accord with the Father, would have suffered were it not for His Covenant of self-sacrifice. All of His sufferings were because He had come into the world to be man's Redeemer. They were all parts of His necessary experience.

The sufferings which our Lord endured were the result of His activity in the service of the Father. These were His weariness, His weakness after giving out His vitality to heal others, His bloody sweat, His ignominious buffetings, and all the reproaches, the sneers and the bitter words incurred on account of His faithfulness, to all of which He meekly and quietly submitted until His sufferings on Calvary terminated His human existence.

SUFFERINGS RESULTING FROM HEREDITY, NOT SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

There is no question that suffering in general is not suffering with Christ, but with Adam. Our physical infirmities which are of heredity, are not sufferings of Christ. Rather we should speak of the sufferings of Christ as being *voluntary* and not involuntary. When the Apostle says that if we suffer with the Lord we shall also reign with Him (2 Tim. 2:12), he means the suffering which we bring on ourselves through faithfulness to our

Covenant. St. Paul speaks of filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for His Body's sake, which is the Church. (Col. 1:24.) These experiences are not for Adam's sake.

In St. Paul's own case he had, we believe, weak eyes as a result of his wrong course in persecuting the Church; and that wrong course was, no doubt, largely the result of heredity. When the Apostle speaks of the sufferings he endured on account of his eyes, he does not speak of them as the sufferings of Christ, but says that his affliction was a messenger of *Satan* to buffet him. (2 Cor. 12:7.) We might then say that all physical sufferings resulting from heredity are ministers of Satan opposing us, causing us much difficulty. However, we believe that the Lord is pleased with us if we resist these ministers of Satan.

If we should think of all our physical pains and aches as sufferings for Christ, then we should be obliged to think of our mental defects also as sufferings for Christ. For instance, a man who had a disabled hand might have a comparatively even temper; another might have a perverse temper, leading him into trouble, leading him to busybody in other men's matters, etc. Thus his disposition causes him to suffer as a *busybody* and not for Christ. St. Paul tells us that our defects in character are works of the fallen flesh. (Gal. 5:19-21.) If the sufferings that come to us because of imperfect mental conditions are sufferings of heredity, the physical sufferings which result from imperfect physical conditions, cannot be counted as sufferings for Christ.

In the case of a Christian, inherited weaknesses and those brought upon himself by the violation of the laws of God previous to his entrance into the family of God as a son, while not sufferings with Christ, will be made advantageous to him. These weaknesses our Father sees fit to leave with us, but assures us that His grace will be sufficient for us. (2 Cor. 12:9.) While the realization of such care for our interests is humiliating in that it forces conviction of our weakness, yet it is refreshing and inspiring in that it proves our Father's love for us. "The Father Himself loveth you."—John 16:27.

SUFFERING TURNED TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW CREATURE

But when one has undertaken to follow in the footsteps of Christ and has been begotten as a New Creature, whatever affliction that *New Creature* undergoes because of following the Lord, is suffering as a Christian; and whatever our experiences in suffering may be, these are not necessarily the portion of the sons of God, for the angels do not suffer; but He permits the Church to have them in order to develop and crystallize character. If we rejoice that we are found worthy to share in the sufferings of the present time, every trial will be turned to advantage as a part of our Christian experience. "They are not of the world." (John 17:16.) Therefore all of our experiences must be regarded as Christian, for correction in righteousness and for educational purposes.

But this is taking a broader, deeper view than ordinary. Certainly a Christian is not to be ashamed of what he may suffer because of his loyalty to the Lord, to the Truth and to

the brethren. In these sufferings he is to glorify God and to be thankful for them. He is to be glad for the opportunity of enduring something, to show not only the Lord, but himself also that he has endured something for Christ's sake. Every sacrifice that we make is for the purpose of suffering as a Christian, and we are not to be ashamed so to suffer.—I Peter 4:16.

SUFFERING FOR CONSCIENCE NOT ALWAYS SUFFERING FOR CHRIST

There are others who suffer more or less as Christians suffer, but they are suffering from a worldly standpoint. People sometimes say, "This worldly man has his trials and sufferings, and shows such patience, such resignation, that surely he is suffering as a Christian." But we do not understand that anyone can suffer as a Christian unless he takes the steps necessary to make him a Christian. We are to view matters from God's standpoint. Doubtless many have suffered as Christians from a human viewpoint who were not Christians. In the Dark Ages many were put to death for the sake of principle. In our own day there are people who give no evidence of being Christians, but who would rather die than have the Bible taken out of the public schools. Although they do not understand the Bible, yet if these were times of persecution, many would die at the stake in order to keep the Bible in the public schools.

We cannot always tell whether suffering is for Christ's sake. But where people have suffered for conscience' sake, they have thus cultivated character, and will get a blessing in the next Age for that suffering. At present there is only the one door into membership in the Body of Christ—obedience even unto death. Suffering with Christ, as we have seen, is not the ordinary suffering common to all in the fallen state, but only such experiences as are the result, more directly, of following Christ's example in advocating unpopular truths and in exposing popular errors. Such were the causes of the sufferings of Christ; and such will be the causes of suffering, persecution and loss to all who follow in His footsteps. Such will have fellowship in His sufferings now, and in the end will be counted worthy to share in the reward given for faithfulness to principle.

Throughout the Gospel Age this course has meant self-sacrificing labor and endurance of reproach in the sowing and watering of Christ's doctrines. Now, in the end of the Age, it means a similar fidelity and endurance in the Harvest work now in progress—faithfulness even to the laying down of life itself, whether it be required by the gradual process of working it out in the Master's service, a dying daily, or by being brought more abruptly to a martyr's death.

SHRINKING BACK FROM SUFFERING

Our Lord forewarns us that in the end of the Gospel Age, many who have a love for Christ will allow their love to grow cold because of the iniquity and sin in the world. (Matt. 24:12.) It will be a test for such to decide whether they will follow the Lord in self-sacrifice as His disciples or whether they will partake of the worldly spirit. We see this test in operation now. A great many people who name the name of Christ, who really

love the Lord, who appreciate much of His character, who would like to see the right prosper, nevertheless have no thought of making a spectacle of themselves before men. They would like to do right, to walk honorably, and to have the favor of men as good citizens. But as to being warm and faithful followers of the Lord—through "evil report and good report" (2 Cor. 6:8)—their faith and zeal are not sufficient to endure the test.

The Lord Jesus gives us the invitation to become joint-heirs with Him. He has very clearly informed us that to follow in His steps will mean trials and difficulties in the flesh. He says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (John 16:33.) St. Paul repeats the sentiment, saying, "We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God"; and again in our text he emphasizes the thought, saying, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution.*" (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12.) There is no other way to enter the Kingdom than by self-sacrifice, deadening of the flesh, mortifying it. In proportion as the New Creature grows, the old creature perishes, until the sacrifice shall have been completed in death.

The Lord's people should thoroughly understand the terms and conditions upon which they have been called. They should therefore not think it strange when trials come upon them, no matter how fiery, no matter how severe. The Apostle Peter lovingly counsels the Church: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some *strange* thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on *their* part He is evil spoken of, but on *your* part He is *glorified.*" (I Peter 4:12-14.) The Lord is to be not only the Instructor, but also the Refiner to purge out the dross, that we may be made ready to share with Christ in the Kingdom of "glory, honor and immortality."—Rom. 2:7.

TRIALS FROM FALSE BRETHREN

The Scriptures plainly teach that special trials may be expected in the Church, amongst the brethren. And we find it to be true that our severest trials come not from without, but, as the Apostle in substance says, "From among yourselves shall arise false brethren," to injure the flock in general through personal ambition. (Acts 20:30.) This becomes a test not only to the Church, but to all those who are in contact with us, for if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.—I Cor. 12:26.

We are not, therefore, to think it strange if there are trials and difficulties, and if more or less dispute arise in the Church. We are to cultivate gentleness, meekness, patience, loving-kindness toward all. Nevertheless, if a dispute arise amongst the Lord's people, we are to recognize that such things are unavoidable amongst those who have the Truth. Our heads are imperfect, and consequently it requires some time to come into line with the teachings of the Lord's Word. Even disputation makes life an activity, and is better than a dead condition—not to care what is spoken or not spoken. Nevertheless, those who have zeal should be careful that they manifest the Spirit of the Lord, as above indicated—gentleness, patience, meekness, brotherly kindness, love, humility.

Think it not strange that there are fiery trials *amongst yourselves*, arising from one cause or another, that will make it particularly severe for you. Those among whom you are thrown in contact will cause you suffering, because of your zeal and their misunderstanding, their imperfection, etc. Similarly, you may be a cause of trial to others. All of these fiery trials will work out good for you. It is far better to be amongst those who are fervent in spirit than to take a place amongst those who are lukewarm and thus lose the privilege of being one of those who are footstep followers of Christ. Perhaps those who are lukewarm will, in the Time of Trouble, learn a lesson. But the Little Flock are to learn their lesson in the present time—allowing the experiences of life to work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. 4:17.

Our knowledge of God is limited; yet it is only what we should expect of the Heavenly Father, that any whom He accepts as His children will have Divine love and care in the supervision of their affairs, which will make all things work for good to them. Since the Lord is our Shepherd, no one is able to pluck us out of His hands. (John 10:28, 29.) We are as dear to Him as the apple of His eye. He that began a good work in us is able to complete it in the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6.) So the more faith we have the more we appreciate the text, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) This includes even the things that seem to be very contrary, very evil, very disadvantageous.

Our Lord said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." (John 17:3.) To know the Father means to be in fellowship with Him, to have an intimate acquaintance with Him. Experience corroborates this fact. The more obedient we are as children the more intimate is our acquaintance with Him. And if we are unfaithful, even for a little space, we shall fail to make development along spiritual lines. But in proportion as we are seeking to walk in His ways, we become intimate with Him in the particular sense in which a child knows his father. This knowledge gives us the trust that He cares for us as His children, and makes all things work together for good to us.—Rom. 8:28; I John 1:6, 7.

CO-OPERATION WITH GOD TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY

We note, however, that St. Paul says that all things work together for *good*, not for *best*. God has something to do in the way of His choice of His reward and of our possibilities. The angels of God, however obedient to Him, could not become archangels nor cherubim. Their obedience brings their highest welfare on their own plane. So with us. We cannot get the best for the reason that He has already given it to Jesus Christ, whom He has set next to Himself at His right hand in power and glory and honor.—I Peter 3:22.

Again, this promise is not a guarantee that all things in life will work together for the very best to us as though we had neither will nor choice in the matter. We should not say, "I positively resign myself; the Lord has said that all things will work together for the

best, and if I miss opportunities in the service I shall say, 'Oh, well, it is all for the best.'" Thus to think would be a mistake, for it is evidently not at all the thought.

After we have become New Creatures in Christ and children of God, He leaves us with a certain amount of choice. It is very largely in our own control what we shall do, whether we shall make progress or stand still or go backward. We cannot say that if one had lost the High Calling his experiences would be the very best possible; and that if he went into the Second Death, his fate was the best. But we can say that this Scripture means that God stands ready to give us the best that He may have under the terms and conditions of the Covenant which He has made with us.

Ours is a Covenant of sacrifice. There are certain laws and principles which are not to be broken. Along these lines the Lord Jesus tells us that the Father will appoint those next to the Lord who have demonstrated most of the Spirit of the Redeemer. He will not put anyone in such a position or into the Kingdom arbitrarily. His Character, His Words, stand pledged that He will make the best of us that He is able to do, while at the same time recognizing our wills as paramount.

Jehovah does not seek those as His children who need to be forced. Our Lord said that the Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:23.) We are to work to the best of our ability. But with all of our stumbling the Lord stands pledged that He will not leave us if we are faithful, and that He will make even our stumbling work out for good to us. Those who lose the crown may come up through great tribulation with the Great Company class. This is the best thing possible for them under the Divine arrangement. For those who go into the Second Death, their fate will not be the best for *them*; but it will be best for the entire universe that those should be blotted out of existence who are out of harmony with righteousness.

MAY 18

We which have believed do enter into rest—Heb. 4:3.

Our rest in the Lord is as complete as is our belief in Him. He who believes fully rests fully; he who believes only partially rests but partially. The ideal condition of the spiritual Israelite is the attainment of a perfect rest, a perfect sabbath-keeping, in his present experience, and a waiting and laboring for another and still more complete rest—the actual rest of the perfected condition—the rest that remains for the people of God. "Let us therefore labor to enter into that rest [sabbath], lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief [of fleshly Israel]" (Heb. 4:9-11)—Z '99, 253 (R 2534).

The weekly sabbath of the Jews, with its rest from labor and its worship, fittingly symbolizes the Millennial Sabbath, with its rest from the curse and its service of God. Our faith-justification reckons to us the Millennial rest in its perfection, and enables us to have the rest of faith in Christ's finished work. In consecration, we labor earnestly even unto death, to be enabled to enter into the rest that remains for the people of God in His glorious Kingdom—P '33, 79.

Parallel passages: Isa. 26:3; Heb. 4:3-11; 3:14, 18; Matt. 11:28-30; John 14:27; 16:33; 20:19; Acts 10:36; Rom. 2:10; 5:1; 14:17; 15:13, 33; Eph. 2:14-17; Phil. 4:7, 9; Col. 1:20; 3:15; 2 Thes. 3:16.

Hymns: 244, 48, 97, 107, 176, 179, 305.
Poems of Dawn, 178: *God's Perfect Peace*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 104 (R 5433).

Questions: Have I this week enjoyed the rest of faith? How? What hindered or helped therein? What resulted?

GOD'S PERFECT PEACE

LIKE a river glorious is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious in its glad increase.
Perfect; yet it floweth *fuller* every day;
Perfect; yet it groweth *deeper* all the way.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand;
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry toucheth spirit there.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the Sun of love.
We may trust Him solely, all for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly, find Him wholly true.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

R5433: FAITH THE BASIS OF TRUE REST

"We which have believed do enter into rest."—Hebrews 4:3.

IN OUR text St. Paul refers to the fact that the Law provided for the Jew a physical rest for the seventh day of the week, for the seventh year and for the forty-ninth and fiftieth years; and that these Sabbaths were typical of a better rest. He points out that all who believe in Christ enter into rest, and thus keep a continual Sabbath. As New Creatures we rest all the time, if so be we abide in the Lord and in His promises.

The Apostle says that faith is necessary to rest. He tells us what to do in order to avail ourselves of that which God has already provided for us. He shows us that God made promises to Abraham, and these were reiterated to Isaac and to Jacob. God declared His purpose to have a special, holy nation, and promised Abraham that the blessing of the world should come through his Seed, who would constitute this chosen nation. The promises were great and precious.

Abraham believed the Message and was glad. He rested. He did not know the way by which God would bring about the blessing, but he had the promise of God, confirmed by His Oath. He did not need to know then about the Lord Jesus or the Plan of Salvation. He had full rest in fully believing God; and so did as many of his posterity as exercised the same faith as Abraham. Isaac and Jacob and many of the Prophets, including the Prophet David, thus trusted God. Their writings show that they were fully in harmony with God. They realized that He had made a gracious provision for the future, and that this provision was for the world in general; yet they knew that they were to have a "better resurrection" than that of the world. They had a rest of faith in these things that God had not yet accomplished.

Our Lord Jesus declared that Abraham saw His day and was glad. He did not see it with his natural eye, but with the eye of faith. He saw the Day in which Christ, who has died for all men, will uplift the human family, raising the world up out of sin and death—first exalting His Bride, and finally causing the blessing of God to extend to every creature. This is just what God promised to Abraham—"In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Abraham was glad, and everybody else is glad who sees it. Abraham was content to see that there was to be a great blessing for his posterity, and through them for the world. He did not see God's Plan clearly, as we see it, but he saw enough to make him rejoice.—John 8:56.

INCREASING LIGHT AND GREATER TESTS

Coming down to our own Age, we see that a greater light, a greater privilege, has brought greater tests of faith in many respects. Abraham was tested in that he was told to offer his son Isaac in sacrifice. He knew that the promises were to be fulfilled through this son, but he said, It is for me to be obedient; God can raise my son from the dead. This shall not hinder my faith in the outworking of God's Plan.

We of the Gospel Age have not heard God's voice speaking to us audibly, as did Abraham; but we live in the time of a further development of the great Plan of God. He has sent His Son into the world, who was made flesh and dwelt among us, and who died, "the Just for the unjust."

Unbelief would assert that if Jesus had been the Son of God He would not have died; but there was a mortgage held on the human race by Justice, and their case was hopeless unless a Redeemer should be provided. So the eye of faith today is able to grasp God's purposes in a fuller way than did Abraham. Yet we do not know that our faith is any greater than his; for even if we have more trials and difficulties, we have also greater opportunities and greater light. Abraham had full faith, full confidence in God, and no one could have more than this.

The Lord's people of the present time believe that mankind are to be rescued from sin and death. Some have more knowledge than others, and more testing; some who have less capacity cannot endure so severe testing, nor can they enjoy so fully. But all can have the same rest that Abraham had—the rest of faith in God. God has promised to His saints a resurrection to glory and honor and blessing. But these are not actual as yet. We have now only the earnest of this inheritance. It is for faith to triumph and to realize that God can bring us to that glorious condition which He has promised; and He will, if we are faithful. Each in proportion to his knowledge and faith will have rest. The most learned and the most ignorant can have this rest, if only they believe God.

REST PROPORTIONATE TO FAITH

The rest we have entered into is not our ultimate rest. If we have the faith today, we may have the rest today; if we lose the faith, we also lose the rest. But a perfect, permanent rest awaits us. God has promised us certain great and precious things. He is our Creator and our Father, and will do for us the things He has promised. And according to our *faith* it will be unto us—much faith, much rest; little faith, little rest. Those who are in harmony with God believe His testimony.

This does not imply that all who have been of God's children have believed all of the Divine Plan; for we see that this would not be possible. Some have had greater opportunity for believing; and some have had less. We who live today have much more advantage than those who lived prior to our day. Our test, then, does not come so much from lack of *knowledge*; but it is a test of faith in God, and obedience to the light now

given us. Having this great flood of light now granted at the close of this Age, our faith should be very strong, and we should seek to increase it more and more by gaining all the knowledge now due. We should grow in faith, grow in grace, grow in knowledge and grow in love. We enter into a deeper and more intelligent rest if we avail ourselves of the helps which the Lord has provided for us. If we truly *believe*, we will manifest our belief by works in harmony therewith.

In Scriptural usage the word *believe* implies much more than merely to acknowledge a fact or a truth. The great Truth before us all is what the Bible calls the Gospel, the Good Tidings. The belief referred to in our text is belief in this Gospel: We who believe the Gospel do enter into rest. What is the Gospel that we believe? It includes all the features of God's love and mercy to us as a fallen race—His proposition for eternal life through Christ, with all the blessings this involves. To the Church the Gospel—the Good Tidings—includes also the offer to us of joint-heirship with Christ in the Kingdom.

One might have an intellectual belief in these promised blessings without entering into the rest mentioned in our text. But this form of belief is evidently not in the Apostle's thought. To the extent that the individual recognizes those facts, accepts them and acts upon them, to that extent he enters into rest. If he believes partially, he rests in that proportion; if he believes more, he rests more; if he believes perfectly, he has perfect rest, and will show his faith by his works. The Gospel Message is so wonderful that any one who believes it will desire to avail himself of its blessings. If the opportunity is presented of becoming a joint-heir with Jesus to the Divine nature, and the mind can grasp the proposition, one would really be a fool if he did not accept such an offer. So any one who does not accept does not believe, in the sense the word is used in our text. All who *truly believe* will accept such an offer and will enter into rest by faith.

HEART CONFIDENCE ESSENTIAL

The expression of the text, "We who have believed," implies that the belief has reached the *heart*, and will thus affect our course in life. And the second part of the statement, "do enter into rest," implies that the rest is gradually coming to him because he has believed. He has first believed; and the fulness of rest is a condition to be attained gradually as his faith grows stronger, and as he learns to appreciate more fully what he has accepted.

"With the *heart* man believeth," and not merely with the *head*. It is not a mere *intellectual* belief. When we accept the Gospel as a *fact*, and enter fully into it, we begin at once to have a measure of this rest; and as we learn by our experiences how true the Lord is to all His promises to us, the rest becomes more deep and abiding. The belief was at first a full belief in the Message of God; but as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of God, the more firm and established does our faith become, and our rest is proportionate.

MAY 19

We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves—Rom. 15:1

Principles may never be abandoned for any consideration; but liberties and personal rights may be ignored in the interest of others frequently and to Divine pleasing. The Apostle Paul was ready to go to any length in defense of principle (Gal. 2:5, 11), but in the sacrifice of his earthly rights and privileges and liberties for the sake of Christ and the Church, the Apostle evidently came next to our Lord Jesus and is a noble example to all the Church—Z '97, 75 (R 2118).

Those who are weak put more or less of the weight of their burdens upon others, and those who are strong may very fittingly relieve the weak of a part of their too great weights, even if it be not to the pleasing of their human nature. This is the Law of Christ for us, that as He did not indulge Himself but bore the weakness of others, so should we bear the weaknesses of our brethren—P '32, 48.

Parallel passages: Rom. 14; 15:2-7; 1 Cor. 8:7-13; 9:4-27; Gal. 2:20; 6:1; Matt. 16:24-26; 1 Thes. 5:10; 1 Pet. 4:2; 2 Cor. 5:15.

Hymns: 191, 44, 134, 192, 198, 277, 279.

Poems of Dawn, 289: *God's Anvil*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 309 (R 5555).

Questions: Did I this week help the weak? How? Why? With what results?

GOD'S ANVIL

PAIN'S furnace-heat within me quivers,
God's breath upon the flame doth blow,
And all my heart in anguish shivers,
And trembles at the fiery glow;
And yet I whisper, As God will!
And in His hottest fire hold still.

He comes and lays my heart all heated,
On the hard anvil, minded so
Into His own fair shape to beat it,
With the great hammer, blow on blow;
And yet I whisper, As God will!
And at His heaviest blows hold still.

He takes my softened heart and beats it,
The sparks fly off at every blow;
He turns it o're and o're and heats it,

And lets it cool, and makes it glow;
And yet I whisper, As God will!
And in His mighty hands hold still.

Why should I murmur? For the sorrow
Thus only longer-lived would be;
It's end will come, and will, tomorrow,
When God has done His work in me;
So I say, trusting, As God will!
And trusting to the end, hold still.

He kindles, for my profit purely,
Affliction's glowing fiery brand,
And all His heaviest blows are surely
Inflicted by a master hand;
So I say, praying, As God will!
And hope in Him and suffer still.

R555: THE ROYAL LAW OF LOVE

"We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification; for even Christ pleased not Himself."—Romans 15:1-3.

AS CHILDREN of God each one of us should use care that others are not injured by our liberty in Christ; for this would be condemned by the Law of Love. The Apostle clearly emphasizes this thought in this Epistle to the Church at Rome. He points out that all the Lord's children are not alike "strong in the faith." Some, weak in the faith, can see that Jesus is our Redeemer, but cannot realize as yet the *liberty* which we as sons have in Christ. One realizes that he is at liberty to eat whatever agrees with him; while another, who is weak, eats vegetables only, lest he violate some law under which he thinks himself. Some Christians condemn their brethren who eat meat, seeming to forget that our Lord ate flesh. We should learn to grant each other full liberty of conscience; the stronger should not despise the weaker, nor should the weaker judge others by himself. It should be sufficient for each of us to know that God accepts the others as well as ourselves, and manifests His acceptance by blessing them in His service.

It is the same with reference to observance of days. One esteems one day above another, as the Apostle says; while another esteems every day alike. Let each carry out fully the conviction of his own mind—whatever he believes to be the will of God for himself. When St. Paul urges that each "be fully persuaded in his own mind," he does not mean that each should make up his mind what is the will of God for all His children, and then stick to his opinion, whether right or wrong, and be unwilling to listen to or consider the thought of any others of the brethren on the subject. On the contrary, he urges growth into the full liberty of Christ, counseling patience and consideration on the part of the

stronger for the weaker. He approves the stronger, and plainly states that the brother who thinks himself under bondage regarding the eating of meat, the observance of Sabbath, etc., is the *weak* brother.

LOVE AND CONSIDERATION FOR THE WEAKER

The Apostle, however, counsels that if the weak brother observes such a bondage, not as an attempt to "keep the Law," and to justify himself thus before God, ignoring Christ's redemption-sacrifice, but because he thinks that our Redeemer wishes him to be bound by such ordinances and observances, than the stronger ones should not rail at his conscientious weakness, or make light of it, but should receive him as a brother, trusting that discipline, experience and growth in grace and knowledge will gradually bring him to the liberty which others of the brethren reach more quickly.

Those strong ones who enter fully into the spirit of the Apostle's statement, "It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak," and deny themselves what their consciences permit, have the greater blessing. They can realize in an additional degree that they are following in the Master's steps; "for even Christ pleased not Himself." But if the stronger brethren by sarcasm and influence should try to force the weaker ones to use a liberty which they do not realize, it would be forcing them into sin. Therefore the weaker brethren should be left to the liberty of *their own consciences*. The influences of love and truth alone should be brought to bear upon them, in the hope of gradually educating them to an appreciation of their full privileges as free men in Christ.

Thus the Body of Christ may be full of charity and unity, each member carrying out the convictions of his own mind as to the Lord's will, and each seeking to grow in grace and in knowledge, out of childhood's weakness into manhood's strength, as rapidly as possible, being developed as he feeds upon God's Word.

The Apostle refers especially to the observance of *days* as a lack of development, saying (Galatians 4:10, 11), "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am anxious on your behalf, lest my labor for you has been in vain." He here addresses those who had once known the liberty of sons of God, but who were now going again into bondage through false teaching. He recognized in them an evidence that they were not growing into the liberty of sons of God, but going backward toward the servant condition; and he was fearful that this weakness and failure to maintain the liberty of sonship might lead them even to reject the Gospel—that Christ gave Himself for our sins—and accept as a gospel a hopeless substitute—that Christ would save them if they *kept the Law*.

But glorious is the liberty of the sons of God! Let us stand fast in it, as the Lord enables us to grasp it in its fulness, yet at the same time extending sympathy and love to those who have not yet reached the high vantage-ground where they can get a broad, comprehensive view of our blessed standing in Christ. Thus we bear the infirmities of the

weak brethren, our companions in the Way, and thus we are in harmony with the Law of Love.

THE BEAUTY OF SELF-ABNEGATION

The Apostle appears to be drawing to our attention the thought that *selfishness* is the predominating principle of the world. People are seeking generally to please themselves—often unjustly, sometimes justly, but simply ignoring others. He is pointing out that the Christian is to take a different course. We are enlisted under the banner of Christ, which is the banner of Love. We are to look well to the rules which belong to this new order of things of which we have become members. The followers of Christ, instead of seeking their own selfish interests, are to consider the interests of others. Instead of seeking their own pleasure, they are to seek the pleasure of others, where this will not conflict with their vow of consecration.

This does not mean that the disciples of Christ are to seek their own misery. But they are to give their thought and time to pleasing others rather than themselves. The Apostle tells us that this is the example set before us by our Leader, our Pattern—"For even Christ pleased not Himself." He was not in the world to seek to do the things pleasing to His own flesh. Quite to the contrary, He renounced His own fleshly interests and gratification for the benefit of mankind. So we covenant to do when we essay to walk in His steps. The denial of self, the taking up of the cross, means the renouncing of self-will and the leading of an unselfish life, in accord with the Divine Pattern and the Divine Plan.

OUR BRETHREN OUR NEIGHBORS IN CLOSEST SENSE

With this light upon the Apostle's words, our thought is that the primary meaning of the word *neighbors* as used by St. Paul is, those closest to us. That is to say, in the Church of Christ, our brethren are our neighbors; they are the ones nearest, closest to our hearts. All the children of God are our brethren; they are particularly our neighbors because they are on our own plane. We should especially seek to please these to their edification. This does not mean that we should necessarily please them according to the flesh; for this would, in many cases be quite the reverse of their edification. If we please the brethren rightly, we shall rather "stir up their pure minds," their spiritual minds, to love and faith and zeal, to good works. This implies that the word *please* is used here in a limited sense.

It is not possible for us to please all people. The direction of our energies should be for their good as we have opportunity. Even though they be not saints, we should "provoke" them—rouse them—"to *love* and *good* works" as far as possible, and not to *anger* or *malice* or *sin* or anything unworthy. We may not always be successful in pleasing people to their edification. There may be times when even the brethren will feel aggrieved rather than pleased at our efforts to serve them. We think, however, that if we *seek* to please them to edification, striving to exercise the spirit of a sound mind, our course will have the Lord's approval and blessing, whether it has the approval of others—even the brethren—or not.

So let every one of us endeavor to "please his neighbor for his good to edification." This matter of neighborhood, the condition of nearness, extends, next to the Church, to our own families. Of course, as relates to earthly obligations and temporal needs our family would have the *first* claim, and would be our neighbors, very near, according to the flesh. We should seek to please them for *their* edification—should seek to do them good, as here suggested. The same principle would extend, as we can readily see, to the butcher, the baker, the ice-man, etc. We are not to please any of these to their injury, or in any way that would not be for their edification. We are not to descend to the world's methods. If they wish to tell stories that are not good, not pure, we are not to join in with them. If we cannot please them by that which is good, we are to avoid unnecessary contact. We are to do good and to edify only.

THE WORLD RECOGNIZES THE GOOD

We should endeavor to be as pleasing as possible to all of our neighbors. If we rebuke in a rude way, it would not be pleasing to them, nor would it be likely to edify them. There is a way in which we can give proper reproof even to very worldly people. The world has a higher standard morally and religiously than they would be willing to acknowledge. Even if they sneer outwardly, in their hearts they recognize that which is good. We often find people who are impure in their own lives who like the society of the pure. They have some appreciation of the good, even though, being defiled themselves, they are likely to defile whatever they touch.

It would not be proper for us to expect that we can do a great deal of good to worldly people—at least that much fruitage will generally be manifested—at present. Our aim should always be to please as far as possible, as far as loyalty to God and the Truth will permit. We should not be of that "grouchy" sort, always going through the world with a quarrel. Rather we should let our light shine, that they may see our good works, and thus "glorify God in the Day of their visitation." A sweet, kindly spirit is the very best recommendation we can give the world now of the power of the Truth. The Lord's people should be kindly disposed toward all men—in the Church especially, but also toward all with whom we come in contact.

A WORD OF WARNING

Let us here say that we fear that some of the Lord's children who have a husband or a wife not in harmony with the Truth, or perhaps more or less in harmony, but not fully consecrated to the Lord, make a mistake and perhaps by their example prevent the development of further interest in the companion. If, for instance, a husband is fully consecrated and his wife is not, the husband should exercise great care that his zeal for the Truth does not lead him to neglect his duty in helping to lift the burdens of household care, etc., which are pressing upon the wife. Volunteer work, meetings, etc., should not so fill his spare time as to cause him to overlook the fact that he owes a very special duty to his wife in ministering to her real needs or comforts.

We fear that some have been embittered and hindered from a full acceptance of the Truth or led to opposition by such lack of loving, thoughtful consideration on the part of the companion who professes entire consecration to the Lord. If we really are fully the Lord's, our home is the first place where this should be demonstrated. No amount of zeal for the service of the Truth outside of our homes will excuse us from the *duties* which we owe to our families and which they have a *right to expect*. To fulfil our obligations is a real service for the Truth, and often a most effectual one. If there is water or coal or wood to carry, or other real services which a husband may and should render to his wife, these should not be neglected for any other service. If she is willing to attend some of the meetings, let him show an appreciation of her company and a pleasure to have her go.

The same rule applies to the consecrated wife. Some time and personal service are just requirements of the husband; and the wife should exercise the spirit of justice, love and of a sound mind along this line, and not give her companion just cause to feel that he is forgotten, unloved and uncared for because of the wife's new interests. The husband is the rightful head of the home. There are duties which are *obligations* to every child of God, and to neglect or ignore these may be the cause of incalculable harm. The real duties of a husband or wife or parent or child are never abrogated when we give ourselves to the Lord. Each consecrated saint should seek by prayer and by the study of the Word and of Divine providences in our lives to discern the will of the Lord concerning us, that we may be "living epistles" which shall glorify our God, and not bring a reproach upon His cause or upon our own Christian profession.

SACRIFICE OUR SPECIAL MISSION

Each member of the Royal Priesthood is to remember that the special mission of our office, our vocation, our calling, in the present time is to sacrifice. One form of service frequently not discerned by the Lord's people is the opportunity of renouncing our own desires or plans, our own methods or preferences, and in the interests of peace accepting instead the plans, the desires, the preferences of others—where it is merely a matter of personal preference. Where we believe the Lord will be as well pleased to have the matter the one way or the other, a yielding of our own wishes often proves a blessing, both to the one yielding and to the one receiving the kindness and consideration. This is the spirit of love, the spirit of the Master.

In the Body of Christ the different members have their various inherited weaknesses against which they must wage a lifelong warfare; and these weaknesses are sometimes of such a nature as to interfere to some extent with the rights and comforts of others as well as of themselves. And just here the Apostle offers the word of counsel, "We, then, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." This does not imply that we should not expostulate with such a one and endeavor to help him to get rid of his infirmity. This we should do, in the spirit of meekness and kindness, while we humbly endure the trial of our patience. It is his good that we are to seek, not chiefly our own greater enjoyment of physical or mental comfort. We are to please him for *his edification*, not by simply ignoring his fault, as though we considered it right, but, if there be suitable opportunity,

by kindly urging him to strive against it, still humbly and patiently submitting to the discomfort it brings to us.

If this spirit prevails, the Apostle further shows (1 Corinthians 12:24-26), there need be no schism in the Body; for the members all have a mutual care and a mutual love one for another—a care which seeks to encourage and strengthen all that is good and to discourage, by our example and sometimes by a kindly word, all that is unbecoming, and a love that throws its mantle over a deformity and endeavors to conceal a fault rather than to expose the weaker brother or sister to the reproach of the other brethren. Thus, in the true Church of Christ, which is knit together in love, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with him; or if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with him, and to some degree share the honor, just as in an earthly family, when one member rises to an honorable distinction, all the members of the family partake of that honor and joy.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!

For such self-sacrificing love how necessary is the spirit of humility, gentleness, patience and faith! The Master's words along this line are very forceful—"Except ye be converted [from the spirit of the world to the Spirit of Christ] and become as little children [in meekness and teachableness], ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." This blessed Law of Christ, the Law of Love, should rule in all who have taken by consecration the name of Christ. Its hallowed influence should radiate from us, not only among the brethren, but also out upon the world, as a powerful witness to the effect of the grace of God in the heart. Thus we shall demonstrate to them that the love of God received into a life brings peace and harmony and happiness; that it makes noble, devoted, faithful husbands; more kind, loyal and tender wives; more obedient, loving children; more kind, good neighbors; and that it pours "oil on the troubled waters" of all our experiences, bringing blessing wherever it reaches.

MAY 20

A peculiar people, zealous of good works—Titus 2:14.

A "peculiar people"—not peculiar in dress, nor in manners, nor in language, nor in foolish, senseless forms and idiosyncrasies; but peculiar in that it is separate from the world and the spirit of the world. It has the Spirit of Christ—a spirit of full consecration to the Lord, and separateness from the world and its selfish aims. It is peculiar in its adherence to the Word of the Lord as its only law. It is peculiar in that it rejects worldly wisdom when it conflicts with the Divine revelation. It is peculiar in that it is in the world, but not of the world. It is peculiar in that it has a decided faith and acts in harmony with its faith, and with zeal. It is peculiar in that it is self-sacrificing and knows no will but the will of its king. It is peculiar in that it knows the Truth and is able to give a reason for the hope within, while others merely speculate and wonder and doubt—Z '97, 95 (R 2127).

The peculiarity of God's people consists in their separateness from selfishness, worldliness, sinfulness and erroneousness, and their dedication to the Lord for His service. They are peculiar to the Lord in the sense that they are owned by Him, and are for Him, ready for His service in the promotion of truth and righteousness. As such they are enthusiastically active in well-doing, serving in good things, as they have opportunity, all men, especially the household of faith—P '26, 61.

Parallel passages: Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Psa. 69:9; 1 Pet. 2:9; Eph. 2:10; Titus 3:8; Gal. 6:7-10; 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Thes. 3:13; 1 Thes. 5:15; 1 Tim. 6:18; Heb. 13:16.

Hymns: 275, 267, 20, 200, 78, 125, 116,
Poems of Dawn, 169: *Go, Labor On*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 151 (R 5460).

Questions: Have I this week acted as one peculiarly the Lord's in good works? Under what circumstances? How? Why? With what results?

GO, LABOR ON

GO, labor on; spend and be spent,—
Thy joy to do thy Father's will;
It is the way the Master went;
Should not the servant tread it still?

Go, labor on; 'tis not for naught;
Thine earthly loss is heavenly gain;
Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee not;
The Master praises—what are men?

Go, labor on; enough, while here,

If He shall praise thee—if He design
Thy willing heart to mark and cheer;
No toil for Him shall be in vain.

Men sit in darkness at thy side,
Without a hope beyond the tomb;
Take up the torch and wave it wide,
The torch that lights the thickest gloom.

Go, labor on; thy hands are weak,
Thy knees are faint, thy soul cast down,
Yet falter not; the prize we seek,
Is near—a Kingdom and a crown!

R5460: "THE ISRAEL OF GOD"

"Ye are a chosen generation, a Royal Priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."—1 Pet. 2:9.

IN OUR text the Apostle Peter is pointing out the fact that the Church of Christ is separate and distinct from all other people. For many centuries before our Lord came, the Jews had understood that they were God's people. He had made a special Covenant with them through Moses, which constituted them His people. He had also made certain promises to them dependent on their keeping of the Law. Thus they were His chosen—heirs of certain special promises that were conditioned upon their obedience, and of certain other promises that were stated without specified conditions. God had also promised to make a New Covenant with them, to give them a new heart, to take away their stoniness of heart, etc. But after the First Advent a different arrangement began.

The Apostle is directing attention to the new feature of God's Plan—that during the Gospel Age He is calling out a special people. There will be no competition between the two classes—the new nation and the nation of Israel—for the promises given to Israel after the flesh were *earthly*, and the promises given to Israel after the spirit are *spiritual*. The *Jews* were a "peculiar people" (Deut. 14:2), a special people whom God had separated from the world; they were a chosen generation, or race. They were the generation, or race, of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. This special generation was recognized of God as His people, Jews, Israelites, through the Law Covenant, as well as through the preceding promises God had made to Abraham.

But since Pentecost God has started this other work in the world—another generation—peculiar, separate, selected for a particular purpose. And this generation will all be holy—there will be none but holy ones in it! The other nation had a priesthood, but this new people is a *whole nation* of priests. We see how this description applies to the Church. The Apostle Paul points out that while Aaron and his sons were typical in some

respects, yet they did not typify all the features of God's Plan. They typified how Jesus would die—as a Sacrifice—how all His associates would be sacrificers. But Aaron and his sons did not typify the still higher priesthood which God had in mind when He established the Levitical priesthood. This higher Order of Priests was typified by Melchizedek, the king-priest.—Hebrews 6:20.

CHURCH'S FUTURE TWO-FOLD OFFICE

Jesus is this great antitypical Royal, or Kingly, Priest, and His Church is the Body of this antitypical Melchizedek. Before the new Order can reign as kings, and before they can serve as Priests, they must go through a certain process. The members of this Body of Christ must be first generated. It is a *new race*—all are begotten of the Holy Spirit. As Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit at the time of His consecration, and there became a New Creature, spirit-begotten, so also the Church, those who are to walk in His steps, must first make a full consecration before this new generative power will begin to operate in them.

This power began to operate in Jesus at His begetting, and completed its work in His resurrection. And so with us: This power will complete its work in us when we have proven our loyalty even unto death. When this work has been accomplished in all of the Priesthood class, then they will be of the Royal Priesthood indeed, on the Heavenly plane. This power of the Holy Spirit is not only a generating, or begetting, power, but an anointing power. And the anointing is not only to a priestly office, but also to a kingly office. This New Creation are a holy nation in the sense that they are representatives of a special Government, a Divine Government.

THE HOLY NATION—TYPE AND ANTITYPE

Israel purposed to be a holy nation, and in a typical way they were a holy nation. But in a broad sense, the Church constitutes the holy nation—separate and distinct from humanity. We are a separate nation in every sense of the word—living in the midst of people of the world. We keep *our* laws and also *their* laws. We are obedient to the "powers that be," realizing that the Lord has permitted these and wishes us to be subject to them, wherever our consciences will not be sacrificed. The Lord tells us that as representatives of His Kingdom we are to make known His Message. He tells us that the world is in a rebellious condition because they have become blinded by the Adversary.

And so He sends us as His ambassadors to tell men of His goodness, His Plan, which He purposes to work out, that the hearts of those who have an ear to hear His Message may turn to the Lord. He tells us not to expect many to hear this Message; for they will be so deaf and blind that they cannot understand. But He assures us that by and by their blindness will be taken away, and they will be ready for what He has for them.

The world does not understand us—they do not know that we belong to a different Kingdom; but we understand them. As the Apostle points out, "He that is spiritual judgeth all things." But they *cannot* understand, because no man can understand beyond

his mental status, so to speak. We who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit still understand the *natural* things, but the natural man does not understand the spiritual things—"neither *can* he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"; "they are foolishness unto him." So we dwell in the midst of a perverse race, or generation, fallen into sin for six thousand years. As our Lord declared, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."—John 17:16.

OUR PRESENT GLORIOUS PRIVILEGE

And we are a peculiar people in the sight of the Lord. This word *peculiar* signifies a *separate* people—implying that God had done something special for us. The Lord Jesus has purchased us. His merit—the purchase-price—has been applied on our behalf. The only ones for whom this purchase-price has as yet been applied are the spirit-begotten ones. The Apostle's Message is to these. What object had God in selecting this peculiar people? It was that we might "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." Is God proud, or vain, that He wishes His praises to be shown forth? Oh, no! God wishes His praises to be known because His praises will show to His creatures the great blessings He has provided for them.

If we go out and tell men that "God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," we are showing forth His praises. We are not making *God* happy by so doing—He was already happy. But we are in this doing a great favor to the people who hear: we are telling them that God will bring them back again into His favor; that He will remove the curse. So, then, it is a great privilege now to tell forth the praises of God! But alas! not very many have the ear to hear; yet by our zeal in showing forth the Master's praises, we are doing all that we can to help men back to God.

The greater work by and by will be the work of the Kingdom in ruling mankind, in overthrowing sin, in instructing and healing the people, bringing them into harmony with their Creator. And this will require a thousand years for its accomplishment. This glorious work will be ours! How wonderful it will be to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord—to be higher than angels! We shall be next to Jesus, as He will be next to the Father—"far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named."

"BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH"

But it is not only the honor that we should seek, but also the privilege of service God is pleased to give this class; the privilege of opening all the deaf ears, of awakening the whole world, to see, to know, to understand our God, to realize that the knowledge of the Lord is to fill the whole world—"for the earth shall be *full* of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"—*ocean deep!* (Isa. 11:9.) That glorious work of the future shall be done only by those who have proved themselves wholly loyal to God. If we are careless or indifferent about telling forth the good Message and showing forth His

praises, we shall show that we are not worthy of the Kingdom. Those who prove loyal and faithful to the end will be the ones whom the Lord will exalt by and by.

And in doing this, God has been merely carrying out a course which men have imitated. God laid His plans long before men were born; nevertheless, wise men instinctively follow certain great principles. Napoleon is said to have directed that the various men who were faithful to him be made princes in the countries he conquered. Our Lord says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10.) So we have from every standpoint the greatest encouragement to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." This Scripture implies that we realize we were once in darkness, and that we know we are now in the light.

Comparatively few have had this experience. Those who have been raised out of ignorance and sin into a heart appreciation of God's Plan are the ones referred to here. They could not get this light, except by being begotten of the Holy Spirit and becoming members of this holy nation, this peculiar people. And we cannot do the world greater good than by telling them of God's great favor, and thus helping them also out of darkness into the light. The light is given us that we may let it shine. May we be enabled to sing from our hearts:

"All for Jesus, all for Jesus—
All my being's ransomed powers;
All my thoughts and words and doings,
All my days and all my hours!"

WE ARE NOT OUR OWN

In Titus 2:14, St. Paul sets forth a similar thought: "A peculiar people, zealous of good works." The people here referred to by him are the saints of God, those who are waiting for the fulfilment of God's promises—for those things which were to be brought to them at the coming (during the *parousia*—presence) of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. These are the people who realize that they have been purchased with the precious blood. Some translators render 1 Pet. 2:9 "A *purchased* people, zealous of good works." The Lord's people are a people who have been redeemed, purchased. Whatever they were through the fall, they have been redeemed from that condition. St. Paul, in recounting certain sins, said, "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified."—1 Cor. 6:9-11.

The thought in Titus 2:14 is much the same as in the other. Ye are a peculiar people, a people bought back from Sin and Death, and all such are "peculiar," different from the remainder of mankind. Amongst mankind, in Christendom, we find *some* that are *vicious*, and even amongst the *heathen* we find *noble* people. But these peculiar people of whom St. Paul wrote, are different from all others—they are New Creatures in Christ.

To these, "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." They have new hopes and new aims. They are hoping to attain the highest position offered to any in the Universe; namely, to be made associates in the Government of Messiah. These are very wonderful hopes. And the possession of these hopes by faith constitutes them different and peculiar, separate and distinct from all other people.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PECULIAR PEOPLE

While others seek the emoluments and distinctions of the present time, these count all the things of this world as loss and dross, in view of the wonderful things that God has set before their minds. They have seen the "pearl of great price," and have given their all to purchase it. They see that the Kingdom of God is the most valuable thing that is obtainable now or ever will be attainable. They have recognized the terms upon which this Kingdom-Pearl may be obtained and are seeking to make good the purchase. The terms are self-sacrifice, faithfulness to God at any cost, and patient endurance under adverse conditions, even unto the end.

These peculiar people are seeking to accomplish this work in themselves, because they see that these are the most gracious characteristics and qualities that can be imagined. Hence they are doubly solicitous; they are *zealous of good works*. They love to see others good and happy, and they love to spread the knowledge of God. They love the things that God delights in, because they have the Spirit of Christ. They are interested in reforms—social reform, temperance reform, every kind of reform; but this does not mean that they will engage in these reforms. The same man cannot be a great preacher, a successful farmer, a successful lawyer, etc. If he be a great farmer, he must give up the other things to a large extent. Or if he be a great preacher, he will have to give up, for the most part, other things. Yet he may have *pleasure* in them *all*.

And so with these peculiar people: they have one particular work given them of the Father. They recognize that this work is most important to be done, hence they cannot give their attention to political reform, social reform, or other reform, outside of their own work. For this reason they are called *theorists* instead of *practical* people. Nevertheless they have the most practical plan of all; for *God's Plan* is of all plans the *most practical*. These people, in becoming co-workers, are taking the wisest course. But they do not find fault with others. They see that the only ones who can grasp these things are those who have the eyes to see and the ears to hear; they know that others cannot go beyond what they see. The peculiarities of these "peculiar people" extend to all the affairs of life.

WHAT CONSTITUTE GOOD WORKS

This class of people are wise enough to know that all the Truth even should not be mentioned at once. The Master said to those who had been His close followers for three and a half years, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." (John 16:12.) The Lord's people are eager to do good, but in the way that will be the most effective, and in the way that will not stumble others. The good works, then, that this

peculiar people are zealous of are the works of God. As Jesus said, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me."—John 9:4.

The world cannot appreciate this, not having the Spirit of God, but more the spirit of the Adversary. The world are walking in the way of slander and hypocrisy, more or less. Jesus said, when speaking to the Pharisees, "Ye are of your father, the Devil." (John 8:44.) And when Jesus walked in the way of God, His course was a condemnation to them. Therefore Jesus declared, "The darkness hateth the light," and He forewarned us that it would be the same all the way down through the Age. He warned His followers that they would suffer the same persecution He had suffered. But the Master urged that they be zealous for the Truth—solicitous for it.

Since God has called us to good works, we are to show great zeal, even though it bring upon us the envy and hatred and opposition of others. We are to rejoice, even if we are called to suffer persecution for His sake. And though the world does not appreciate these good works now, they will see and understand by and by, in their day of visitation. (1 Peter 2:12.) They will see that God's Plan was the best plan. The Church glorified will be the channel for blessing the world in general.

Only this peculiar people can now understand these things. Jesus said unto His disciples, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them [the multitudes who went to hear Him] it is not given. ... Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand." (Matt. 13:11, 13.) Only those who have come into this special relationship *can* understand. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His Covenant."—Psa. 25:14.

We find a great many who gladly accept the Truth, and then seem to forget that the only way they can make *progress* in the Truth is to consecrate themselves to God. If they fail to make consecration, they *must* fail to make progress. We should be sure that we give people the right thought along this line. Only those who thus become God's "peculiar people, zealous of good works," can *inherit the Kingdom*.

MAY 21

All scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

It will be well for us all to remember that all the graces of the Spirit, all the progress in the knowledge of Divine things to which we have already attained, that may have helped us nearer to God and to holiness, have come to us through the Scriptures of the Old Testament and through the words of our Lord and His inspired Apostles: nor will it ever be necessary to go to other channels for the true wisdom which would prepare us for the salvation promised—Z '97, 170 (R 2165).

The Scriptures are God in-breathed, and therefore to the man of God they contain a sufficiency of Divine thought as to what he should believe as true, as to what he should reject as error, as to what he should purge from his character, and as to what he should practice for character development. Accordingly, by subjecting his heart and mind to its influence, he is purged from sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, as well as thereby is fully developed in every good word and quality, whereby he is completely prepared for every good work—P '36, 64.

Parallel passages: Deut. 6:6, 7; 2 Sam. 23:2; Luke 1:70; Matt. 22:43; 26:54, 56; John 5:39; 10:35; Mark 12:24; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; Acts 20:20, 27; Rom. 3:2; 15:4; Psa. 19:7-11; 119:9, 11, 97-104; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:21, 25; 4:2; Heb. 3:7; 4:12; 10:24; 2 Cor. 9:8; Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:14.

Hymns: 22, 49, 79, 154, 296, 311, 315.

Poems of Dawn, 7: *The Word of God*.

Tower Reading: Z '03, 186 (R 3210).

Questions: How have I used this passage this week? Why? What was bothersome and what was helpful? In what did it result?

THE WORD OF GOD

OH, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
True wisdom its pages unfold;
And though we may read them a thousand time o'er,
They never, no never, grow old!
Each line hath a pleasure, each promise a pearl,
That all if they will may secure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away,
God's Word shall forever endure.

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
The lamp that our Father above

So kindly hath lighted to teach us the way
That leads to the arms of His love!
Its warnings, its counsels, are faithful and just;
Its judgments are perfect and pure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away,
God's Word shall forever endure.

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
Our only salvation is there;
It carries conviction down deep in the heart,
And shows us ourselves as we are.
It tells of a Savior, and points to the cross,
Where pardon we now may secure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away
God's Word shall forever endure.

R3210: PAUL'S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY.

2 Tim. 3:14—4:8.

"There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

A DREADFUL conflagration burst forth in the City of Rome a few months after Paul was set at liberty, which laid waste a large area of the city during the six days it continued. Nero, the Emperor, "enjoyed the dreadful sight from a turret of his palace, singing and dancing the mime of the 'burning of Troy' during the progress of the national catastrophe." It was rumored that Nero himself caused the fire, and to avert suspicion he had it charged to innocent Christians, of whom, it would appear, there was a considerable number by that time. Christians, being unpopular with their heathen as well as their Jewish neighbors, were made the scapegoats, and they suffered dreadfully. One very careful account says: "Multitudes of every age, of every sex, were arrested. They were slain with the sword; they were exposed in amphitheaters; they were covered with the skins of wild beasts to be torn to pieces by dogs; they were wrapped in sheets of pitch, tied to stakes and set on fire. Nero drove among the people in his chariot, lighted by the flare of these hideous human torches."

The Lord's faithful of today ought to be prepared to suffer similarly for the truth, whether called upon to do so or not. It seems improbable that anything so dreadful should occur in our enlightened day; and yet we have various Scriptural reasons for expecting that within ten years all who stand faithfully and boldly for the truth will suffer to a considerable extent—some of them quite probably even unto death. What charge could be brought against them? We answer, the same charge that could be brought against their brethren of Paul's day—they are unpopular; the world hates them; their loyalty to truth and principle will hinder them from being highly esteemed among men, and probably make them the scapegoat of evil-doers.

It was about two years after this conflagration and persecution that the Apostle was arrested, imprisoned, and, very shortly after, beheaded; and it was while waiting in his prison that he wrote his second epistle to Timothy, who was, apparently, at the time with the Church at Ephesus—where tradition says he remained until his own martyrdom, which probably occurred about thirty years later, in A.D. 96. Our lesson is based upon extracts from this letter to Timothy; it urges him with Mark to visit him at Rome, but he was beheaded before they reached there. The grandeur of the sentiments expressed, the confidence and hope, can be appreciated only when we remember the circumstances bearing upon the Apostle at the time they were written. Realizing that he had come to the end of his own course, he sought to impress as much as possible of his own spirit and zeal upon Timothy—that he might be the more faithful and efficient servant of God. The exhortation is specially applicable to all who seek in any manner to minister to others—and this really includes all of the Lord's people, each one of whom should be a living epistle showing forth and speaking forth the Lord's message as his ambassador. Let us each apply to himself the words of this lesson.

Timothy is first reminded of how great his privileges had been—that he was well born, under religious instruction from his infancy. He is reminded, too, in a most modest manner, of how he had received his understanding of the Scriptures through the Apostle, and had been assured that the instructions were of God—that the Apostle spoke as an oracle of God; "He that heareth us, heareth God." The Apostle points to the Word of God as a great light, or lamp, able to make wise unto salvation. He must have referred chiefly to the Old Testament, since the New Testament was not yet completed; but no one will doubt that if the Old Testament is valuable for the instruction of the Lord's people, the New Testament is still more valuable as its key and elucidation. The Apostle's words give the thought that these divine instructions are for the purpose of making the Lord's people wise unto salvation,—of showing them how they may please God and be acceptable to him under the terms of his covenant. However, the Apostle carefully guards the matter by indicating that such wisdom cannot be unto salvation except through the faith that is in Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus must be recognized as the antitypical Prophet, Priest and King, and must have reverence and obedience as such to the extent of our ability, else there can be no salvation. Ours is not a gospel of works merely, but a gospel of faith, which acknowledges that we cannot perform the works which we recognize to be perfect, but must needs have the merit of our Redeemer imputed to us.

We live in a time when the Bible is more generally in the hands of the people than ever before, but in a time when its inspiration is more generally doubted than it has been for centuries. Only a short time ago the opponents of the Bible, Paine, Voltaire, Ingersoll, *et al.*, were called infidels; but today its opponents and traducers are found in the majority of the pulpits of Christendom, and in the Professors' chairs of nearly all its colleges and seminaries. This recent view holds the Bible to be worthy of reverence because of its age, but not as a revelation from God; it places the Bible alongside of Shakespeare, and draws comparisons in favor of the latter; it attempts to question not only the inspiration of the book, but even its reliability as history. So virulent is this attack that the faith of all Christendom is being shaken to its foundation, and our expectation is that within ten

years there will be a distinct cleavage between those who accept the Word of God and those who reject it, and that amongst those professing the name of Christian the unbelievers will be an hundred-fold more numerous than the believers. This will form a part of the great falling away predicted for that day: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

The best proofs respecting the inspiration of the Scriptures are to be found on the inside—in the divine plan of the ages which it records with such grand harmony. The trouble with the higher critics is that they do not see this internal evidence, but, on the contrary, have accepted the incongruous and unreasonable theories of the dark ages which misrepresent the real teachings of the Bible, and these higher critics are now showing the book (which they believe to be full of inconsistencies) from the outside—endeavoring to prove that it was not written by the people whose names are attached to its various parts. To those who see the divine plan which the book contains, these arguments of the higher critics respecting the authorship of the parts are of little weight; for it matters not to us who wrote the books, so long as we see they contain the elements of a divine plan so stupendously grand that we are confident no human mind conceived it or could have depicted it.

That the Apostle was a firm believer in the inspiration of the Scriptures is evidenced by his declaration, found in this lesson, to the effect that "all Scripture [holy writings] given by inspiration of God, is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for rebuke, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect [complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

In harmony with this testimony of Paul respecting *inspired* writings, we have the words of the Apostle Peter assuring us that holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the holy spirit. (2 Pet. 1:21.) It seems difficult for some to understand how this inspiration could be, and yet the individuality of the writer be maintained. The matter, however, becomes very clear and simple when we consider that God was able to inspire the sentiments and leave much of the clothing of those sentiments to the judgment and taste and mannerism of the prophet, merely overruling where necessary to hinder any misstatement which might prove injurious, and to secure an exactly proper statement of a necessary item.*

How true are the Apostle's words that the teachings of this wonderful book are profitable! What other book ever so inspired us with hopes and joys eternal, and of newness of life in order to attain this? What other book ever proved valuable to so large a number for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness?—None. The value of all other books is in proportion to their fidelity to the teachings of this Book of books. What is true of teachers is true also of books written by teachers: "If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isa. 8:20.

Not only can no man of God be "complete and thoroughly furnished unto every good work" without the assistance of the Bible, but it is admitted even by worldly men that no man's education is complete without a considerable knowledge of this wonderful Book.

The Lord's people who are growing in grace and in knowledge are daily becoming more convinced of their need of the instructions which flow from this Book, by whatever silver tongues and helping hands of explanatory writings the interpretation may come.

After thus laying down the foundation of Timothy's established faith, and after thus urging him to abide, or continue, in those things which he had learned, the Apostle proceeds to deliver his dying charge. He sets the matter forth in a most solemn form, according to the Greek—"I adjure thee [I most solemnly urge upon you, therefore] before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom." We may accept these urgent words from the Apostle as applicable to ourselves. We, also, stand before God; we, also, are trusting in his favor for eternal life; we, also, are adopted into his family, and as sons are hoping to have such experiences as will fit and prepare us for the glorious things the Father has promised to them that love him. We, also, have respect to the Lord Jesus and his appearing and Kingdom—hoping to have a share with him in those future glories and grand opportunities. We, also, remember that that Kingdom is to judge the world, and to judge the fallen angels—the latter, the quick, the living, who have never passed into death, but are restrained by chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day; the former, the race of mankind to which we belong by nature, children of wrath even as others, all of whom are dead, under sentence of death. Hoping for a share in all these glorious privileges, what manner of persons ought we to be! Let us hearken to the charge further:—

"Preach the Word!" All of the Lord's people are teachers; as it is written, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the good tidings," etc. This anointing of the spirit which came upon our Lord, the Head of the Church, comes down to, and covers every member of the body, anointing each one similarly to preach the good tidings, the Word of God's grace and mercy and peace through Jesus—to all who have an ear to hear. The Christian washerwoman is to preach this message; so is the Christian business man and laborer and housewife, each according to his opportunities—and there are surely some opportunities for all. All should be able to show forth the praises of him who hath called us "out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9);—should be living epistles known and read of all men. We are to consider the preaching of the Word to be the chief business of life, and the earning of a living and keeping ourselves in comfort to be secondary and incidental to the one vocation to which we are called of the Lord. He who would hold back the word of truth must surely do so for a reason, and the reason cannot be a proper one. If he has received the truth in the love of it, he will love to tell it forth; and any restraint will, therefore, indicate either that he is subject to the fear of man or ashamed of the Lord and his Word; and the Master has declared that such are not fit for the Kingdom—not fit to be of the Bride class, whatever else they may be fit for.—Luke 9:62.

"Be instant in season and out of season." This cannot mean that we are to violate the laws of reason and decency by intruding the good tidings upon others at times inconvenient and unseasonable to them; but it does mean that we are to have such a love for the truth, such an earnest desire to serve it, that we will gladly accept the opportunity to do so, however inconvenient it may be for ourselves. It is the chief business of our

lives, to which life itself even is subservient, and hence, no opportunity for service must be laid aside.

"Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." This part of the exhortation is not alike applicable to all; too many feel at liberty to reprove and to rebuke. Doubtless many need reproofs and many need rebukes, but how few are able to administer these to profit and not to injury! The Apostle addressed these words in a particular sense to Timothy as an experienced elder in the Church of Christ, and to some extent an overseer amongst the elders. It would be a great mistake to apply these words in general, and for each of the Lord's people to see to what extent he could administer reproofs and rebukes to his brethren. Rather should sympathy go out to such an extent that reproofs and rebukes would be avoided, except as duty, because of responsibility in the Church of God, should necessitate this. Even so experienced an elder and overseer as Timothy must see to it that his reproofing and rebuking and exhorting should be done with all longsuffering—with patience, gentleness and forbearance, and with doctrine (2 Tim. 4:2); showing clearly wherein the principles of righteousness were infringed and pointing out distinctly the Word of the Lord concerning the same. This duty still rests upon those who occupy places of prominence in the Church to which they have in the Lord's providence been appointed; and in proportion as they are filled with the Lord's spirit of love and gentleness and meekness and patience and forbearance, they will strive to perform this delicate and unpleasant business of reproofing and rebuking, where necessary, in most modest language and under the most favorable conditions.

Without knowing how long it would be from his day until the harvest, the end of the age, the Apostle did know distinctly from the Scriptures that a great falling away would come and that the end of the age would be a period of special trial amongst the Lord's people, when every man's work would be tested; as he elsewhere wrote, "The fire of that day shall prove every man's work of what sort it is." In verses 3 and 4 of our lesson he describes the conditions which prevail today in the nominal churches. The time has come when sound doctrine is not endured, when the faithful ministers of the Word are considered back numbers, and when up-to-date higher critics are wanted for all the high-salaried pulpits. The Revised Version says, "Having itching ears will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts [desires], and will turn away their ears from the truth and turn aside unto fables." How true to the facts! In scarcely any of the pulpits of Christendom are the truths of God's Word set forth. The great mass of preaching is largely composed of anecdotes or delineations of science, often falsely so called, or essays on politics, social uplift, etc. The preaching of the Lord is obsolete because the hearts of men have been turned largely from the Word of God to the great Adversary's deceptions—putting darkness for light and misrepresenting the Bible through the creeds of the various churches.

But what should be the attitude of the true soldier of the Cross at such a time? The faithful ministers of the truth, whether they teach merely by example or precept, or by the printed page or orally,—what should be their attitude? It is clearly pointed out by the Apostle saying, "Watch thou in all things, endure affliction [suffer hardships], do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry"—demonstrate what you have

professed and what you know to be the truth, that you are a servant of God and not of man, that you are loyal as an ambassador of the great King in delivering none other than the message he sends.

As clinching this earnest appeal for faithfulness to the Word of the Lord, the Apostle refers to himself—that he must give up the fight; that the end of his life course was apparently in sight; the time of his departure from life was at hand. How we can rejoice that he could and did write the burning words of verses 7 and 8, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith," etc. As we glance through the Apostle's history we concur with his judgment, and see that he was not boasting; but was a faithful follower in the footsteps of Jesus; that he did make a good fight for right, for principle, for truth, for the Lord against sin and selfishness; that notwithstanding its narrowness and ruggedness, he did run faithfully over the course from the time that he started in it; that he did keep the faith to the close, at the cost of self-denial, of self-sacrifice, hardships and persecutions. And here we must remember that keeping the faith is not merely keeping it in us, but is in the sense of faithfully declaring it; for whoever does not declare the good tidings to others will soon lose the faith himself. Let us press along the line toward the same mark for the same prize of joint-heirship with the Lord; and if when we come to the close of life we can say, as did the Apostle, that we have fought well all along the course and kept the faith, the Lord will not say to us that we did not do as much as the Apostle Paul or as much as the Lord Jesus, but having done what we could, having been faithful in the few things and in the small talents entrusted to us, we will hear the welcome words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

These joys of the Lord the Apostle refers to as a crown of righteousness. The Apostles James and John speak of the same crown and call it the crown of life. (Jas. 1:12; Rev. 2:10), and the Apostle Peter speaking of the same calls it the crown of glory. (1 Pet. 5:4.) The thought at the bottom of each of these expressions is evidently the same; namely, the custom in olden times of running races and the giving of a crown to the successful runner at the end of the course. As it was not sufficient to enter a race, or start to run, but it was required that the race be run faithfully and perseveringly to a conclusion, so with this race which we are running as followers of Jesus, it is essential not only that we shall make consecration to the Lord, but that we persevere to the end, and our reward will be the crown of life in the sense that we will get life on the highest plane, inherent life, immortality. It will be a crown of righteousness in the sense that only those who are approved of God as righteous will thus be rewarded and glorified; and our hope is, therefore, that we may be accepted in the Beloved; that the righteousness of the Lord may be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit; and that the rewards which God has promised to those who love him and serve him will be granted to us. The crown of glory is another name for the same grand reward—the glory of the Kingdom, the glory of immortality, the glory of the Father's favor, the glory of being joint-heirs with Christ in his Kingdom.

The Apostle declares that his crown is laid up for him; he did not claim to possess it at the time, except by faith, and he had never seen it except by the eye of faith. This laying

up of crowns is an expressive figure. The Scriptural thought seems to be that when justified believers make a full consecration to the Lord and are accepted as members of the body of Christ, their names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and crowns are set apart for them. If they are faithful their names will never be blotted out and their crowns will never be given to others, but if unfaithful others will be permitted to take their places upon the roll of honor and attain to their inheritance to the crown, their share in the Kingdom.—Rev. 3:11; Rev. 3:5.

The Lord, the righteous Judge, will determine the matter of unworthiness for the crowns. The Apostle's language elsewhere in this letter seems to imply that some who did have confidence in him had lost their confidence, and in the heat of trial had deserted him. "At my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their charge." (2 Tim. 4:16.) He here intimates that he cannot even accept the judgment of the brethren respecting his faithfulness, but that he has appealed his case in the fullest sense of the word to the great Lord and Judge who shall finally determine these matters for him and for all. He is a righteous Judge and, therefore, will not condemn any who are seeking, to the best of their ability, to serve and praise him. He will approve such, but being a righteous Judge none may venture to hope that he will approve that which is evil, unrighteous, unfaithful; hence, if our hearts condemn us not we may have peace with God.

The Apostle was not expecting his crown of righteousness, the crown of life, the crown of glory, at the moment of death; but pointed Timothy forward to the second coming of Christ, and the general giving of rewards, as the Lord has promised, "at that day." We rejoice to believe that we are living "in that day," and hence that the Apostle is no longer waiting, but has received his crown during this harvest time, and we expect that those who are now alive and remain need not wait, but that when the hour of death shall come to them there will be no need of sleeping to wait for a future time, but the death change will mean the immediate entrance into the glorious conditions referred to by the Apostle.

The Apostle distinctly points out that although he, with the other apostles, occupied a high position in the Church of Christ, this did not signify that only the Lord and the apostles were to be crowned as victors; on the contrary, he includes all of the faithful ones of this Gospel age; saying that the crown of righteousness is not for him only, but "for all those who love his appearing." Ah! the loving of his appearing is indeed a close test, whether applied now or in the Apostle's day! The Apostle himself could not have looked forward with joy to the day of Christ's revelation in Kingdom power and glory, if he had not felt that he had fought a good fight and kept the faith courageously; and so it must be with all others who have named the name of Christ and started to run in this Gospel race for the heavenly prize. If they are overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches in any sense, they will put far from them the thought of the Lord's presence and Kingdom; they will not be looking for it and longing for it; they will not be loving it. Those who love the Lord's appearing must of necessity love the Lord himself, and this will mean that the love of Christ will constrain them to endeavor to

serve him and those who are his. John Calvin remarks, "Paul excludes from the number of the faithful those to whom Christ's coming is a source of terror."

MAY 22

God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind—2 Tim. 1:7.

The spirit of the Lord imparted to His people is not a spirit of fear, but on the contrary a spirit of power, energy, zeal awakened by love—loving devotion to God, and a desire to please and serve Him; loving devotion to the Truth, and a loving devotion to God's people and a desire to build them up in holy things, and to do good unto all men as we have opportunity—the spirit of a "sound mind"—a mind that is fortified and strengthened by the Word of the Lord on every subject, and hence, while thoroughly fearless of man, is wise in judging of times, seasons and methods for using the energy of love which burns as a fire within the consecrated heart—Z '97, 170 (R 2165).

As the spirit of fear is a timid disposition, so the spirit of power, of love and of a sound mind is the disposition of power, of love and of wisdom, *i.e.*, a strong, loving and wise disposition. God rids us of a timid disposition by His Spirit, Word and providences, as well as thereby gives us a disposition like His own, in which wisdom, justice, love and power blend in beautiful harmony. Praise be to God for such a gift!—P '30, 78.

Parallel passages: Josh. 1:5-9; Rom. 8:15; Isa. 51:12, 13; Acts 1:8; 6:8; Eph. 1:19, 20; 1 Cor. 1:24-28; 2 Cor. 12:9; Psa. 18:1; 31:23; John 14:15, 21, 24; 13:34, 35; 15:12-15, 17; 1 Cor. 13; Matt. 7:24, 25; 25:1-9; 15:14; 16:19; Eph. 5:15-17; Col. 3:10, 16; Jas. 3:13.

Hymns: 95, 13, 44, 346, 266, 165, 272.

Poems of Dawn, 105: *My Times are in Thy Hand*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 279 (R 5093).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences as to this text? How were they met? To what did they lead?

MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND

PSALM 31:15.

FATHER, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me;
And the changes that are sure to come
I do not fear to see:
But I ask Thee for a present mind
Intent on pleasing Thee.

I ask Thee for a thankful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,

To wipe the weeping eyes,
And a heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathize.

I would not have the restless will
That hurries to and fro,
Seeking for some great thing to do,
Or secret thing to know;
I would be dealt with as a child,
And guided where to go.

I ask Thee for the daily strength,
To none that ask denied;
And a mind to blend with outward life,
While keeping at Thy side,
Content to fill a little space,
If Thou be glorified.

R5093: CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUND MIND

"God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."—2 Tim. 1:7.

IN THIS TEXT St. Paul is addressing the children of God—those who have left the world, who have turned their backs upon the things of sin and selfishness, who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit because of full consecration to God and to whom the Advocate has imputed His merit. They have received of His Spirit, the new mind, and so have the spirit of a sound mind.

In the beginning of the Gospel Age there were marked manifestations of the Holy Spirit, known as "the gifts of the Spirit" (I Cor. 12:4-11), such as knowledge, healing, miracles, tongues, etc. These gifts were bestowed at that time for two reasons: first, to witness who were God's people; and second, to confirm the faith of the early Church. They were necessary that the Church might have a start, so to speak.

The Apostle says that these miraculous *gifts* were to continue only for a time, but that the *fruits* of the spirit were to abide—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, faith, hope and love, the greatest of all. (I Cor. 13.) The gifts of the Spirit died out with the death of the Apostles and of those also upon whom they had conferred the gifts. But the fruits and graces remain to this day.

Just as soon as we have been begotten of the Holy Spirit a transforming work begins with us. But in general the reception of the Spirit is at first without marked manifestation. We *grow* in knowledge, love and all the fruits of the Spirit, in proportion as we have received the Holy Spirit, which is given in order to develop our minds and hearts and to

do a transforming work, bringing forth the fruitage of the spirit in our characters and our lives. With some of us the fruitage develops rapidly; with others, slowly.

The grape-vine gives us gifts in that it bears grapes. As fruit-bearing in nature is in one sense of the word a miracle, so also are the fruits and graces of the Spirit which show in our lives, but which are such a gradual development that they do not seem to be miraculous.

The Lord is the true Vine and His true disciples are the branches. The Spirit of the Vine must permeate all the branches, and the fruit of the Vine must appear on every branch. The one thing necessary to remember is that our ultimate blessing and acceptance of the Father depends upon our abiding continually in this blessed relationship of branches in the Vine and our bearing fruit. If we fail to do this, we shall not remain in this relationship. But if we bear the fruits of the Spirit abundantly, we shall some day be branches in the glorified Vine—The Christ of God.

FEAR A FORM OF SELFISHNESS

In our text the Apostle is discussing the character of this Spirit which God has given us. It is not the spirit of fear, not the spirit of dread, not the spirit of timidity. Where the spirit of selfishness goes, there is more or less fear accompanying it. We can realize that with our first parents the spirit of fear led them to hide themselves from the Lord. We recall that Cain feared and fled. (Gen. 3:10; 4:14.) So all down through the ages, the spirit of fear has exerted a powerful influence upon mankind. If a storm comes up, many people act as if they feared that it was something sent especially after them.

All fear, being a manifestation of one form of selfishness, is made up of the elements of self-love. People fear lest they may lose some of the things which they selfishly desire to retain. The spirit of many of the heathen as well as of many in Christian lands is a spirit of fear. They are serving God, not from a desire to be co-laborers in His work, but from fear. They have been taught that they ought to go to Church. They know not what God might do to them if they were to neglect to go. Some ministers have said, "If I believed, as you do, that there is no eternal torture, I would do all the wicked things imaginable." They show by these words that they are not impelled by a Holy Spirit, but by a spirit of fear, a spirit that belongs to sin. The spirit of fear does not come from God.

There is, of course, a holy fear—a fear to do anything to offend God or to offend a friend. And we ought to be afraid of offending a friend, afraid of hurting or injuring a friend or anybody. If we love our Heavenly Father, we ought to fear to do anything to displease Him.

In Hebrews 4:1 the Apostle says, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Let us not fear evil—but let us fear lest we fail to attain the blessings promised to the overcomers. God will give those blessings only to those who reach a certain development of character. But the fear of the

world is wholly improper. If any of the Lord's people have that fear, they have received it from some other source than the spirit of Truth.

TRANSFORMING INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Apostle proceeds to tell us what this Spirit of the Lord has brought to us. It has been a spirit of power, of strength. All who are seeking to walk after the Spirit and have a knowledge of the Lord's love—these He will not forsake, but will deliver them from evil. These have a courageous spirit, or influence of mind proceeding from this spirit of power. It gives them such energy that they are able to do more than otherwise they could. They astonish themselves. They have the peace of God to work in them to will and to do His good pleasure.—Phil. 2:13.

Those who receive the Truth are very different from what they were before they had received its spirit; and as a rule their neighbors and friends discern the change. Where a wife comes to the knowledge of the Truth, her husband is often surprised to find how much more firmness she has for everything that is right. This firmness is not a spirit of arrogance, but a spirit of assurance that God is able and willing to work things together for good. It is the same with the husband. Many wives have seen how much the Truth has strengthened the husband. This change is due to the spirit of power which the Lord has given His people. In proportion as we get this spirit, we get this power. Of course, some characters are naturally strong, but the Truth will make them stronger. Others naturally weak are made so much stronger that they surprise their friends and neighbors.

All who have been in the School of Christ seem to make like development. They become better people than they have ever been before. They are not necessarily better looking, but the Spirit of the Lord helps them to keep their clothes tidy and neat. It helps them to be more particular as to what they say and how they say it. It influences their words, actions, conduct—everything. It makes them more patient, brotherly-kind. All these qualities are manifested increasingly.

Some who have been a little while in the Lord's service have been remarked upon by others. They say, "These are a very intelligent people. Where did they get their vocabulary? They are not well educated, yet how much they know of affairs in the world! They seem to have a general knowledge of everything." God's Word gives this broad knowledge, and His Spirit gives us power to use this knowledge and to appropriate it to ourselves, for we see it to be the Word of the Lord.

We receive the spirit of love also. The Apostle says that the Spirit of God is the spirit of love, because "God is Love." (I John 4:8.) God's Spirit is God's mind, God's disposition, God's influence. Since God is love, His Spirit must partake of all the qualities which go to make up love.

In proportion to the measure of the Holy Spirit which we have, we shall have *love*—first, toward God; secondly, to the children of God; thirdly, to our neighbors and friends, and lastly it will extend even to our enemies. It would lead us to be considerate of birds

and beasts also. The spirit of love has a generally benevolent influence. Whatever affects the thoughts is sure to affect the words. Whoever has the spirit of love will manifest its influences and will become more loving and more lovable as that spirit increases.

DISREGARD FOR THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS A FORM OF SELFISHNESS

Finally, the Apostle brings in the spirit of a sound mind. Man was created with a well-balanced mind. Adam and Eve did not need an outward record of God's Law. They had the sense of right and wrong so well defined in their minds that they knew right from wrong intuitively. But when they fell, they lost this balance of mind.

As we come down the centuries from their day to ours, we find that this keen sense of right and wrong has become dull. Thus in cannibal lands the inhabitants believe it right to eat each other. They think that if they feed on enemies who are strong, they will be made strong. This utter disregard for the rights of others is the spirit of selfishness. We see this spirit manifested in civilized lands also, where they do not eat up the enemy literally, but eat up his fortune, his reputation.

Our Lord said that while the Pharisees were very particular to give a full tenth of the mint, anise and cummin, yet they had omitted the weightier matters of the Law—judgment, mercy and faith. He showed that the Law which says, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," is more important than the giving of tithes. He also said that the Pharisees were full of extortion and excess, and that they strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel, that they devoured widows' houses.—Matt. 23:23-25, 14.

By this our Lord meant that when a widow was left alone, with no one to look after her interests, some of these professors of religion would get possession of her property if they could. So in our day there are people who scheme to discover how they can injure their neighbor. They do not eat the persons of their neighbors, but they eat their substance, their property. These people are cannibals in spirit.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUND MIND

In proportion as we get the spirit of love, we get the spirit of a sound mind. This spirit leads us to consider what is right and what is wrong, in all the affairs of life. Not only have we the spirit of the Law, but in addition we have the spirit of the Lord to instruct us. The Law says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." The spirit of the Law says that we shall not permit wealth or anything else to take away our minds from the Lord. We today find people worshipping bonds, stocks, giving the best of their time to the worship of Mammon. They do not know what they are doing.

These people are very well illustrated by Bunyan's picture. You remember that when the pilgrims were in the house of the Interpreter, he took them into a room where there was a man with a muck-rake in his hand, drawing to himself straws, small sticks and the dust of the floor. Above his head was one with a celestial crown in his hand. This crown

he proffered to the man in exchange for the muck-rake. But the man neither looked up, nor regarded what was said.

Today we see some who use muck-rakes, gathering all the trinkets of life, not knowing what to do with them after they have been accumulated. When such people die, perhaps these things will be injurious to those to whom they are left. The pilgrims had sound minds, but the man who was raking for sticks and straws and dust had an unsound mind. More or less we see all around us the spirit of an unsound mind, overlooking the things that are really valuable and grasping at trifles.

As we develop the spirit of a sound mind we get to see what things are valuable, and we look at other things as being insignificant. More and more we desire the heavenly things. But the world thinks, "Look at this dust! Is not this fine straw?" or what not. They say, "Get some of these sticks and worm-eaten fruits that we have here." But what they strive for is all illusion.

They say of us that we are of unsound mind because we care for the better things, the heavenly things. So they said of Jesus, "He hath a devil and is mad." (John 10:20.) As the Apostle said, "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God." (2 Cor. 5:13.) Others think it strange that we run not to the same excess of riot. (1 Peter 4:4.) And it is true today that whoever will live godly will be misunderstood, slandered. (2 Tim. 3:12.) But it is for us to show our courage, our faith and our loyalty to the Lord and to manifest His Spirit "of power and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7.) The manifestation of His Spirit will help those who are His to become "more than conquerors." (Romans 8:37.) Thus, even if we are not helping the world, we build one another up in our most holy faith.—Jude 20, 21.

The spirit of a sound mind is a most wonderful manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the Lord's people. It gives them much advantage every way over the remainder of mankind. It sees in the present life opportunities for the attainment of character. It broadens and deepens the mind along all good lines. It makes one less touchy in respect to his own rights, privileges and preferences, and more considerate of the rights and feelings of others.

The spirit of a sound mind makes one's judgment clearer, truer, more trustworthy than before, for it impels him to accept the instructions of the Word of God in respect to what he should and should not do, and to reject his own faulty judgment. The meek will He guide in judgment. Whatever may be the imperfection of mind and body resulting from the fall, those who receive the spirit of a sound mind are thereby made purer, kinder, gentler, less selfish and more thoughtful in regard to others. Those who are thus rightly exercised will develop the spirit of love increasingly until that which is perfect shall have come and that which is in part shall have been done away.—1 Cor. 13:10.

MAY 23

Ye also ought to wash one another's feet—John 13:14.

This would signify that the disciples of Christ should have a mutual watch-care over one another's welfare; to keep each other clean, holy, pure, and to assist one another in overcoming the trials and temptations and besetments of this present evil world, arising from the three sources of temptation, "the world, the flesh and the devil." Only as we cultivate the various graces of the Spirit—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love—can we hope to be specially helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and to get rid of defilements of the world and the flesh—Z '97, 243 (R 2200).

Certainly in exhorting us to wash one another's feet, the Lord did not mean our literal feet, for this under present conditions would be the reverse of the spirit He manifested in washing His disciples' feet. As the washing of their feet by Jesus made them comfortable and thus served them, so His exhortation to us to wash one another's feet would signify to serve one another in love, even in the humblest ways—P '35, 62.

Parallel passages: Matt. 4:19; 10:16-24; 20:25-28; 23:8-11; John 4:36-38; Luke 10:1, 2; Acts 6:3, 4; 13:1-3; 20:24; Rom. 10:14, 15; 1 Cor. 9:16-20; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Eph. 4:11, 12; Heb. 5:4; Isa. 32:20; 52:11; Jer. 20:9; Mal 2:6, 7; John 13:13-17; 1 Cor. 3:7-10.

Hymns: 309, 22, 275, 70, 210, 23, 49.
Poems of Dawn, 169: *Go, Labor On*.
Tower Reading: Z '12, 273 (R 5090).

Questions: Have I this week served the brethren? How? Why? Under what circumstances? With what result?

GO, LABOR ON

GO, labor on; spend and be spent,—
Thy joy to do thy Father's will;
It is the way the Master went;
Should not the servant tread it still?

Go, labor on; 'tis not for naught;
Thine earthly loss is heavenly gain;
Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee not;
The Master praises—what are men?

Go, labor on; enough, while here,
If He shall praise thee—if He design
Thy willing heart to mark and cheer;
No toil for Him shall be in vain.

Men sit in darkness at thy side,
Without a hope beyond the tomb;
Take up the torch and wave it wide,
The torch that lights the thickest gloom.

Go, labor on; thy hands are weak,
Thy knees are faint, thy soul cast down,
Yet falter not; the prize we seek,
Is near—a Kingdom and a crown!

R5090: FEET-WASHING AS A LESSON IN HUMILITY

"Ye also ought to wash one another's feet."—John 13:14.

WE REMEMBER the occasion on which our Lord washed the feet of His disciples. The Lord and His twelve Apostles had met in the upper room to commemorate the Passover Supper. This feast was followed by the inauguration of the Memorial Supper, the bread and wine of which represented the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus. The disciples, full of the enthusiasm which had been incited for some days previous, were all at a loss to understand the sadness of our Lord Jesus. While He was saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38) and desiring that His baptism might be accomplished, they were inclined to think that He was taking a pessimistic view of matters.

During the five preceding days the disciples had witnessed the feast in the house of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, the breaking of the alabaster box of ointment, the riding on the ass, and the spreading of palm branches for the little animal to walk on, and the demonstration of the people, who had cried, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!" (Matt. 21:9.) They had heard the Pharisees ask Jesus to put a stop to this demonstration. But He had said to them that if these people should hold their peace the very stones would cry out. (Luke 19:40.) To fulfil the prophecy (Zech. 9:9) there must be a *shout*, and there was a shout.

We remember that the little company went to the Temple, that the whole city was in commotion, that the rulers were impressed, and that they were afraid of the people. We remember that Jesus had gone into the Temple and had driven out those who sold merchandise; that when the Pharisees, the Sadducees and others tried to make Jesus appear confused, He had wisely turned all their arguments upon themselves; and that they dared not ask Him any more questions, for by so doing they would only make a bad matter worse.

From all these things it must have seemed to the Apostles that they were on the eve of attaining great prominence and that Jesus would be exalted. Therefore, they could not understand His attitude of sorrow. As an evidence, we have the fact that James and John

went to Jesus and asked about the place they might occupy in the Kingdom. Could they be *next to Him*? There was no doubt in their minds that the Kingdom was near. They specially loved Him and would like to have the favor of being near Him. Others might not care so much where they were placed, but James and John would like to be *close to the Master*.

These were the thoughts uppermost in their minds. As a result, when they came to the upper room, they had not the humility of mind to take thought of serving. No doubt it was the custom of the Jews to have a *servant* to minister to the comfort of the guests. But there was no servant here and not one of them had the humility of mind to offer to be the servant. Apparently they not only did not have the disposition to serve one another, but they did not desire to wash even the Master's feet.

SELFISHNESS EVEN IN LOVE

Since it is difficult for us to gage our own hearts thoroughly, we should use great charity in measuring the hearts and intentions of others, and should err on the side of too great sympathy and leniency rather than on that of too strong condemnation. Doubtless had the Apostles been asked as to their motives and conduct, they would have denied that these were selfish, and would have spoken only of their zeal for the Lord and their desire to be near Him. This illustrates to us what the Scriptures declare, that the human heart is exceedingly deceitful, and that it requires careful scrutiny, lest under the cloak of good motives, it harbor qualities which, if recognized, it would spurn.

Apparently our Lord let the matter go to its full limit to see whether or not any of His followers would improve the opportunity to make himself servant of all. He waited until supper was being served (not ended as in our common Version); then, arising from the table, He laid aside His mantle and got a basin and a towel. Then, girding up His garments to keep them from getting into the water, He proceeded to wash their feet.

We can well imagine the consternation of the Apostles as they watched the procedure, and then saw the Lord go from the feet of one to those of another, as they protruded from the couches on which the Apostles reclined. The method of feet-washing at that time was different from that of today. The water was poured from a pitcher in a small stream upon the feet, which were washed and rinsed. The basin was merely a receptacle for receiving the soiled water.

OUR LORD'S ACT A DEEP SPIRITUAL LESSON

This act was a pointed reproof for their neglect to wash *His* feet and *one another's*. They were all silent until He came to St. Peter. When our Lord paused before him, St. Peter said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet!" St. Peter had too much reverence to wish the Lord to be his servant. He had as a natural trait, more than had some of the others, that courage, or boldness, which led him to speak out. But the Lord said to him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." (John 13:8.) St. Peter did not understand how this washing would give him a part with the Lord, but he said eagerly, "Lord, not my feet

only, but also my hands and my head," if this gives me a more particular part with You. The Lord answered him, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." I am doing all that is necessary. What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall understand hereafter.—See verses 7-10.

In all this the Lord was giving a deep spiritual lesson—that no one is naturally fit for the Kingdom. Each one needs to be washed, to be cleansed, before he can be a joint-sufferer, before he can be a joint-heir. He must be a joint-sacrificer in order to become a member of The Christ. Jesus said to His disciples, You have witnessed My humility in this matter, and now I want to tell you that you ought to have this attitude toward one another. You should have been careful for even the humblest one in your number. Whether or not it was by washing My feet and those of all the others, you should have done whatever was necessary for the refreshment of the company.

THE ACT NOT THE INSTITUTION OF A CEREMONY

We are to remember that things were different then from what they are today. Because of the wearing of sandals, the feet would be considerably soiled even after only a short journey and would, therefore, need refreshing. It was the custom that the servant should come forth and make the guests comfortable—not to the inconvenience of the traveler, but to his further comfort. This was a menial service, which afforded Jesus the opportunity to impress upon His Apostles the lesson of the necessity of humility in all the members of the Body of Christ.

We do not get a lesson of the institution of a formal ceremony. It was only a case of *necessity*, of which the Lord took advantage to give a lesson of humility. No such need exists with us today. Our streets are paved and we wear shoes that are closely laced and are sufficient protection. So there is no necessity to wash each other's feet, at a public gathering, to have a public exhibition of feet-washing.

The incident affords a lesson in humility to us as well as it afforded one to the Apostles. We should be glad to do any service, even to the humblest of the members of Christ, in whatever way the opportunity may come. There is no suggestion in the Scriptures that feet-washing was ever done as a ceremony. We have an intimation, however, that feet-washing was a custom in Palestine. In I Tim. 5:9-16, we read that if a widowed sister had washed the saints' feet, meaning that if she had shown such a disposition, St. Paul would advocate a special care for such a sister in need; for she had manifested a loyal and true spirit.

There are some very good Christian people who have adopted feet-washing as a religious custom. We are not to berate them unnecessarily for following their consciences. Rather we should say to them that so long as they think they are doing the Lord's will, they are right to follow the custom; but that the Scriptures relate only this one case where the feet-washing was done in public, and it was very unlikely, therefore, that it was ever done in public by the Church except on this occasion. As the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," has a deeper meaning than that one shall not take the life of another,

so this washing of feet has a deeper meaning. Throughout His ministry Jesus indicated the deeper thought by His treatment of others; He lightened the burden and happified the condition of those with whom He came in contact. So we should do all in our power for the consecrated ones, members of Christ's Body.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ONE ANOTHER

This lesson suggests that the members of Christ's Body should have a mutual watch-care over one another's welfare; to keep each other pure, holy, clean and to assist one another in overcoming the trials, temptations and besetments of this present evil world, arising from the three sources of temptation—the world, the flesh and the Devil. Only as we cultivate the various graces of the Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love—can we hope to be specially helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and in getting rid of the defilements of the world and of the flesh.

It requires peculiar qualifications to enable us to assist each other in this respect. Before we can help others to cleanse their way of life in every little particular, so that every thought, word and deed shall be brought into subjection to the Divine will, it is necessary that we have experience along the same lines. Only as we cultivate purity of thought, word and deed in our own lives, only as we put on the various graces of the Spirit, can we wash the feet of the saints.

Many who would reject well-meant criticism of conduct, who would resent well-meant offers of assistance to a higher standard of character, as interferences with their private business, would be very amenable to the influence of the same person if he approached them with such evidences of true devotion and loving interest as would be indicated by the performance of some menial act. It is the sympathetic ones who are most successful in helping the various members of the Body of Christ out of the besetments and difficulties incident to the following of the Lord in the present time. Oh, let us study and strive and pray that we may be very successful in obeying the Master's injunction, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet!"

How many opportunities we have for comforting, refreshing, consoling and assisting one another in some of the humblest affairs of daily living or in respect to some of the unpleasant duties, experiences or trials of life! By love we are to serve one another, but not as a mere formality. Any service done or attempted to be done in love, with the desire to do good to one of the Lord's people, has, we may be sure, the approval of the Head of the Church.

Let us lose no opportunities of this kind; let us remember the Master's example. Let us not merely assume the guise of humility, but let us actually have that grace of character which will enable us to do kindnesses and service to all with whom we come in contact. Then we shall all the more enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the Body of Christ—The Christ.

MAY 24

Love ... is not easily provoked—1 Cor. 13:4, 5.

However natural depravity and heredity and nervous disorders may tend toward the spirit of fretfulness, taciturnity and touchiness, every heart filled with the Lord's Spirit must oppose this disposition to evil in his flesh, and must wage a good warfare against it. It will not do to say, "It is my way"; for all the ways of the fallen nature are bad; it is the business of the new nature to overcome the old nature in this as well as other works of the flesh and the devil; and few show to our friends and households more than this of the power of the grace of Love. This grace as it grows should make every child of God sweet-tempered—Z '97, 247 (R 2202).

By love not only is thankful good will meant, but more especially the unselfish, disinterested good will which delights in good principles, which appreciates character in harmony with them, which sympathizes with and pities those out of harmony with them, and which delights to lay down life to spread them. Such a love cannot become infuriated. An evil disposition is the reverse of such love. On the contrary, such a love is mild, long-suffering and forgiving—P '34, 63.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 13:4; 2 Cor. 6:4-6; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:1, 2; Col. 1:11-13; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Tim. 3:10; 4:2; Prov. 19:11; Eccles. 7:21; Matt. 5:7, 39-48; Luke 6:35-37; Rom. 12:14, 17, 19, 21; 1 Cor. 4:12, 13; Eph. 4:32; 1 Pet. 3:9.

Hymns: 1, 125, 95, 198, 165, 166, 201.

Poems of Dawn, 119: *A Prayer for Perfect Love*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 5 (R 5603).

Questions: Have I been forbearing this week? How? Why? With what results?

A PRAYER FOR PERFECT LOVE

O GOD! this is my plea,
Whate'er the process be,
This love to know
And if, the prize to gain,
Through sorrow, toil and pain
I go, ere self be slain,
Amen! I go.

Rooted and grounded! yes,
For this I plead. O! bless
My waiting soul.
Will not this proud heart melt
Unless the rod be felt?
In mercy be it dealt,

And make me whole.

To Thee I humbly bow
And pray Thou wilt e'en now
The work begin.
'Tis all that I desire
This fullness to acquire;
This one great Purifier,
Dwelling within.

R5603: RIGHTEOUS AND UNRIGHTEOUS ANGER

"Love is not easily provoked."—1 Corinthians 13:5.

IN THE chapter from which our text is taken, St. Paul sets forth the prime necessity for the cultivation and development of Love, without which, whatever else we may attain, we shall be nothing in the sight of God. The Apostle tells us in the words of our text, that love is not easily provoked. Evidently he uses the word *provoke* here in a very different sense from its meaning where he says that we should "consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works." (Hebrews 10:24.) The thought in the latter text is to incite to good works, to call forth love in others, to exert an influence favorable to righteousness. The thought in our present text, however, is that of being excited, or roused, to anger. St. Paul declares that love is not easily thus aroused, but is long-suffering.

We might say, strictly speaking, that it is not the quality of Love itself that would ever be moved to anger. Yet righteous anger—a just indignation aroused by our love for the principles of righteousness—is not incompatible with love. "God is Love," and the Scriptures assure us that He "is angry with the wicked every day." His anger is righteous indignation against sin.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS ANGER

Looking to God as our great Example, we see that His Love was manifested on behalf of His human creatures in the beginning. It was love for humanity that provided the Garden of Eden with all its blessings and its perfect life, just as His love for the angels had provided all their blessings. But when Sin came in, Love stepped back; or in other words, Justice was the special attribute of God then manifested. It was better for mankind that there should be this punishment for sin; for from the foundation of the world God, foreknowing man's fall, had purchased his redemption. So even in the sentence of death His love for man persisted. But God is the opponent of sin, and when His Law was violated, Love, or He who is the embodiment of Love, was provoked to righteous anger.

God's indignation was likewise kindled against His chosen people, the Jews, when He said to the Prophet (Jeremiah 8:19), "Why have they provoked Me to anger?" Many Scriptures speak of God's anger. That anger has ever burned against sin. It has been

resting upon the world for six thousand years. But the Love of God has in no way been violated by this attitude against the condemned world. Therefore, Love can be justly provoked to anger. He who declares that Justice is the foundation of His Throne never indulges in sentiments which are not in the fullest harmony with that Justice. But He has arranged for the recovery of this condemned race. The Love of God has made this provision for His fallen creatures.

GOD'S LOVE HELD IN ABEYANCE

But Love is not easily provoked, not unjustly provoked. It required an act of *intentional disobedience* on the part of Father Adam to provoke God to anger. It was not because Mother Eve was deceived that the sentence came upon the world. The anger of God came upon mankind and the sentence of death was pronounced because of Father Adam's sin, which was committed with full knowledge. And during all these six thousand years of sin God's Love has been held in abeyance, so to speak, provoked to the point of withdrawal.

But all the while God's character has not changed. He did not cause the diabolical conditions which have existed since the fall of man. Neither Love nor Justice, as embodied in Jehovah, would sanction sin; "The wages of Sin is death." (Romans 6:23.) And everything that goes with death as its natural result is a part of that penalty. But God has permitted these conditions, knowing that by His Power they would all be overruled for the ultimate good of mankind. The great Adversary of God is responsible for the disaster which Sin has wrought upon the earth. But the Almighty will yet cause the wrath of Satan to work out good for the children of men, ultimately crushing, annihilating, the great Enemy of righteousness.—Hebrews 2:14.

The Love of God, thus held in abeyance, has bided its time, to be revealed to astonished man when the due time shall have come. Nearly two thousand years ago Love manifested itself on behalf of the world, when God sent forth His Only-Begotten Son to be man's Redeemer. He came to earth and gave His life—a willing sacrifice for human sin. Then the call went forth to gather the Church, the class who were in God's Purpose to be the Bride of His Son, to be associated with Him in the great future work for the race of Adam. During this Gospel Age, this Church is being gathered, and in due time will be exalted in Kingdom glory. Then God's love will manifest itself to our race. The Kingdom of God will lift up mankind from sin and degradation and death, into the light and glory of the Lord—all who are willing to accept life on God's terms.

SPECIAL CRISES IN CHRISTIAN LIFE

How earnestly we as children of God should watch and pray that we may indeed be fitted for our great future work—now so near! There is a danger that love will not be sufficiently strong in us; for by reason of the fall, sin and selfishness have come to be preponderating influences in the world. These, operating for six thousand years, have made man very deficient in love, sympathy, brotherly-kindness and long-suffering. Now there is a greater tendency toward anger, malice, hatred, strife, than toward love.

Consequently, when God accepts us into His family, He tells us that one of the first requirements is *love*. Love must grow in our hearts and minds, and permeate all our thoughts, words and actions.

Our fallen flesh, helped on by the unseen "powers of the air," will seek to prevent our attaining this necessary condition; and after we have *attained* it, strong pressure will at times be brought to bear upon us as New Creatures to induce us to withdraw from this position. From time to time the child of God has experiences with others of the brethren that seem to threaten his spiritual health, or even his spiritual life. The powers of darkness assail him, endeavoring to encourage the feelings and sentiments which he is strongly tempted to adopt. He has come to a crisis in his Christian experience. He must go forward or backward. He cannot stand still. The struggle is on. Will this severe trial prove a stepping-stone to lift him nearer God, or will it be a stone of stumbling, to overthrow him?

At such crucial times, the only refuge is prayer. The Lord permits these very trials to test our mettle as children of God. The Adversary will endeavor to place the matter before our agitated minds in the most unfavorable light as regards the brother or sister. He will seek to pervert the judgment, and to deceive the mind as to the real facts in the case; and our flesh responds to this view of the matter. The only safe course is to refuse to entertain in the slightest degree the thoughts of bitterness trying to find a lodgment in our mind and heart, and to cry at once to the Lord for strength and help in our time of need, seeking counsel of His Word bearing upon our proper attitude in such an emergency. Let us remember the words of the hymn we have often sung:

"Yield not to temptation,
For yielding is sin;
Each victory will help you
Some other to win.
Fight manfully onward,
Dark passions subdue;
Look ever to Jesus,
He'll carry you through."

"FORGIVE, AND YE SHALL BE FORGIVEN"

Let us, then, be kind and forbearing one with another, brethren, seeking to put the kindest construction upon the words, the actions and the natural tendencies of one another, remembering our own peculiarities and foibles. Let us remember that each of us is blemished by the fall, and that those of the brethren who try us most may have had hereditary tendencies and environments in earlier life of which we are not aware, and which would make us very pitiful if we knew. Let us remember also that *we* may be altogether unaware of some of our own weaknesses and mannerisms, which may grate upon others. We should be much more careful to note our own mistakes and faults than those of other brethren of the Lord.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger [fleshly anger], and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"—and still forgives you. (Ephesians 4:31, 32.) "Put on, therefore, as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have occasion of complaint against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things, put on *love*, which is the *bond of perfectness*. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which ye are also called in one Body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."—Colossians 3:12-16.

After the child of the Lord has gained the victory in a struggle like this, and has through prayer and determined effort brought the Arm of God to his deliverance, he is a stronger Christian than before the trial came. He has taken a stride forward in the narrow way; he has taken a firmer hold on God, and will be the better enabled to conquer in the next testing. But every failure to thus overcome leaves the child of God weaker and less able to resist the onslaught of his flesh and of the Adversary and his evil host, and the less sure of being a final overcomer.

In speaking of love as respects the Church of Christ, the Apostle assures us that if we would be pleasing to the Lord we must develop richly this grace. Those who possess this quality in goodly measure will not be easily provoked to anger, will not readily take offense, will not be too watchful lest their rights and their dignity be infringed upon. Those who have little love will be easily angered and offended. Let us keep self down, and diligently continue the work of its crucifixion, looking ever to Him from whom cometh our help. The love which our Lord appreciates is longsuffering. This does not mean that there would never be occasions for just indignation, righteous anger. There should be a feeling of righteous anger when we see great injustice. Why? Because injustice is wrong. God is angry with injustice, when it is committed knowingly, or willingly. And so God's people should have no sympathy with injustice.

LOVE SUPERADDED TO JUSTICE

If the children of God do not carefully cultivate the quality of justice, they will get themselves into that attitude where they will not appreciate justice at all. But while appreciating what is right and what is wrong, we are to go further, and see that we cultivate diligently the quality of love, sympathy, charity. None can say that his own estimate of what constitutes justice and love is entirely right, and that the other man's estimate is entirely wrong, especially when this other is a brother or sister in Christ, seeking to develop the same Christlike qualities as ourself. Our viewpoints cannot be always the same; therefore let us not be too sure that our own viewpoint is the correct one, and the other view wrong, where there is any possibility of our being mistaken.

No follower of Christ is so well developed that he can say, I do not need any further instruction along the lines of justice and love, but my brother needs it. And in our experiences with the brethren, where the other one seems to be at fault, let us say to

ourselves, Here is a brother who perhaps has had more disadvantages than I have had. He is a brother of mine according to the Spirit. He seems to me to be doing wrong, but I sympathize with him because he probably does not know that his action is wrong. Or I may be wrong myself. If he saw the matter from my viewpoint, he would do differently. I will not judge him, but leave that for the Almighty, who is infallible in judgment and to whom judgment belongs.—1 Corinthians 4:5.

SYMPATHY FOR ALL MEN

God has no sympathy with *sin*; but He has so much sympathy for sinners that He has provided His well-beloved Son to redeem and uplift the sinner. He has set apart a thousand years for this work of human uplift. We note injustice; we ought to note it. But it is not our province to flay, to inflict punishment. We are to "judge nothing before the time." We see acts committed that shock our moral sense. We are to say to ourselves, I believe that act to be criminal; but it is not for me to settle with that wrong-doer. God knows to what extent the individual is responsible; I do not. It is my duty as far as possible to view him from the standpoint of sympathy. It is my duty to assist him if it is in my power, if I have a proper opportunity—to help him out of his wrong views into right views. But even in this I am to be "wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove." The conduct is wrong, but I cannot know how wrong the individual may be.

So Love looks out and sees that the whole world is in much difficulty through the fall. And Love says, Be gentle toward all; be meek; be forbearing. We are ever to remember that we are in a world of sin, pain, sickness, death. From this viewpoint, Love will not be easily provoked, but will think kindly and sympathetically of others. Thus, beloved, shall we grow up into Christ, our glorious Head, in all things, until, made perfect and complete through His grace, we shall be presented to the Father "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."—Ephesians 5:27.

MAY 25

Be not overcome of evil—Rom. 12:21.

We are never to take up or to use evil words or methods or manners. To do so is temporarily to join the enemy, or to admit that his implements and methods are better than those of the Captain to whom we belong. To answer anger with anger, evil report with evil report, bitter words with bitter words, slander with slander, persecution with persecution, blow with blow, or any of these, would be to endeavor to overcome evil with evil. This, which is natural to our fallen natures, is what we are commanded to avoid, that we may the more thoroughly cultivate the new nature. To be misled by the Adversary to use his methods in any of these ways is to be overcome by evil—Z '97, 267 (R 2212).

Evils of all sorts are permitted to assail the Lord's people. The devil, the world and the flesh are constantly seeking to overcome the new heart, mind and will. Only by persistent battles will we be enabled to overcome our enemies. God's Oathbound Covenant is our encouragement in this warfare, and His Spirit, Word and Providence are our weapons of defense and offense. Therewith let us fight the good fight of faith, so that instead of being overcome by evil, we will overcome it—P '33, 79.

Parallel passages: Ex. 23:4, 5; Deut. 32:35; Prov. 19:11; 24:17, 29; 25:21, 22; Matt. 5:7, 30-45; Luke 6:35-37; Rom. 12:14, 17, 19, 20; Heb. 10:30; Acts 7:60; 1 Cor. 4:12; 1 Pet. 3:9.

Hymns: 91, 130, 136, 145, 183, 196, 198.
Poems of Dawn, 92: *Believe Good Things of God*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 179 (R 5705).

Questions: Have I this week overcome evil? How? What helped or hindered therein? What were the results?

BELIEVE GOOD THINGS OF GOD

WHEN in the storm it seems to thee
That He who rules the raging sea
Is sleeping, still, on bended knee,
Believe good things of God.

When thou hast sought in vain to find
The silver thread of love entwined
In life's soft, tangled web, resigned,
Believe good things of God.

And should He smite thee till thy heart
Is crushed beneath the bruising smart,

Still, while the bitter teardrops start,
Believe good things of God.

'Tis true thou mayst not understand
The dealings of thy Father's hand;
But trusting what His love hath planned,
Believe good things of God.

He loves thee; in that love confide;
Unchanging, faithful, true and tried;
And through whatever may betide,
Believe good things of God.

R5705: OUR CONQUEST OF THE ANTITYPICAL CANAANITES

"Be thou strong and very courageous."—Joshua 1:7.

JOSHUA records these words of Jehovah God, spoken to him at the time when, after Moses' death, he took command of Israel. The Israelites had then had their forty years' experience in the wilderness, and were just about to cross the Jordan and take possession of the land of Canaan. Joshua had become Moses' successor. The people had learned many lessons in their wilderness experiences; and now that Moses was dead, they looked to Joshua as their leader.

Joshua expressed his inability to serve in the place of Moses, through whom God had signally manifested Himself. But the Lord assured Joshua that He would bless him all the days of his life, even as He had blessed Moses. Joshua had been found faithful in all his experiences. He was one of the two survivors of the wilderness experiences who, when starting out from Egypt, were over twenty years of age. Because of the faithfulness of Joshua and Caleb, the Lord had promised them that they alone of all the adults who left Egypt should enter the Promised Land. The others had died in the wilderness, save Moses and Aaron, Aaron dying in Mount Hor and Moses a little later in Mount Nebo, before the people crossed over Jordan.

The Lord's exhortation for Joshua to be strong and very courageous was in connection with the instruction that the Israelites were to take possession of the land of Canaan and destroy the inhabitants of the land. This command of God has been a stumbling-block to many. They have supposed that the Bible could not be of God when it bears such instructions. They have felt that it would be an act of injustice for the Israelites to go in and possess Canaan. What right, they say, had Israel to kill those people and take possession of their land? It belonged more to the people who already possessed it than to anybody else. To invade their country, destroy their lives and confiscate their lands and their possessions would be very unjust. The course of Israel is held up as an illustration of the "land-grabbing" disposition of the natural man, which has seemed to grow stronger

century by century, notwithstanding the increase of civilization and his professed appreciation of justice.

This is the view that many take, and much to their own injury; for they do not understand the matter they discuss. When we say that they do not understand the matter, we do not mean that they are people of inferior mind, but that they have not taken God's viewpoint. From any other than the right viewpoint, the whole course of Israel in this matter must seem to be unjust and ungodlike. From the right viewpoint, however, the matter is seen to be reasonable, just and righteous altogether. The sins and abominations of these Gentile people were such that their destruction was a very desirable thing. God had a great surprise in mind for this land of Canaan, which they inhabited. Moreover, the Jewish Age was an Age of Types. Both Israel and these corrupt Gentile nations were typical.

CHRISTIANS TO BE NON-RESISTANT

In the present Age, the Lord's people are not to take possession of either the persons or the property of others. They are not to destroy life under any circumstances. They are not to battle with any kind of carnal weapons. They are to be non-resistant. We are not of those who would defend the course of the professed Christian nations of modern times along these lines. As Christians, guided by our Master's example and instruction, we should seek to do good to all men as we have opportunity, and to leave them in peaceable possession of their homes, their property and their liberties. There is a great difference between the Divine Law of Love, which is the motive power operating in the true children of God today, and the law of selfishness, under which the masses of mankind—including the vast majority of nominal Christendom—still operate, and will continue to operate until the New Dispensation shall be fully ushered in by Divine Power.

Nevertheless, seeing that the true Church is separate from the world in the Lord's Plan and His dealings, we can look with comparative equanimity upon the overriding of justice and equity by the kingdoms of this world, and may realize that the Lord, especially at the present time, is taking advantage of their natural disposition toward warfare and conquest and empire-building. He will cause the wrath of man thus to work out certain features of His Plan which will prove later on to be for the blessing of the whole world, those now in their graves as well as those yet living.

Not being able to see behind the veil into all the gracious purposes of our Heavenly Father, and not being wise enough to know how these purposes could be carried out, the peoples of the earth are groping on in darkness, thinking they are managing their own affairs, not knowing that a Mighty Hand is so directing the affairs of nations that His own glorious designs shall be outworked in all things, not knowing that nothing can thwart His purposes. The Lord's people occupy largely the position of spectators in respect to the course of this world—its policies, politics, conquests, its frantic efforts to carry out its selfish projects.—John 17:16.

Were we to take a hand in the affairs of the world, on either side of the great questions with which they are grappling, we would surely be working contrary to the Divine Program. The Lord does not purpose to give the victory now to either party in the strife. We are to be separate from the world and to give our thought and attention, our sympathy and interest, to the affairs of the Heavenly Kingdom; and while our voices, if ever raised at all on such questions, should be raised on behalf of justice, mercy and peace, yet we can view with great composure whatever events and changes may take place in the world, knowing that our Heavenly Father has all power to overrule these matters to His own praise and to the ultimate good of mankind.

A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW

But the world tells us that we are too peaceable. They say that mankind could not get along without a certain amount of warfare. We answer that no one can understand God's methods except as he is guided by His Word, by the Spirit of the Truth. God's dealings are different in different ages and for different purposes. These seemingly conflicting presentations of God's will are perfectly reasonable and harmonizable from the proper viewpoint.

Let us see. Back in Eden, the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die," was pronounced upon Adam because of wilful disobedience to the Divine instruction that a violation of God's command would bring death. After the fall, mankind gradually became more and more estranged from the Lord. Many of the angels, who then had access to earth with powers of materialization, fell from their holy estate. Mankind became a prey to these angels who "lusted after strange flesh." (Genesis 6:1-4; Jude 6, 7; 2 Peter 2:4, Diaglott.) This condition of things was finally overthrown by the great Deluge of Noah's day.

But in time the world again became very sinful. Then God made selection of one man from amongst mankind; namely, Abraham. He promised that if Abraham would walk in His ways, He would guide Abraham's affairs to his good and make of him a great nation and would bless his seed. And so we have Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God's special servants. The descendants of Jacob, God took into covenant relationship with Himself during the days of Moses. Under Moses as their mediator, God promised to be their God and to recognize them as His people. If they would be loyal to Him, He would bless them. If they should be disloyal to Him and go over to the idolatry of the neighboring nations, then He would punish them for their sins and give them chastisements; but He would not forsake them.

The peoples of Canaan were in a very degraded condition morally. They had progressed so far in sin that it was no longer advantageous that they should continue in possession of Canaan. The Israelites were to drive out these peoples—and they were to be destroyed when necessary. There were certain nations which God especially commanded Israel to utterly destroy.—Deuteronomy 20:10-18.

When thinking of this command of God, we are to rid our minds of the superstitions of the past. These people who were to be slain did not go into eternal torment, but into

death, into Sheol, Hades, the tomb. This would be an unconscious sleep. Those who perished by the sword are still asleep; they are not in pain, not in anguish of any kind. They are merely cut off from life until the general awakening time; for God has made a provision whereby those people may return to life, may be called forth from their sleep. All the blessings of everlasting life God has made provision for through Messiah. Messiah is to have a Kingdom; and this Kingdom is to rule the world in righteousness (see Psalms 96, 97, and 72), blessing not only the living, but also those who have fallen asleep in death. (Isaiah 25:6-9; Hosea 13:14; Romans 14:9; 8:20, 21, Diaglott.) Many Scriptures declare this in unmistakable terms. Indeed this is the tenor of the entire Word of God. The Divine Plan runs like a golden chain through the whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments.

This great Messiah, who is yet to bless all the race of Adam, must needs be their Redeemer, and thus the Owner and Deliverer of the people, as the Scriptures declare. Through His sacrifice for man He has obtained the "keys of Hades and of death," as He tells us. (Revelation 1:18.) He gave His life as the offset to Father Adam's life. This purchase price has not as yet been applied for the world in general, but will be applied, we believe, in the very near future. The Millennial Kingdom of Christ is for the very purpose of giving all of Adam's children, not previously enlightened, as well as Adam himself, a full opportunity for everlasting life, after having had experience in the nature and results of sin.

From this broad viewpoint, we see that with these peoples of ancient Palestine—the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, etc.—it was a blessing that they died at the time they did. Vile and debased in morals, they were no benefit to themselves or to others. It was all the same whether they died by some kind of disease—consumption, pneumonia, cholera—or in some other manner.

Should any one ask, Why did God choose to have these ancient peoples die in battle instead of by disease? The answer is that the peoples inhabiting the land would be a constant menace to the morals of the people of Israel. They were not only idolatrous, but practised licentious rites, divination, etc. Furthermore, God purposed that the land should be put to a far different use. He had a great Plan, in which it was His design that Canaan should play an important part. The land and its inhabitants were to be typical of God's dealings with Spiritual Israel in the Gospel Age. The type in which the land of Canaan was designed of God to figure could not be carried out without the expulsion of these heathen, or their destruction.

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL EXPELLING THE CANAANITES

Is it asked what type was here shown? We believe that the expulsion and destruction of these sinful nations by Israel was a type of how the people of God today, Spiritual Israel, are to take possession of their human bodies. We are, as New Creatures, to conquer, to destroy, these tendencies of the flesh which would enslave us. If we do not overcome and destroy them, they will overcome and destroy us. We are to vanquish the evil propensities, evil habits, vices, thoughts, desires, which have inhabited our minds,

and are by our new wills to take entire control and fill the place of the former occupants with holy, pure thoughts, desires, ambitions, purposes, habits.

These human bodies are now the property and possession of the Spiritual Israelites, the New Creatures in Christ. There is to be no peace between the New Creature and his flesh. We are to take warning from Natural Israel in this respect. Failure on their part to drive out and destroy their enemies completely, as God commanded, was a source of constant trouble and ensnarement, and a cause of much idolatry and sin to Israel. And their experiences "were written for our admonition." Our warfare against spiritual foes must result in the utter destruction of the fleshly mind, and will also mean the death of the human body.

This warfare of Israel against their enemies may also be a picture of conditions in the Millennium. During the Millennial Age the world, under the guidance of Christ and the Church, will be brought into a condition which will fit them to have possession of the whole earth. Satan will be bound for a thousand years. Sin and the curse of Adamic death now resting on the world will be destroyed, together with everything contrary to righteousness. All these things belong to the reign of that "strong man" who has so long oppressed the world. Christ, the Antitype of Joshua, will then be in control, and will show man how to exterminate these things of sin and thus eventually come into possession of the earth, the Eden of God, and each man be a king, a sovereign.

While the Natural Israelite was to be a man of battle and to take possession of the land of the enemy, we are not to see in this fact anything that was not in it. For instance, it was not the Israelites who were to say that they would go up and possess the land of Canaan. It was God Himself who was to give them possession. Nor are we to think that God was negligent of the real interests of these Gentile peoples. He declares that their iniquity had come to the full. It was no longer profitable at that time that their lives should be prolonged. Thus we see that justice was not infringed upon in giving the Israelites that land for an everlasting possession. This had been previously foretold by the Lord; but the testimony of the Lord, at the time the promise was made, was that it would not then be an appropriate time for its fulfilment, but that there should first be a dark time, until the iniquity of those nations had come to the full.

BATTLE OF SPIRITUAL ISRAEL TODAY

Coming down to the Gospel Age, we see that the Spiritual Israelites have had a great conflict. It is a warfare against the whole world—no warfare so mighty and so momentous has ever been waged. Yet the conflict fought by the Lord Jesus and His followers has not been a fight with guns or other carnal weapons. We have today millions of people in great camps intent upon destroying one another. They are being goaded on by their rulers. There may be here and there a Christian among them, one who has truly given his heart to God; but these are the exceptions. The great mass of the world acknowledge that they have taken no such step as consecration to the Lord. Yet they are instructed by their rulers that they are God's people and are fighting His battles.

According to the Bible, only the saintly, only those who have taken the specific steps laid down by the Master for His disciples, are Christians at all. All others professing to be Christians are merely imitations—"tares." Through a study of the lives of saints of olden time true Christians are enabled to see more clearly the mind of God, the will of God, for themselves. They gain from the lives of Moses, Joshua, the Prophets, and other faithful ones of past ages lessons of faith, of courage, of zeal. They are instructed that all these Scriptural records are meant as types and as admonitions for the Gospel Church; and they are thereby warned, strengthened and encouraged.

The Lord's people should not feel strong in themselves nor boastful, but, on the contrary, very humble and very insufficient—just as Joshua did. All of God's children are to realize their insufficiency in their own strength. They should feel that God has called them to a great work, and that they would make an utter failure unless the Lord gives His blessing. They are to look to the Lord and to receive His promises into good and honest hearts, believing that these promises are theirs, so long as they are loyal and true to Him. Thus doing, they may be strong, very strong; they may be very courageous.

SHINING EXAMPLES OF THE PAST

We have noted the courage of our Lord Jesus Himself, with a whole nation against Him! It has been thus with all His faithful followers—most of them the poor of this world, who have had very little wealth or influence or honor of men. The true people of God throughout the Gospel Age have been a humble class, yet they have been very strong and courageous. The people in the days of the Apostles "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus" and had learned of Him. Those disciples of Jesus had seen His readiness to lay down His life in the Father's service. They had seen His courage when He was facing death of the most cruel kind, when He said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" And so we who have followed the Master since then have taken note of the spirit which our dear Lord manifested at all times, under the most trying and crucial experiences; and it has proven a wonderful inspiration to us.

The faithful ones have all along as a rule been little known in the world. They have not usually been of the great, the learned, the rich. In the past there may have been some prominent ones, some of noble birth, who were saints of God, living up to what light they had in their time; but they were the exceptions. We know that there have been many true saints who have lived quiet, uneventful lives, yet who have seemed to live up to all the light they possessed and to walk with God until they fell asleep in death. The world has generally ignored these saints of God, even when they were not actively persecuted. We cannot surely know who are entirely loyal and sincere at heart; but we may be sure that "the Lord knoweth them that are His."—2 Timothy 2:19.

COURAGE IN THIS "HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

Coming down to our own day, there never was a time when more strength of character and more courage were needed than just now. The iniquities of the whole world, and especially of so-called Christendom, have now about come to the full; and all present

governments are about to be swept away, to make room for the glorious Kingdom of God under the whole heavens—the glorious Reign of the King of kings. All the ecclesiastical systems of today, calling themselves the Church of Christ, are arrayed on the side of error and are battling against the Truth and its advocates. So we need to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Whoever starts out to battle in his own strength against this stronghold of error will be sure to be defeated. But if he goes in the strength of the Lord of Hosts, and has Divine direction as to what he shall do or say, he may well be of good courage. Many earnest hearts are now asking for the Bread of Life, they are captives in Babylon or are famishing out in the "field," the world. These need our assistance.

Our strength will be tried—our hold upon God and upon the Truth, and our courage in defending the Truth. These will surely be put to the test; for Babylon is opposing our way. God will not have any in the Kingdom who have not faithfully endured. Yet in meekness let us seek to instruct those who oppose themselves to the Word of the Lord; and let us look for the hungry and thirsty ones.

We do not know in what form some of our trials and tribulations will come. But we who are living in this "evil day," yea, in the very close of this day—in the final "hour of temptation"—surely need to have on the whole armor of God. We need to have our loins girt about with *Truth*; we need the helmet to protect our minds, our intellects, from the shafts of error; we need the breastplate of righteousness; we need the Sword of the Spirit—the broad two-edged Sword; we need the sandals of "preparation of the Gospel of Peace." We need all these to overcome the Canaanites in our own breast, and to overcome all the surrounding obstacles.

Thus armored and furnished, we may indeed come off "more than conquerors" in the great conflict, which is daily increasing. We shall conquer "through Him who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood." Let the promise of the Master be our daily inspiration: "To him that *overcometh* will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."

"Arise, then, O Army of Gideon!
Let him that is fearful return;
Jehovah wants only the zealous,
Whose hearts with the love of Truth burn!

"Your sword is the 'Sword of the Spirit';
Your lamp is the light from His Word;
Your pitcher, this poor earthen vessel
You break at the voice of your Lord.

"Is your light burning bright in your pitcher?
Doth your trumpet give forth certain sound?
Soon the Sword of the Lord and of Gideon
The enemy's host will confound.

"For sure is the victory promised,
And great is the peace He awards;
Then 'stand' in your place, all ye faithful—
The battle's not yours, but the Lord's!"

MAY 26

Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up—1 Cor. 8:1.

All who seek to teach the Divine Plan to others are exposed to peculiar temptations, so that the honor of serving the Lord and His people demands a correspondingly larger measure of the graces of the holy Spirit, as well as of knowledge. Whoever, therefore, would be an instructor of others, a mouthpiece of the Lord, should cultivate all the various graces of the holy Spirit including meekness, that these (combined in Love) with knowledge, may build up himself as well as build up those to whom he ministers—Z '97, 277 (R 2218).

The natural tendency of knowledge is to puff up its possessor, whose defense against such pride is a humble recognition that this knowledge is not his own invention, but a gift of God. The natural tendency of love is to build us up in abhorrence and avoidance of evil and opposition to it, in the graces, in the heavenly disposition, in the consecrated use of our fleshly members and in strengthening, balancing and perfecting the elements of Christlikeness—P '32, 48.

Parallel passages: Rom. 11:25; 12:16; Prov. 3:7; 26:12; Isa. 5:21; 1 Cor. 13; John 15:9-17; Rom. 12:9, 10; 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 John 4:7-21.

Hymns: 165, 166, 90, 91, 95, 198, 201.

Poems of Dawn, 159: *Not Now, My Child*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 110 (R 5000).

Questions: What were this week's experiences relating to this text? How were they met? What were their results?

NOT NOW, MY CHILD

"FATHER, I long to spread thy blessed Truth
o'er land and sea!"

I listen, and there comes to me
His answer, tender, loving, mild,
"Not now, My child."

"Father, my heart is sad, I fain would leave this wilderness,
Go forth, earth's groaning ones to bless!"
I hear again His answer mild,
"Not now, My child."

"Father, I yearn to break these fleshly fetters and be
free,
As pants the hart, I pant for Thee!"
His voice, how sweet, how tender, mild,

"Not now, My child."

"Father, Thy will be done, I humbly leave it *all*
with Thee,
Thou knowest what is best for me!"
I hear His voice, so low, so mild,
"Come now, My child."

R5000: BEWARE OF PRIDE IN THE HEART

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord."—Prov. 16:5.

PRIDE IS VERY DECEITFUL and frequently cloaks or covers itself with humility. Because of our own imperfections it is well for us not to become *judges* of others, but merely limit our judgment to the outward manifestations. The Lord says, "By their *fruits* ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:20.) We are to judge the outward conduct, but we cannot go beyond and say what is of the *heart*. Errors of judgment are not an abomination to the Lord. He may look upon mistakes with sympathetic eyes. People are not responsible for those qualities which have come down to them by inheritance. Without judging individuals we may see certain conduct sometimes which may seem to be pride, yet is not pride.

We have seen people who have a great lack of self-esteem, a great lack of vanity, but who may have large approbateness. They do not think so much of themselves as they wish others to think of them. They say, "If people knew me as I know myself, I would simply be a cypher in the world." There is a certain amount of truth in this. People with small self-esteem are often taken to be proud, when it is really not the case. In trying to look as though they were somebody they will carry themselves as though they thought they were everybody. Such persons are simply laboring in an unfavorable condition in which they were born. We cannot think that the Lord would abominate them. They are very often little to themselves and very humble with the Lord. Yet they try to make themselves appear in as favorable a manner as possible. We must admit that there is a propriety in this to a certain extent. It is wise for them to try to overcome their weaknesses of nature. They should try to think soberly of themselves (that is, to be of sound mind), and they should try not to overdo matters. They must act with meekness, as well as feel and think meekly.

There is another class who have a large amount of self-esteem, yet who think, "I do not wish others to know that I have this high opinion of myself, therefore I will cloak it. I will endeavor to speak very humbly. The Scriptures say that we should be humble, therefore when I speak of anything I will try to speak from this standpoint." Such people very frequently get a gloss of humility of an *outward kind*. Some people really think that this course is right. If they are sincere in their conduct, we cannot suppose that the Lord would abhor them.

Our thought, then, is that in this text "The proud in heart" are the haughty-minded—those who feel haughty toward others and are not sympathetic, who think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, who despise others. The heart of such a one is not that which God could love or that anyone could love; *it is an abomination in the Lord's sight.*

WHY PRIDE IS AN ABOMINABLE TRAIT

An abomination is that which is extremely displeasing—that which is repulsive—that which a person should not wish to entertain—should not harbor—must reprove. There *must be some reason* why God declares Himself thus in opposition to pride. We perceive that no one really has anything whereof to be proud. As the Apostle suggests in one place (I Cor. 4:7), "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" What have we that we have not received of the Lord? If whatever we have received is a gift, where is our right to be proud of it? Evidently, such would be a very wrong condition of mind to be in—to be proud of things not our own, not of ourselves, but a gift.

There is, therefore, no reason for any to be proud; but there is every reason to be thankful to the Great Giver of all good. And that which is true of us is true also of the angels. Hence, there is nothing in all the Universe for any of God's creatures to be proud of. Whatever conditions they are in are not of themselves. God seems to have arranged the conditions for humility, so that there could be *no ground* for pride.

Pride is merely selfishness, self-laudation; and selfishness is another name for sin. Sin and selfishness, therefore, are in opposition to the Divine Character and the Divine Plan—totally in opposition to it. It is, therefore, the right and proper thing that God should have the proud in detestation. Not having used His blessings aright, they could not have His favor. Whether they be proud of mental attainments, proud of physical strength, proud of wealth or ancestry, or proud that their "ancestors were monkeys," matters not. It is all pride, and an abomination to the Lord.

THE MOST DETESTABLE FORM OF PRIDE

But evidently the most detestable form of pride is *pride in the Church*—as though we had made the Plan and could boast in it! We do, indeed, see that anyone making the Plan might justly feel proud of it. But when we remember that none of us made the Plan, but that we are privileged to see it, we should be filled the more with humility, and should try day by day to better glorify His Name for the blessings which He has provided for the whole world.

We cannot suppose that any kind of pride would be more detestable in God's sight than pride of the Truth. If anyone should continue in such a course, manifestly it would lead him out of the light. We see this principle illustrated well in the case of Satan. Noble, grand, he allowed pride to enter his heart and said, "I will ascend above the others; I will

have *an empire of my own.*" And this pride made him the opponent of God. (Isa. 14:12-17.) He is known in the Scriptures as the Adversary, Satan, the Devil.

All those who have the spirit of pride fail to recognize that "every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of Lights." (Jas. 1:17.) Every such one, therefore, has the spirit of the Adversary instead of the Spirit of God. If it be allowed to grow and bring forth fruit, it will lead eventually to the Second Death. It is appalling to see the nature of the temptations that come to God's people! But we are not to judge their hearts, to determine whether it is a pride of heart or not; for it may be merely a deception for a time. And even though they may miss the "high calling," they may get a place in the "great company." And when we see that the conduct is not at all in accord with what we should expect in those blessed with the Truth, it should make us all search our own hearts to see to what extent *we have the same traits of pride.*

Perhaps this quality of pride is nowhere more manifested than in some of those who have been in the Truth for quite a while. Sometimes it is on the part of the sisters. Sometimes they are very proud of what they know and very domineering in their manner, seeming to think that they know it all. Sometimes it is on the part of the brethren, in whom a spirit of pride appears. They have been placed as Elders. They see that they themselves are right and others are wrong. Sometimes this leads to an attempt to override the liberties of the congregation and to hold power in their own hands.

"BE NOT MANY TEACHERS"

It may not always be our privilege to mention such a matter. Such things may be matters that belong to a class. But, as one Pilgrim brother remarked some time ago, "Brother Russell, I sometimes think that, when we get beyond the veil, we shall be astonished to find how few of those who have exercised positions of prominence in the Church will be amongst the elect." It behooves us all who are associated in the Lord's work to watch ourselves closely, that if we find the slightest tendency in this direction of pride we may stamp it out as we would some contagious disease, knowing what the effects are upon others. We should be sympathetic with those who are beset, but not with the difficulty. We are reminded of the Apostle's words, "Be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." Those who have seen the Truth clearly and have some talents and opportunities will have the severer trial on that account.

Recently we have heard of some trials in the Class Extension work. The opportunities of Class Extension have resulted, in some cases, not advantageously. Some of great self-esteem have felt that they should be in the work, determining that they would tell the Class what to do. Some good brethren may have done this; some noble men may have done it. But in doing it, they were not acting wisely, we believe.

As we said at first, it is not well for us to judge the heart. Everyone is privileged to preach as he may have opportunity. He may go forth entirely at his own expense and opportunity. He may preach all that he can. Good men have done so. There is nothing in the Scriptures to prohibit it. But to try to coerce a Class—trying to recognize the Class in

some sense and to ignore that Class in another sense—is not the right thing. If the Class is supposed to express the Divine will, the individuals should acquiesce in what the Class decides.

MAY 27

In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves—Phil. 2:3.

Paul exhorts that all shall cultivate the grace of humility, and that in every affair each shall take heed that "nothing be done through strife or vainglory," that self-laudation and strivings for pre-eminence be thoroughly put away as the greatest enemies to the Spirit of the Lord and the blessing of the Church. On the contrary, each should have that lowliness of mind which can see the good qualities of fellow-brethren and appreciate some of these qualities at least as superior to his own. All the talents, and all the abilities, need never be expected in any one person in any congregation. So, then, each may, if he be of lowly mind, see in others certain good qualities or graces superior to his own, and should delight to recognize these and to esteem their possessor accordingly—Z '97, 296 (R 2227).

By lowliness of mind we understand humility to be meant. Humility is a proper self-estimate, and a self-estimate to be proper for us must be lowly; because whether considering ourselves from the standpoint of our physical, mental, moral or religious qualities, we must judge ourselves as not amounting to much. Such a self-estimate naturally esteems others better than ourselves, because it looks upon their qualities with more appreciation than upon one's own qualities—P '26, 61.

Parallel passages: Rom. 12:3, 10, 16; 1 Pet. 5:5; Phil. 2:5-11; Psa. 138:6; Prov. 15:33; 16:19; 25:6, 7; Isa. 57:15; Jer. 45:5; Mic. 6:8; Matt. 11:29; 20:26, 27; 23:12; Luke 14:10; John 13:14-16.

Hymns: 198, 95, 23, 114, 74, 4, 145.

Poems of Dawn, 144: *Judge Not by Outward Appearance*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 35 (R 5842).

Questions: What were this week's experiences along the lines of this text? How were they met? What were their effects?

JUDGE NOT BY OUTWARD APPEARANCE

JUDGE not; the workings of the brain
And of the heart thou canst not see;
What looks to thy dim eye a stain,
In God's pure light may only be
A scar, brought from some well-won field,
Where thou wouldst only faint and yield.

The look, the air, that frets thy sight,
May be a token that below
The soul hath closed in deadly fight
With some internal, fiery foe,

Whose glance would scorch thy smiling grace,
And cast thee, shuddering, on thy face.

The fall thou darest to despise;
May be the angel's slackened hand
Hath suffered it that he may rise
And take a firmer, truer stand;
Or, trusting less to earthly things,
May henceforth learn to use his wings.

And judge none lost; but wait and see,
With hopeful pity, not disdain;
The depth of the abyss may be
The measure of the height of pain
And love and glory that may raise
This soul to God in after days.

R5842: WHAT IS EMBODIED IN TRUE HUMILITY

"Doing nothing from party-spirit or vain-glory, but in humility esteeming others as excelling yourselves."—Philippians 2:3, Diaglott.

LOWLINESS of mind, humility, is a mental quality which enables its possessor to look up with appreciation, not only to God, but also to earthly beings, recognizing their good qualities. The Apostle urges that this lowliness of mind should be in all of God's people; this fact proves it to be a quality that demands careful cultivation.

Not all of the Lord's people are lowly in mind. Some of them think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. Some of them may be proud of having the Truth or of their ability to serve the Truth. Any such pride is very objectionable in the sight of the Lord, and indicates that its possessor has a very small mind; for, with a proper estimate of matters, the best of us can see that we have nothing of which to be proud, nothing of which to boast. If we have received anything of the Lord, we should boast of our receipts, instead of glorying in something as if we had attained it of ourselves.

So the Lord's people should spend earnest effort to stimulate and encourage humility. Some have this quality naturally; but the larger number have to contend against the reverse tendency—self-esteem, self-exaltation, pride—a feeling that they are superior to others.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION

When we come to consider St. Paul's injunction, "in humility esteeming others as excelling yourselves," it is a question as to just what the Apostle meant. Those who have come into Christ should make progress, and should therefore feel that they are better than

they were before they came into Christ. Those who have come into Christ know that they are not lower than all others. Evidently the Apostle did not mean that the Lord's people should rate themselves as inferior to other men. In his own case he felt that he was the chief of sinners, because he had been an open opposer of the Truth; and Jesus had said that whosoever should injure one of the least of His disciples would transgress seriously. We cannot say, therefore, that we are the chief of all sinners. We think that few of the Lord's people could say, I am the chief of sinners—either from the standpoint of committing crime or from that of persecuting the Church. We are not to bear false witness against ourselves.

In what way, then, are we to understand the Apostle's injunction? In this way: We are to realize that no two of the Lord's people are just alike. If we have the right focus upon the matter, we shall think of our own talents in a humble manner. We shall think, "I have something of this quality or that talent or grace; and therefore I have much responsibility to the Lord. I wonder whether I am using as faithfully as I could, this talent which I think is greater than that of my neighbor or my brother. Though they may have less than I have, they may be using all that they have with more resolute purpose to succeed than I am using what I have. If this be so, then he is better than I am, in this respect."

A PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD BRETHREN

As we look around in the Lord's family, we are bound to see the weaknesses and frailties of its various members. We are not to allow our thoughts to dwell too much upon their undesirable qualities, however, but are to remember all their good ones, especially their loyalty of heart. With ourself personally, it is always a recommendation in any one that God has called and accepted him. Whenever we see one who has come into the Truth, we say to ourself, "Well, no matter what he may be according to the flesh, God saw in his *heart* something good, noble and true; and since God is dealing with him as a son, he is therefore to be esteemed as a brother." Although we might not be able to esteem that man highly according to his natural qualities, yet we would do him good as we had opportunity. He might not be one whom we would select as a companion; yet God may esteem that brother more highly than He does us. Realizing this we would try to keep very humble and to learn whatever helpful lessons we might be able to get from that brother.

In all persons there are certain qualities that may be esteemed and appreciated; even as the old lady said that she could wish that others had as much *perseverance* as Satan. We are to appreciate good traits whenever we see them in others. We do not know whether in the Lord's sight they may not be more noble, more self-sacrificing, more lowly in mind than ourselves. Our duty is plain. We are not able to read the heart, and hence we are to think kindly and generously of all those whom God has brought into His family. "Love beareth all things, ... endureth all things." "As we have opportunity, therefore, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them of the Household of Faith."—1 Corinthians 13:7; Galatians 6:10.

HUMILITY THE PATH TO GLORY

The Apostles Peter and James also emphasize the necessity on the part of the Lord's people that they be clothed with humility. They tell us that this grace is indispensable to those who would abide in the Father's favor; for God resists the proud, while He continually shows favor to those who are of humble spirit. Thus He encourages humility and discourages pride. (1 Peter 5:5; James 4:6.) We can see a reason for this course. The Almighty sees that we have nothing whatever of which to be proud or to boast. Whatever we have has been of the Lord's providence, or favoring circumstances.

The Scriptures give some marked instances of the evil results of pride. Lucifer, one of the very highest of spirit beings, became proud and vain in his imagination, and encouraging these evil qualities he lost his exalted position, having become Satan, the adversary of God. If Mother Eve had possessed the proper humility she would have said, when tempted of the serpent, I will not listen to this suggestion to disobey my Creator; He knows what is for my highest good, and I therefore submit myself to Him who knows all things. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."—Prov. 16:18.

In contrast, we have given to us a beautiful illustration of the opposite spirit—humility—in the case of the Logos. We are shown how He humbled Himself, and how God has highly exalted Him—to the very position which Satan coveted. So if we are fully obedient to the Lord, the results with us will be as with the Lord Jesus, a great blessing, a high exaltation. After presenting this argument, the Apostle says, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—1 Peter 5:6.

The Heavenly Father has deeper love for those who are humble. This is the reason why we should humble ourselves. Since we find that "God resisteth the proud," and that humility is one of the basic principles of a properly crystallized character, we should more and more seek to develop this grace and attain to the attitude in which God can give us the greatest blessing.

THE "SOUND MIND" IS HUMBLE

To humble ourselves does not necessarily mean to think that we have no talent, no power, no ability. Such an attitude would be foolishness. But we should think soberly of ourselves. We should think of all our powers as coming from God. So if we find that we have some blessings more than our neighbor or our brother or our sister, let us be thankful; but let us not for a moment think that we have anything to make us proud. It is a *gift*. We should appreciate the gift, but we should not be puffed up over its possession. The fact that we have received the gift indicates that we *lacked* it, needed it.

The one who has naturally a proud heart, but who brings himself to the point of submission, manifests humility. If, on the other hand, one who by nature has too low an estimate of himself, will submit himself to God, the Father will show him the proper attitude of mind. The Apostle speaks of those who receive the Holy Spirit as having the

"spirit of a sound mind." In proportion as we seek to become acquainted with God and to submit ourselves to His will, in that same proportion we become balanced in mind. We become more and more sane, if you please. He who receives the mind of Christ, the mind of God, the holy mind, is instructed more thoroughly by the Word. Thus we are getting the balance of a sound mind, the spirit of a sound mind. Our reasoning faculties become more developed as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Truth.

ILLUSTRATION OF TRUE SUBMISSION

No one can come to the Father except through full consecration. We must admit that we need the Master, and that without Him we can do nothing. So we take this position: "I am nothing but a sinner; I know that I am imperfect, that I have nothing which I have not received. God provides everything; whatever I have is a gift from Him. Knowing all this, I gratefully accept these things, and humble myself under His mighty hand."

The world says, "No! I will not submit myself; if I need any punishment I will take what is coming to me." Such is the spirit of a worldly heart that has not yet learned its need and its impotence. But the spirit of a consecrated heart is that of submission to the will of the Lord. Such recognize that their only source of help is the Almighty God, through the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior. For those alone who become His disciples can our Lord become the Advocate; and unless He be the Advocate none can be accepted of the Father. We might have a blessing in the Times of Restitution, but nobody can come to God now except through the Advocate.

The terms of discipleship are that we lay down all earthly rights, earthly interests. *Everything* must be submitted before the Father will accept us as disciples of Christ at all, before He will beget us of the Holy Spirit, before we can become a part of the anointed Body of Christ. If we would make any true progress, we must say from the heart, "*Thy* will, not *mine*, be done." We know that God's will is best, whether we understand that will or not. A person with large self-esteem might, as a natural man, think his own will better; but when he comes to see the Truth, he will say, "I have made mistakes before; but now I will do the Lord's way, regardless of what my judgment may be."

Such a course would evidence real humility, no matter how proud-spirited one might be by nature. As he would progress in the good way, and see more clearly wherein he had made mistakes, his humility would increase. So we are to submit ourselves, humble ourselves, have no will of our own, but merely seek the Lord's will.

ILLUSTRATION OF FALSE HUMILITY

There is such a thing as a false submission, which might deceive even the person himself. One might talk a great deal about submission to the will of God, and yet be only *nominally* submitting while he is really doing his own will. We are to watch, therefore, that we are *carrying out* the profession of submission, and that in our daily course of life we are asking, "Is this the course which the Lord wishes me to pursue? Is this the will of God?"

The most submissive will receive the greatest blessings. God will test our submission and our humility. We cannot suppose that our Lord Jesus, who was perfect, did not know that He had perfect powers. But no matter what His own ideas were, He submitted Himself to the Father, and said, "Not My will, but Thine, be done." A man who had no tastes or preferences would be a nonentity. We may know what we would will for ourselves; and yet, knowing this, we are to say to ourselves, "You cannot have your own way about this; you are to seek to know what is the Lord's will concerning you in this matter, and to carry it out, as far as in you lies."

SUBMISSION A TEST OF LOYALTY

Sometimes the Lord's hand is *very heavy*. It was in the case of our Lord Jesus, heavy, *pressed down*. But when the Lord felt the Father's hand pressing down, He meekly bowed Himself beneath the weight, in humble acquiescence to the will of the One whose purpose He had come to carry out. But the Hand did not crush Him, although it seemed to do so. Instead of being a crushing, it was the Hand of Love, testing His obedience to the full. When His obedience was fully tested, the same Hand lifted Him up and "set Him at His own right hand in the Heavenly places; far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."—Ephesians 1:20-23.

Thus it will be with us, if we are found faithful. God will exalt us in due time. But He cannot exalt any who are not humble. Submission indicates faith. We would not submit ourselves unless we had absolute confidence in God. And not *faith* only, but *loyalty* also, is necessary. Therefore the Father tests us in these two qualities. Without these, we would be quite unfit for the Kingdom; and so the various tests of the present time are tests of faith and loyalty to God, and of entire submission to His will. It is to those "who, by *patient continuance* in well doing, *seek for* glory and honor and immortality" that God has promised "eternal life."—Romans 2:7.

We should recognize Divine providences and *look for* them. We should expect God's providential leadings in all of life's affairs. We should not pass through life with the thought that *we* are running this, or regulating that. As a child would look to his parent, or a pupil to his teacher, or as an apprentice to his master, or a maid to her mistress, so should our eyes be looking to the Lord asking His guidance.—Psalm 123:1, 2.

OUR ATTITUDE IN TRIAL

This Divine guidance we should seek in all things. Suppose that some business complication arises. Perhaps one loses his situation. A child of God who had not learned full submission to the Lord's will might immediately blame some one else or find fault with his employers. But the right attitude for the Lord's people would be to say, "The Father knows all about this matter; He could have prevented it and would have done so had it been for my best interests. There is some lesson here for me to learn, and I will

look for it." If he should discover that there had been some carelessness on his part, then he must perceive that the logical consequence would be that he lose the position.

But if after careful investigation of matters, he feels that he could not have been more faithful or more loyal to duty, then he should look further and say, "Lord, I do not see wherein I have deserved to lose this situation, but I am looking to Thee, to see what is Thy providence in the matter; for Thou knowest that I must have some kind of employment; and therefore I merely pray, Give me this day my daily bread. I cannot suppose that this is accidental. Surely Thou hast some lesson for me in this experience. I know not what Thy providence may be. Give me, I pray, the necessary grace and wisdom to perceive Thy will."

As he *prays* thus, he should at the same time be *on the lookout* for the Lord's providences and guidance. The child of God who thus acknowledges the Lord, and is faithful to Him in all the details of life's affairs, is the one who will come off victorious and be participator with the Master in His Kingdom. This great exaltation will be given all who are fully submissive to God's will, whether their powers and talents be many or few.

THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF OBEDIENCE

In our context the Apostle Paul urges that the Church cultivate the mind of Christ. He says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." He had been reciting the qualities necessary to the Church in order that they could be acceptable to the Father. Amongst these was an eager desire to please God. The Apostle exhorts all such to pursue the course of humility and submission taken by our Lord as the only proper path for the Master's footstep followers. St. Paul was endeavoring to impress that the mind of Christ was eminently worthy of imitation and painstaking cultivation.

As a further evidence of the Master's great humility, the Apostle brings forcefully to their attention what Jesus was in His prehuman existence. As the Logos, He was in the form of God—the spirit condition. Yet He was not ambitious; He was not self-seeking. On the contrary, He made Himself of no reputation—divested Himself of His former glory and honor, that He might do the will of the Father. His spirit was directly opposite to that of Satan. The Logos thought not to usurp the Father's place, or to claim equality with Him, but manifested a very different disposition—an attitude of humility. Then "let this mind be in you," urges the Apostle. "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." Consider that God has called you with the same High Calling, that you might attain to a place at the right hand of Christ, even as He attained to a place at the Father's right hand. Realizing this, permit this mind of Christ to be in you.

God was not seeking to force this mind upon Christ, nor is He seeking to force it upon us. Our Lord having taken this position of humility, in order to be man's Redeemer, it was needful that He maintain that mind in order to work out the blessed fruitage of patience. Three and one half years were required for Jesus to complete His work; and it was not

until after He reached the Cross and could say, "*It is finished,*" that He was "set down with the Father in His Throne." If we have become Jesus' disciples, if we have accepted the conditions of the High Calling, if we have received this mind, then we are to let, or permit, this mind to work out in us the character-likeness of our Head.

THE UNIVERSAL STANDARD OF OBEDIENCE

We have seen that the Logos did not meditate the usurpation to be equal with God, but humbled Himself. Lucifer took the opposite course. Instead of humbling himself, he said, "I will be like the Most High." (Isaiah 14:14.) Here we have an illustration of what we should not do. It is a principle of the Divine Government that "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—Luke 14:11; 1 Peter 5:6.

Every creature of God, whether angel or man, should have this humble mind. This is the only proper attitude. This test comes during the Gospel Age to only the Lord and the Church. To what extent it may ever come to others is a question. It would seem to be impossible for this test to come to all. Those who have the right disposition will desire to do the Father's will at any cost. Doubtless if any one of the holy angels were allowed the privilege of becoming the Redeemer of a race, he would be glad to do so. We do not know, however, just how it would have been had the angels not seen the result of the obedience of the Logos to the will of the Father.

The world will be subjected to a test during the Millennial Age. The proper attitude for every creature would be to risk everything in the Father's service; it will eventually be the standing of the world of mankind—every one who shall attain everlasting life. We must remember, however, that *Divine Justice* never calls for *self-sacrifice*. It calls for *obedience*; and the obedience of the Church is the extreme of obedience—even "*unto death.*" But the Father has offered a reward so high that such obedience has become the standard par excellence throughout the Universe.—Revelation 2:10.

MAY 28

Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body [so long as we feel entirely contented with present conditions—ourselves and our surroundings], we are absent from the Lord—2 Cor. 5:6.

If we were living near to Him "walking with God," we would not feel perfectly satisfied with present attainments, conditions, *etc.*, but would feel like pilgrims and strangers, seeking a better rest, a better home, "which God hath in reservation for them that love him." But this, as the Apostle explains (v.7), is true only of those who walk by faith and not by sight. "But we are confident [full of faith toward God, we rejoice to walk by faith], and are well pleased rather to be from home [homeless, pilgrims and strangers in this world], and to be at home with the Lord" "in the spirit of our fellowship"—Z '97, 305 (R 2230).

Confidence, the full assurance of faith, is the privilege of God's people, based upon the word and oath of the all-wise, just, loving and powerful Jehovah. His Plan and our experience in connection with that plan, so far as unfolded, fully corroborate His word and His oath. Under all circumstances of our pilgrimage to our home, we may enjoy this confidence, as we see all things working together for our good. This keeps us from feeling absent from the Lord in the spirit of our minds—P '36, 64.

Parallel passages: Matt. 6:25-34; 10:39; 16:26; 18:1-4; 24:38, 39; Luke 8:14; 12:19; 14:17-24; 21:34; John 12:43; 15:19; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; 15:32; Phil. 3:18, 19; Col. 3:2; Jas. 4:4; 1 Pet. 1:14, 24; 2:11.

Hymns: 47, 322, 7, 94, 170, 172, 4.
Poems of Dawn, 196: *In The Wilderness*.
Tower Reading: Z '97, 303 (R 2230).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they undergone? In what did they result?

IN THE WILDERNESS

BE still, and murmur not, poor heart,
When God shall lead thee to a "desert place,"
And bid thee dwell apart;
If ravens in the wilderness
Did feed *the servant* of the Lord, will He
For thee, *His child*, do less?

Nor fear, sad heart, its loneliness,—
Hath He not said, "I never will forsake
Nor leave thee comfortless?"
Have faith, thy Master may design

To fit thee thus for Kingdom work and bliss,—
And wilt thou then repine?

Be patient, let His will be done;
Be calm, be strong, that He may finish there
The work He hath begun.
"A little while," He soon will come,
And say to thee, "It is enough, my child,
My *faithful* one, come home!"

R2230: SONGS IN THE HOUSE OF OUR PILGRIMAGE.

"Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage."—Psa. 119:54.

GOD'S PEOPLE during the Jewish dispensation as well as during the Gospel dispensation are spoken of as "pilgrims and strangers" in the "present evil world." They are such, because they have heard of "a better country," whose ruler is God, and whose law is love—"the perfect law of liberty." To such pilgrims the strife for wealth and vain glory, the pride, haughtiness and tinsel that everywhere prevail now, are distasteful; while the battle for wealth or position, especially when it leads to unrighteousness, oppression, slander, envy, strife and every evil work, is repulsive. Having obtained a glimpse of the perfection of divine character with its absoluteness of justice and love, it has become their ideal: and they have heard "the voice of him that speaketh from heaven," instructing them that sin and evil shall not always prevail, but that the God of heaven by and by shall set up his Kingdom which will renovate and bless the world of mankind, and bring in everlasting righteousness. Since they have heard this, and the more they learn to appreciate it, the more, necessarily, they are out of harmony with the contrary conditions of the present time. Hence it is that they feel themselves, and are portrayed in the Scriptures as being, pilgrims and strangers who seek the fairer clime of the coming age.

It was in this view of matters that the Apostle declared that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were "pilgrims and strangers on the earth," who sought a better country, a home under more righteous conditions. They sojourned in the very land promised to them, but it was not their "home;" because it was still in the hands and under the government of those who were aliens and strangers from God. They waited for the fulfilment of God's promise to give them that country under his divine blessing and laws, when it would become to them a heavenly country, a country under heavenly direction and blessing. They were obliged to wait for two reasons: first, as a test and development of their own faith and trust in the Great Promiser; and secondly, because "the wickedness of the Amorites was not yet come to the full."—Gen. 15:16.

Commenting on this, the Apostle declares that if they had been mindful, *i.e.*, wishful, to have returned to Charran, their own country prior to the promise of Canaan, they might have returned to it,—when they found the land of promise still occupied by other peoples, and that God was *not yet ready to fulfil* to them his promises. (Heb. 11:15.) But they

preferred to hold on to God's promises, and chose accordingly, for the time, to be pilgrims and strangers in the land of promise. Stephen in his discourse (Acts 7:2, 5) points out this pilgrimage and sojourn, as strangers, of Abraham and his seed—waiting for possession of the promised land. Stephen says, "God gave him none inheritance in it: no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he *would give it to him* for a possession, and to his seed after him."

We are to understand, accordingly, that the heavenly country for which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the faithful of the fleshly house of Israel waited as "pilgrims and strangers" is after all to be earthly, in the sense of being *on the earth*; but it will be heavenly in the sense that its government, regulations, laws, etc., will be heavenly laws, etc., and not "earthly, sensual, devilish." Consequently, when the Apostle says that they "looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God;" and that God "hath prepared for them a city," we must understand this promise, so far as they are concerned, to be in harmony with the other promises made to fleshly Israel.

The "city" referred to is not a literal city, but the symbolical one mentioned in Rev. 21:2, 9-27. In symbol a city signifies a government, and this city which comes down from God out of heaven symbolizes the Kingdom of God, his rule or government, which will be established in all the earth. This "city" or government will consist of The Christ—the "Bridegroom" and "the bride the Lamb's wife." "Then shall the righteous shine forth"—the city will have the glory of God. When this Kingdom is established, the nations* shall walk in the light of it.—Rev. 21:24.

*The words "*of them that are saved*" in this text are not found in the older MSS. Very evidently they are an interpolation; because after the nations are saved, brought into harmony with God, they will no longer be "nations" (Gentiles, heathen), but parts of the one holy nation, the Kingdom of God.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the faithful pilgrims and strangers prior to the atonement, while they will not be members of the bride company nor of the new Jerusalem, the Kingdom, will nevertheless be very closely identified with it in the work of blessing the world of mankind in general. And hence it is that they are represented as waiting for this "city," this government which God will establish in the world; preferring to have their inheritance at that time, and under the blessing and bright illumination of that heavenly city or government, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. It is in harmony with this thought that we are taught to pray, "Thy Kingdom [the Heavenly Jerusalem, the city which hath for foundations the twelve Apostles—Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone] come! Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." This city will shine and bless the world until all the *willing* shall be helped and reconciled to God. Its reign will be for a thousand years, after which a new dispensation will open, under new conditions, in which mankind (perfected) will be granted the privilege of ruling themselves in harmony with the divine law.

In a certain sense then we might designate the present era, "the present evil world," to be the general house of our pilgrimage for all who love and long for righteousness; and the better condition of the future, the "new heavens and the new earth" promised as the heavenly home or condition which will be found abundantly satisfactory to all who shall attain thereto.

"OUR EARTHLY HOUSE" AND "OUR HOUSE FROM HEAVEN."

Nevertheless, the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 5:1-10) writing concerning this pilgrimage and addressing specially the consecrated Church of the Gospel age, uses language which, while not out of harmony with what we have just seen, foregoing, may be nevertheless properly understood to refer to the present mortal bodies of the saints, as their houses of pilgrimage—their temporary houses, while on the way to their permanent homes, the spiritual bodies which God hath promised to them that love him, and which the same apostle described to the same readers in a previous epistle.—1 Cor. 15:38, 42-45.

Moreover, since we well know that very much in the Psalms was written prophetically, respecting the Christ, head and body, the overcoming Church of the Gospel age, we may well infer that the language of our text had special reference to these pilgrims of the Gospel age. The Apostle says, "We know that if our earthly house of this temporary dwelling place were dissolved, we have a permanent structure of God, a house not made with hands [not produced by human powers] everlasting in the heavens." Since the renewed earth, altho it will be a permanent house for the world of mankind, will not be "in the heavens;" and since the Church when granted their new spiritual bodies in the resurrection will be thereafter everlastingly in the higher or heavenly condition, it seems but proper to construe the Apostle's language as relating to the earthly bodies and the heavenly bodies of the Church. And such an application seems to fit his discourse throughout thoroughly. It is true that in this present body or temporary house of pilgrimage we groan—oppressed not only by the evil influence of the world and the devil on every hand but also and especially by the weaknesses of our own flesh. For when we would do good, evil is present with us, so that the good which we would do we are often hindered from doing, while the evil which we do not approve often obtrudes itself on us and requires to be continually resisted and overcome. As the Apostle elsewhere declares, we "which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our body,"—the Church, into the glorious likeness of our Lord.

But our groaning is not with a desire to be unclothed; we do not wish to be without a body, for that at very best all down through the Gospel age would mean to be "asleep in Jesus," waiting for the resurrection morning that then we might be "clothed upon with our house from heaven," our new, perfect and permanent body, our "home." What we prefer is not to have the little spark of present life extinguished, but to have it swallowed up, absorbed into the perfect conditions of the perfect life to which we are begotten, with its perfect body.

"Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the spirit." This perfect condition which we are to obtain in the resurrection will be the grand consummation of our salvation which God has promised; and the new mind, the new will begotten by the Word of truth, is reckoned as the beginning of that new creature, which will be perfected in the divine nature when the first resurrection shall have completed it. The holy spirit granted us in the present time is a hand payment so to speak, an "earnest" or assurance of the grand and gracious results for which we are hoping and striving, groaning and praying.

"Therefore we are always confident knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body [so long as we feel entirely contented with present conditions—ourselves and our surroundings], we are absent from the Lord." If we were living near to him, "walking with God, we would not feel perfectly satisfied with present attainments, conditions, etc.; but would feel like pilgrims and strangers, seeking a better rest, a better home, "which God hath in reservation for them that love him." But this, as the Apostle explains, is true only of those who walk by faith and not by sight.

"But we are confident [full of faith toward God, we rejoice to walk by faith], and are well pleased rather to be from home [homeless, pilgrims and strangers on the earth] and to be at home with the Lord" in the spirit of our fellowship.

For this cause we are striving, that whether it be by and by when we reach our home, or whether it be in the present time when we are actually away from home, pilgrims and strangers, we strive that we may be acceptable with the Lord; that we may have his favor and blessing and realize his fellowship and presence and know that we shall ultimately be accepted by him. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to the things he hath done whether it be good or bad." All through this pilgrimage we are standing at the bar of our Lord's judgment: he is testing us, proving us, to see whether or not we love him and the things which make for righteousness and peace; and if so, how much we are willing to sacrifice for righteousness' sake. He marks the degree of our love by the measure of our self-denials and self-sacrifices for his sake, the truth's sake.

But to thus speak of our bodies as houses can be true only of the "saints," the "new creatures" in Christ. Others of mankind have not duality of nature, and could not properly apply to themselves such expressions as that of Romans 8:10, 11, "If Christ be in you the *body* is [reckoned] *dead* because of sin; but the spirit alive because of [the imputed] righteousness" of Christ. The new nature of the saints, begotten by the word of truth, is really only the new *will*, which however is thenceforth addressed as the real person, and it alone is recognized of God who knows us not after the flesh but after the spirit of our new minds—Christ-minds. Notice also Romans 6:3, 4. These "new creatures" have an old man or outward man that is perishing, and a new man, inward man, or hidden man of the heart who is being renewed day by day.—2 Cor. 4:16; Col. 3:9, 10; Eph. 4:23, 24; 1 Pet. 3:4.

It is written, he "giveth songs in the night," and "He hath put a new song into my mouth." It causes us no surprise to know that the saints will "be joyful in glory" and sing aloud with the high praises of God in their mouths, when it shall be given to them to execute the judgments written (Psa. 149:4-9); but it may strike some as peculiar that the present conditions of God's people, the condition of imperfection and physical frailty, in which we groan and are burdened, should be a condition in which *songs* and thanksgiving and joy should prevail with us. Nevertheless, this is the divine will, as it is the divine statement, respecting all who are truly overcomers: they are all to be joyful in the house of their pilgrimage. Respecting this joy our Lord declares "Your joy no man taketh from you." "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."—John 14:27; 16:22.

So then, while there is a measure of groaning because of some burdens on the part of those who have attained to the new life, there are also blessed joys which the world cannot give, neither take away: and these are the source and cause of the unceasing joy and "songs in the night," before the glorious dawn of the new Millennial day: these songs are inspired by the joys granted us in the house of our pilgrimage—while we are actually absent from our "home."

What are our joys which no man taketh from us? and which persecution and affliction and trouble can only deepen and widen and make more sweet? What joy is this? This joy is a foretaste of the blessings to come, an earnest of our inheritance. It is inspired by confidence in him on whom we have believed: confidence that he is both able and willing to perfect the work which he has begun and which we desire shall be perfected in his own best way: confidence that so long as we are firmly holding to his gracious promises with the arms of our faith, he will not permit us to be separated from him. Who shall separate us from the love of God in Christ? Shall tribulation and persecution? Our confidence is that "no one is able to pluck us out of the Father's hand," and that "the Father himself loveth" us, and will not turn us away so long as we desire to abide obediently in his love. Yea, we are confident that all things are working together for good to those who love God; confident that he who is for us is more powerful than all who can be against us. Such confidence is sure to bring joy beyond the world's comprehension, and a peace of God that passeth all understanding, which keeps the heart.

And such joy, produced by the true gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ received into an honest heart, naturally and properly awakens the "songs in the house of our pilgrimage."

"Mid all the tumult and the strife I hear the music ringing,
It finds an echo in my soul, how can I keep from singing."

The word "song" has a wider meaning than simply a musical cadence: it is used in the Scriptures and elsewhere to indicate a joyful message of any kind. For instance, we say, referring to the gospel, the knowledge of the divine plan, "Thou hast put a new song into my mouth, even the loving-kindness of our God." And it is a fact that those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, those who have received the joy which no man can take from them, those who have tasted of the grace of God in Christ, will not only rejoice and

literally sing musical songs with their lips, but they will also rejoice to have their entire lives a song of praise and thanksgiving unto God. The song will bubble over on every proper occasion, wherever hearing ears are found: so fully will the cleansed, justified and consecrated heart appreciate God's goodness and so greatly will it desire to—

"Tell the whole world these blessed tidings,
And speak of the time of rest that nears."

Wherever Christians find themselves without this joy of the Lord, and where they have no song in the house of their pilgrimage, they have reason to fear that there is something wrong,—that the connections between their own hearts and the Lord are not full and complete. If they are unacquainted with this joy and these songs, it is because they have either never fully accepted the Lord as their portion, and consecrated themselves to his service, or else because certain false doctrines have so terrorized their minds and so completely enslaved them to fear that trustful joys are impossible to them. Such should at once take the proper steps either to make their consecration to the Lord *complete*, so that he can put his spirit into them as members of his body, and give them the "seal of adoption," and cause them to know the joys of his salvation; or, if fully consecrated and hindered from joy and songs through false doctrine, they should diligently search the Scriptures and find the Lord's message,—"Their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men."—Isa. 29:13.

IN THE CLOUDY DAY.

It is true, nevertheless, that our Christian experience is not always of a kind calculated to produce an exuberance of spirit: it is doubtless to our advantage that sometimes there are dark hours such as our dear Redeemer experienced when he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." Such experiences no doubt draw us nearer to the fountain of comfort, of joy and peace, and are blessings in disguise, and amongst the "all things" which are working together for our good. But even in the very midst of trials and difficulties, and while cast down so that the songs do not abound, we may nevertheless in all conditions and at all times realize God's love and care and so firmly hold on to the Lord, with the hand of faith, that we would in the darkest moments be able to realize the joy of our Master's sympathy and love and help, and thus have the joy which no disaster of the present time can interrupt.

Despondency and loss of these joys and songs may sometimes result from ill health: in which case, if the illness be the result of selfish gratification, we have room for a lesson and reform; or it may seem to be the result of unselfish fidelity to the service of the truth, along the lines of duty, and if so, as soon as this is recognized, our joys and songs will return. In illustration let us remember Paul and Silas praising God in the prison of Philippi, while their backs were still lacerated and bleeding.

It should be the aim of the Lord's people to cultivate this joy and the conditions favorable to it, daily. The condition of our hearts has much to do with it; for this joy is not wholly dependent upon the heads,—our knowledge of the divine Word and plan. Its

possession and increase depends chiefly upon the heart—the center of our affections. If we set our affections, our hearts, on earthly things and seek for joy through the various gratifications of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, etc., we will thereby quench to some extent the spirit of the new mind, and correspondingly decrease the joys of the new mind. On the contrary, the more we overcome the world, the flesh and the devil, the more we seek to do the will of our Father who is in heaven, the more we seek for the fellowship and communion of our dear Redeemer, the more we seek to do those things which are pleasing in his sight, so much the more will we have of the joy and peace which no man taketh from us and which trials, difficulties and persecutions can only make the more sweet and precious.

And the more we have of this new mind, and the closer we are in sympathy with the Lord, the more we will desire to sing heartily "The old, old story of Jesus and his love."

"How happy and blessed the hours,
Since Jesus I always can see!
Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
Have all gained new sweetness to me."

"MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU."

"When *He* giveth quietness, *who* then can make trouble?"—Job 34:29.

"Like a river glorious is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious in its glad increase.
Perfect—yet it floweth fuller every day;
Perfect—yet it groweth deeper all the way.

"Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.
Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand.

"Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry toucheth spirit there.
Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the sun of love.

"We may trust Him solely all for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly, find Him wholly true.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest."

MAY 29

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. ... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid—John 14:27.

The more we overcome the world, the flesh and the devil, the more we seek to do the will of our Father who is in heaven, the more we seek for the fellowship and communion of our dear Redeemer, the more we seek to do those things which are pleasing in His sight, so much the more will we have of the joy and peace which no man takes from us, and which trials, difficulties and persecutions can only make the more sweet and precious. "Ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (John 16:22)—Z '97, 306 (R 2230).

Peace is rest of heart and mind. In the first instance, it arises from the consciousness of the forgiveness of our sins through the merit of Christ, giving us peace with God. In the second instance, it arises from a consciousness of our harmony with the good will of God in sanctification, giving the peace of God. In neither sense should we permit anything to drive it from our hearts, but hold ourselves in rest with, and in God—P '30, 78.

Parallel passages: Job 34:29; Psa. 4:8; 25:12, 13; 85:8; 119:165; 125:1; Prov. 3:17, 24; Isa. 26:3; 28:12; 32:2, 17, 18; 53:5; Matt. 11:28-30; John 16:33; Rom. 5:1; 8:6; 14:17; 15:13, 33; Eph. 2:14, 17; Phil. 4:6, 7, 9; Col. 3:15; 2 Thes. 3:16.

Hymns: 330, 63, 110, 99, 120, 244, 293.
Poems of Dawn, 210: *A Little While*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 150 (R 4817).

Questions: Have I been fully resting in the Lord this week? Under what circumstances? What aided or hindered? What were the results?

A LITTLE WHILE

A LITTLE while, our warfare shall be over;
A little while, our tears be wiped away;
A little while, the power of Jehovah
Shall turn our darkness into gladsome day.

A little while, the fears that oft surround us
Shall to the memories of the past belong;
A little while, the love that sought and found us
Shall change our weeping into Heaven's glad song.

A little while! 'Tis ever drawing nearer—
The brighter dawning of that glorious day.
Blest Savior, make our spirit's vision clearer,

And guide, O guide us in the shining way!

A little while, O blessed expectation!
For strength to run with patience, Lord, we cry;
Our hearts up-leap in fond anticipation;
Our union with the Bridegroom draweth nigh.

R4817: STRENGTH AND PEACE

"The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace."—Psa. 29:11

AS WE look back over the years that have passed since first we learned to "know the joyful sound" of the true Gospel and consecrated ourselves fully to the Lord, we view with sorrow the imperfections of even our best efforts; and as looking forward we see the difficulties that seem to obstruct our onward course, we shall greatly need to reinforce our waning courage with the special promises of Divine grace to help in every time of need. Among others, we have the blessed assurance that "The Lord will give strength unto his people"; "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."—Psa. 50:15.

As soldiers under our great Captain, we have enlisted in no uncertain struggle, unless our own faint-heartedness or unfaithfulness should make it so. We are fully supplied with the whole armor of God, which will amply protect us against the fiery darts of the Adversary, if only we accept it and carefully buckle it on. We have with us the constant presence of our Captain, so long as we are closely following his leading. Above the din of battle his inspiring voice may be heard saying, "Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom"; "Be of good cheer; I have overcome!" (Luke 12:32; John 16:33.) If we are weak and incline to faint-heartedness, we have only to remember the blessed promise, "The Lord will give strength unto his people"; and by our faithfulness we shall glorify God, who will deliver us from all our foes, both seen and unseen.

Like all others, the Lord's people need fortitude and patience, else they might soon become discouraged in the conflict with the world, the flesh, and the Adversary. They need strength; they need encouragement. In the text under consideration, the word *strength* means, in large measure, *courage*. The Lord will give *courage* to his people. He encourages us in a variety of ways; he encourages us through each other, as we build one another up in the most holy faith.

MILK FOR BABES—STRONG MEAT FOR THOSE MORE DEVELOPED

We, nevertheless, look to the individual, innate strength and to its importance. "Be of good courage, and he will strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." (Psa.

31:24.) We are assured that we shall be strengthened in the "*inner man*" through the Spirit of the Lord. None have this particular kind of strength, that of the "inner man," except those who have become New Creatures in Christ, to whom "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." (2 Cor. 5:17.) With this particular Spirit-begotten class all of the Lord's dealings are intended to develop character.

"Desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby," and become strong. (I Pet. 2:2.) This milk of the Word the Lord gives at first to his children, that the new nature may grow thereby and become able to digest stronger food and thus develop in character-likeness to our Lord. To all his own he has provided nourishment—*milk* for babes, *strong meat* for those more developed. (Heb. 5:12-14.) And any who would be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might (courageous) will avail himself of the Divine provision.

Our *faith*, however, is the basis of both our *strength* and our *peace*. No matter how fiercely the storms of life may assail us, we must never let go of our *anchor* and allow ourselves to drift; but always remember that "The foundation of God standeth sure"; that "His truth is our shield and buckler"; that "What he has promised he is able also to perform," notwithstanding our human imperfections and frailties; that, covering these, we have the imputed righteousness of Christ, our Surety and Advocate; that "The Father himself loveth us," and that "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust," and so has compassion for the sons of his love and is very pitiful and of tender mercy. (2 Tim. 2:19; Psa. 91:4; Rom. 4:21; John 16:27; Psa. 103:14.) Indeed, "What more *could* he say than to us he hath said" to assure our faith and to steady and strengthen our hearts to patient endurance in the midst of the trials and conflicts in the narrow way of sacrifice?

With abounding compassion and tenderness our Lord, on the last night of his earthly life, bestowed upon his beloved disciples his parting blessing, his legacy of *peace*. It was the richest legacy he had to bequeath, and was of priceless value. It was the promise of that tranquility of soul, that rest and ease of mind which he himself possessed—the *peace of God*. It was the same peace which the Father has always enjoyed, even in the midst of all the commotion which the permission of evil has brought about; but it was not derived from the same source. In Jehovah, this peace is self-centered, because he realizes *in himself* omnipotence and Infinite wisdom; while the peace of Christ was centered, not in *himself*, but in *God*, through faith in *his* wisdom, power and grace. So also, if we would have the *peace of God*, the peace of Christ ("my peace"), it must, like his, be centered in God, by faith.

The peace promised is not the short-lived peace of the world, which is sometimes enjoyed for a little season; but "my peace," the peace of God which Christ himself by faith enjoyed, who, "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor" (2 Cor. 8:9); who lost friend after friend, and in his last hour was forsaken by all of the few that remained—the peace that endured through loss, persecution, scorn and contempt, and even amidst the agonies of the cross. This peace is something which none of the vicissitudes of this life can destroy and which no enemy can wrest from us.

"MARVEL NOT IF THE WORLD HATE YOU"

"There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." (Isa. 48:22.) "The wicked are like the troubled sea, continually casting up mire and dirt." Their hearts are not in accord with peace and righteousness, but are filled with selfishness. The wicked are self-seeking and grasping; filled with anger if they cannot always get what they want; with malice if they see some one enjoying what they cannot have. All of these things indicate a lack of peace.

To the extent that any of the Lord's people have any of these evil propensities they cannot have the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding"—which passeth all description. It is a rest of heart by faith. In this peace lies a satisfaction for all the various qualities of the mind; in proportion as the mind develops the ambition of pleasing the Lord, of communicating to others the knowledge of the Truth and the blessed opportunity of salvation, it becomes our ambition to do good, instead of evil. So ambition, being turned into a right line, the peace of God, which none can comprehend save those who possess it, comes to the mind and heart.

It is not an outward peace, however, for the Lord's people, individually and collectively, have most distressing experiences. The Church has always been persecuted, as Jesus forewarned us: "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you"; "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—I John 3:13; John 15:19.

"IN THE WORLD YE SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION"

The peace promised is not such as the world can always recognize and appreciate, for the possessor of it, like the Lord and the Apostles and Prophets, may have a stormy pathway. *They* did not have peace *outwardly*. They were beset, harassed on every hand; they were persecuted and obliged to flee from place to place; some of the saints of old were stoned to death; some were sawn asunder. Yet the peace of God, abounding in their hearts, enabled them to endure all these trials joyfully. Indeed, that it must be so with all the faithful until all the purposes of God in the permission of evil are accomplished, we are distinctly forewarned, but with the assurance that through all the storms of life this peace shall abide—"In the world ye shall have *tribulation*," but "in me ye shall have *peace*."—John 16:33.

This promise, that God will give peace to his people, seems to apply only to a peace of heart. Our Lord and the Apostles possessed it to such an extent that they enjoyed themselves much more than did their enemies. While Paul and Silas were in prison they sang praises to God, instead of berating the governments and threatening what would be done to them; instead of butting their heads against the bars and saying, "God does not care for us; we will go about our own business, hereafter." So with us. In proportion as we see matters from the Divine viewpoint and appreciate the precious promises and let them inspire our hearts, we shall rejoice in those promises, and our hearts will be blessed. Even if we have trials and difficulties that we are not able to surmount, if these are

working out for us the fruits and graces of the Spirit, we may rejoice and give thanks for these evidences of God's love.

"MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU"

We see that the peace of God is compatible with great commotion and with sorrow and pain of various kinds; for it is not dependent upon outward circumstances, but upon a proper balancing of the mind and the condition of a perfect heart. Such peace—the peace of God—was enjoyed by our Lord Jesus in the midst of all the turmoil and confusion of his eventful earthly life. And this brings us to the consideration of our Lord's last legacy to his disciples, when he was about to leave the world, as expressed in his own words: "*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth [in stinted measure or in perishable quality], give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*"—John 14:27.

The promise in our text—"The Lord will bless his people with peace"—evidently belongs to this Age, when all creation groans and travails in pain. (Rom. 8:22.) When the Millennial Age shall have been ushered in, there will be prevailing conditions of peace and thus he will give peace to all people.

Let us, then, have for our watchword, "LOYALTY" to God and to the principles of righteousness; and let each of us write upon his heart the gracious promise—"The Lord will give *strength* unto his people." Let us be faithfully "his people," and let us earnestly desire and faithfully use the *strength* promised. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it"; "He is faithful that promised."—I Thess. 5:24; Heb. 10:23.

So then, if you lack the strength or the peace promised, the fault is *yours*, not *God's*. Either you have not the interests of his service closely enough at heart, or else you do not make use of the strength he provides. "The Lord will give *strength unto his people* (his trusting, faithful servants, those who are using to his praise the talents consecrated to their Master, however many or few those talents may be); the Lord will bless his people with peace."

MAY 30

Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation—Rom. 12:12.

Here is an important part of the great battle of the Christian's life. He must fight the natural tendencies of the old nature and confidently anticipate the victory in the strength of the great Captain of his Salvation. He must not succumb to the flattering and deceptive influences of prosperity, nor faint under the burdens of adversity. He must not allow the trials of life to sour and harden his disposition, to make him morose, or surly, or bitter, or unkind. Nor may he allow pride or ostentation or self-righteousness to grow and feed upon the temporal good things which the Lord's providence has granted him to test his faithfulness as a steward—Z '95, 20 (R 1759).

Our hope of being in God's and Christ's image and of sharing in the Kingdom blessings and work is a strong basis for joy. Our tribulations are steps preparing us for the realization of our hopes, and they call for the exercise of patience, lest we fail, while considering our tribulations, to persevere in looking with cheerful constancy to the glorious hope set before us. Let patience have her perfect work, and the glorious hope will be ours—P '35, 62.

Parallel passages: Phil. 4:4; 1 Thes. 1:2, 3, 6, 7; 5:16; Luke 10:20; Rom. 15:3, 4, 13; 5:2-5; Heb. 3:6; 10:36; 1 Pet. 4:13; Luke 21:19; Psa. 37:7; 40:1; Hab. 3:17, 18; Col. 1:11; Jas. 1:2-4; 5:7; 1 Pet. 2:19, 20; Heb. 12:1-3; 2 Thes. 1:4.

Hymns: 25, 7, 21, 32, 58, 88, 92.
Poems of Dawn, 185: *I Can Trust*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 408 (R 4909).

Questions: What have this week's experiences been in the light of this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

I CAN TRUST

I CANNOT see, with my small human sight,
Why God should lead this way or that for me;
I only know He saith, "Child, follow me."
But I can trust.

I know not why my path should be at times
So straitly hedged, so strangely barred before;
I only know God could keep wide the door.
But I can trust.

I often wonder, as with trembling hand
I cast the seed along the furrowed ground,
If ripened fruit for God will there be found.

But I can trust.

I cannot know why suddenly the storm
Should rage so fiercely round me in its wrath;
But this I know, God watches still my path—
And I can trust.

R4909: "YE HAVE NEED OF PATIENCE"

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—Jas. 1:4.

THERE ARE two quite distinct words in the Greek which, in our English Scriptures, are translated "patience." One of these is a word that in a general way corresponds to the common thought of patience as we speak of it in connection with the everyday affairs of life, meaning merely forbearance, or long-suffering. Indeed the Greek word is generally translated long-suffering. It is the other word with which we are more particularly interested in the treatment of our text, and which is the one most frequently translated patience by the New Testament writers.

This word has a much deeper and fuller significance than attaches to our English word patience. It signifies, rather, constancy, the thought being an endurance of evil in a cheerful, hopeful, willing, patient manner. It represents, therefore, an element of character, and not merely a temporary condition or restraint of feeling or action. It signifies that development of heart and character which manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full acquiescence in the Divine Wisdom and Love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised to overthrow them in God's due time.

This grace of patience smooths the way for every other Christian grace, because all must be acquired under the process of patient and continuous self-discipline. Not a step of progress can be gained without this grace of patience; and not one of the graces more beautifully adorns the Christian character, or wins the approval of the world's conscience, or glorifies the God of all grace whose Truth inspires it. It is *enduring meekness*, striving to stem the tide of human weakness, and endeavoring with painstaking care to attain to the Divine likeness. It is slow to wrath and plenteous in mercy; it is quick to perceive the paths of righteousness, and prompt to walk in them; it is mindful of its own imperfections and sympathetic with the imperfections and shortcomings of others.

The importance of endurance in the Christian's character is fully borne out by the Apostle Paul's use of the word; for on more than one occasion he places *patience* above and beyond *love*, which we have seen is the "mark" of character for which we are to run—the "*mark for the prize*." For instance, in writing to Titus (2:2), enumerating the characteristics of the advanced Christian, the Apostle uses the following order: "Vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity [love], in *patience*." Though we have all the

other qualities, this final test of *patient, cheerful endurance* must be passed before we can be accepted of the Lord as members of the *very elect*.

Again, in writing to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:10) respecting himself, the Apostle puts this quality of *patient endurance* in the place beyond *love*, saying, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, *patient endurance*."

"THE LORD YOUR GOD DOTH PROVE YOU"

One might ask, if "Love is the fulfilling of the Law" and "the mark for the prize of our high calling," how can patience rank higher than Love? The answer is that patient endurance does not come in merely at the close of our race, but it is a requisite all the way along the race-course. We need this *cheerful endurance* of the *earliest trials* in the Christian way; and as we speed along in our race for the "mark," the spirit of *cheerful endurance* should be *growing stronger and stronger at every step of the journey*. Some might be faithful for a few days or a few months or a few years, yet be unworthy of the great Kingdom blessing of Christ.

In the Parable of the Sower, our Lord gave an illustration of this fact, saying that some seed fell on stony ground and sprang up; *it grew*; but finally, when the burning heat of persecution came, the tender plants withered away. In choosing the members of the Kingdom class the Lord is looking for a *depth of soil*, a *depth of character*, a *depth of heart* that will be *patient to endure*. Those who lack this *one* quality will not be fit for the Kingdom. *Patience* is necessary as an element of character on *any* plane of being; but with the *Christian* it is specially important to have it developed *from the beginning of the race*. We need it with us at the *first quarter mark*, and at the *second quarter mark*, and at the *third quarter mark*, and still with us at the *fourth quarter mark*, the *mark for the prize—perfect Love*.

And when we have reached this mark of the race where we love, not only our *friends*, but our *enemies*, it is required of us that we *stand up to the mark faithfully, cheerfully, patiently enduring the tests* which the Lord will even then see fit to have come upon us. God subjects His people to testing, *long testing*, sometimes for months and years. As it is said, "The Lord your God *proveth you*."—Deut. 13:3.

Hence it is that the Apostle Paul exhorts us, "Having done all, *stand*"—*endure*. Having reached the "mark," "Let *patient endurance* have her perfect work," or "*perfect her work*." Let *patient endurance* demonstrate, not only that you have the character, the qualifications of Love, demanded in the race for the prize, but also that you have love as an *element of character, deep-rooted, immutable*, so that you can *endure opposition cheerfully*.

St. Paul tells us that we have need of this *patient endurance* that, after having done the will of God [after having brought our own will into complete subjection to the Divine will], we might receive the promise. (Heb. 10:36.) The thought in the Apostle's mind seems to be that there is a certain work for us all *to do in ourselves*—"Work out your own

salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. 2:12, 13.) It is God who is working in us to *will* and to *do*—to co-operate in this work. Let us make sure that rebellion of any kind in our heart be thoroughly killed, mortified; and that we bring the will into perfect submission to the Divine will, so that we may have *no other will than His*. Even then, after we have overcome to this extent, *we have need of patience*. The Lord will not accept us merely because we are consecrated. He requires that the consecration shall be *proven*. *To begin with*, He accepts the consecration; then He *tests us* to demonstrate to what extent we really love Him.

PATIENCE NECESSARY TO FRUIT-BEARING

Patient endurance is also mentioned in the Scriptures as being the Lord's Word, or teaching. Our Lord says, "Because thou hast kept the *Word of My patience* I will also *keep thee*." (Rev. 3:10.) Twice in the Gospels also we note that our Lord brought to the notice of the disciples the importance of the quality of patient endurance. Once was in the Parable of the Sower above referred to. (Luke 8:11-15.) He said, "That [sown] on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, *keep it*, and bring forth fruit with patience [with cheerful endurance, constancy]." The thought here is that in order to be of the fruit-bearing class, which the Lord will approve and accept in His Kingdom, it is necessary to do more than receive the Word of His Testimony, even though we receive it with joy; for that class in the parable is represented by the stony ground, which at first gave evidence of great fruitfulness and vigor, but withered under the sun of persecution, because of lack of depth of soil. That stony, shallow ground represents, the Lord explained, a class of hearers who rejoice greatly in the Truth, but do not *endure*; they are such as cannot withstand persecution or opposition, but wither under it, become discouraged. Such cannot be of the Kingdom class, all of whom must be overcomers.

In this parable our Lord shows us that patient endurance, constancy, is the *final test*, following after the readiness of preparation to receive the seed; following after the seed has been received and has sprouted; following after love and hope and joy and faith have caused it to spring forth and to give promise of fruitage. Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the grain may be developed and thoroughly ripened and made fit for the garner. How important patient endurance, cheerful endurance, seems to be, in the light of the Lord's Word! for we cannot suppose that He who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with His children, even if He saw them enduring much for His sake, if they *endured in an impatient or unhappy frame of mind*. They would not in that event be copies of God's dear Son, whose sentiment is expressed in the words, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O God!"

Our Lord at another time was telling His disciples that as the result of being His followers they must expect opposition, trials, *tribulations*. Perhaps it may assist some to realize the strength of the meaning of the word *tribulation* when they know its origin. It is derived from the Latin word "*tribulum*," the name of a roller, or threshing-machine used in olden times for cleaning wheat, removing from it the outer husk, or chaff. How appropriate the term when applied to the Lord's consecrated people, who in the Scriptures

are symbolized by wheat! Our new natures are the kernel, the real grain; yet this treasure, or valuable part, is covered with the husk of earthly conditions. In order that the wheat may be made properly ready for the "garner" and for usefulness, it is necessary that each grain shall pass through the tribulation necessary to remove those qualities which, until separated, render us unfit for the future service to which we are called of the Lord.

In proportion as we are able to realize our own imperfections, and the perfect will of God concerning us, we shall be enabled to bear patiently, and even with a certain kind of rejoicing, all the tribulations which the Master may see best to let come upon us. Our Lord explained to His disciples that so long as they lived in this present Age, when sin abounds, and when Satan is the prince of this world, they must expect tribulation from various quarters; but He assured them that they would, nevertheless, be fully and completely under Divine care and protection, even though the persecutions would be permitted to reach and to affect them. Then follow the words, "In your patience [patient endurance, cheerful, hopeful constancy] possess ye your souls."—Luke 21:19.

"HE THAT OVERCOMETH SHALL INHERIT ALL THINGS"

One object of the test of patient endurance is that we may be "strong in the Lord," that we may have the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus—not merely the firmness, but also the gentleness. All this must be developed before we can receive the things promised, the things which God has in reservation for those that love Him. (I Cor. 2:9, 10.) These things are spiritual and might be apprehended by our minds, but could not be comprehended. The promise that we are to be like our Lord includes not only the spiritual and heavenly conditions, to which we shall attain in the First Resurrection, but also the blessing of sharing in the uplifting of the world. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29.) But to "be Christ's" means, not only that we shall accept Him, join Him and His standards, but also that we shall be good soldiers. Those who would not be good soldiers would not be worthy of being members of the Body of Christ, for such could not be conquerors and "more than conquerors" through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Rom. 8:37.

We already have the "promise," but it has not yet been received in the sense of being fulfilled. The promise is a conditional one. "He that doeth these things shall live by them." (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5.) So in our Lord's arrangement, the condition of the promise is that we shall abide in His love, His favor. Whoever accepts of Christ's death and trusts in Him and seeks to follow the Divine commandments, walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, will receive the promise, for the promise is made to "*overcomers*." All the promises of the Gospel Age are made to the "*overcomers*." Such shall sit upon the Throne. Such shall become the Bride of Christ. Such shall be joint-heirs with the Redeemer and participate in all His great work as the great Messiah, to bless Israel and through Israel the world of mankind.

By faith the Church now begins to enjoy this conditional promise, which depends upon their faithfulness to the end—their *patient endurance*. Such loyal ones have the earnest of the promise and shall be joint-heirs in the Kingdom. All others will be cut off

from that membership. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth [cleanseth, pruneth] it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2.) We are on trial; and the trial is to prove our loyalty. If this trial time, or probation, is satisfactory, the membership is made permanent. Those who fail to live up to the conditions, are not counted worthy to be members of the Body of Christ and joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

LET US ABIDE IN HIS LOVE

Who can consider the importance of becoming copies of our blessed Lord and Head without feeling that to attain to this character-likeness will be a life-work! It cannot be accomplished in a day or in a year; but the whole life must be devoted to it; and day by day, if we are faithful, we should realize a measure of growth in grace and of development in Christian character. It is not enough that we know the Truth, or that we be content to hold it in unrighteousness. We must see to it that the Truth is having its legitimate and designed effect upon the character. And if the Truth is thus received into good and honest hearts, we shall have the assurance of the Apostle Peter that "We shall never fall," but that in due time we shall be received into the Kingdom.

Hence we see the necessity of ever keeping the instructions and precepts of the Lord fresh in our minds, and of drinking deep into their inspiring spirit, although we are already established in the faith. To be established in the faith is one thing; to be established in Christian character and in all the graces of the Spirit is *quite another*.

Beloved, "Let us run with patience [cheerful constancy, patient endurance] the race set before us" in the Gospel. (Heb. 12:1.) As already observed, the race must be run with this constancy if we would reach the "mark;" and after reaching the mark we can maintain our position only by the grace of constancy, patient endurance, that having *done all, we may STAND!*

MAY 31

It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak—Rom. 14:21.

It is a very serious crime against the law of love and against the Lord's injunction, to cause one of His brethren to stumble (Matt. 18:6), but it would also be a crime in His sight for us to stumble others—to hinder them from becoming brethren, and of the household of faith. Hence, it is clear that although knowledge might remove all prohibition of our consciences and all restraints of our liberty, yet love must first come in and approve the liberty before we can exercise it. Love places a firm command upon us, saying, Thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart, and thy neighbor as thyself. Love, therefore, and not knowledge, not liberty, must finally decide every question—Z '03, 43 (R 3144).

The strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. Cheerfully ought they to surrender their preferences in natural things to the spiritual interests of the weak. The thought of stumbling one for whom Christ died will be a successful deterrent to a faithful follower of Christ from self-indulgence at the expense of a weak brother. Yes, such an one would gladly lay down life to save a weak brother rather than to indulge self to his injury—P '34, 63.

Parallel passages: Rom. 14; 1 Cor. 8; Rom. 15:1-3; 1 Tim. 4:3, 4; Col. 2:16; 1 Cor. 9:10, 22; 10:23, 24, 31-33; 13:5; 1 Pet. 4:2; 2 Cor. 5:15; Phil. 2:4, 5; Matt. 13:44-46; 16:24, 25; Acts 20:22-24.

Hymns: 23, 8, 95, 114, 346, 340, 250.

Poems of Dawn, 136: *What Would Jesus Do?*

Tower Reading: Z '11, 424 (R 4919).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? In what did they result?

WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

WHEN the morning paints the skies,
And the birds their songs renew,
Let me from my slumbers rise,
Saying, "What would Jesus do?"

When I ply my daily task,
And the round of toil pursue,
Let me every moment ask,
"What would Jesus do?"

Would the foe my heart beguile,

Whispering thoughts and words untrue?
Let me to his subtlest wile
Answer, "What would Jesus do?"

Countless mercies from above
Day by day my pathway strew,
Father, I would prove my love,
Asking, "What would Jesus do?"

Ever let Thy love, O God,
Fill my spirit through and through,
While I tread where He hath trod,
Whispering, "What would Jesus do?"

R4919: DO NOTHING WHEREBY THY BROTHER STUMBLETH

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."—Rom. 14:21.

VERY EVIDENTLY the Apostle was not in these words endeavoring to put any bounds upon the liberties of God's people. Elsewhere he declares that the liberty of Christ makes us *free*. But he points out that while we have liberty to do things not sinful and not injurious to ourselves, yet it is part of our privilege and of our contract with the Lord to abstain from anything which would be injurious to others; and that we should seek to regulate our lives so as to be a help to others and not use our liberty merely for the flesh, for self-gratification. We are representatives of righteousness and should so deal with others, "Doing good unto all men, especially unto those who are of the household of faith."—Gal. 6:10.

In this text the Apostle is not referring to a matter where there might be merely a difference of opinion as between meat and vegetable diet. Such a question each should decide for himself. If one finds a flesh diet injurious to him, he should abstain. If, on the contrary, he finds that flesh diet is beneficial to him, he should use it. The Apostle's thought in connection with the eating of meat was in reference to religious convictions. In his time it was the custom for people to eat meat which had been offered to idols. No Jew would care to eat such meat. With a Christian it would be different. He would understand that it did not affect the meat to wave it before wooden idols, etc. Yet the Apostle goes on to show that to some it would seem a crime to eat meat that had been offered to an idol.

The Apostle's thought is that our conscience is the most important thing we have to deal with and should always be obeyed. The brother who would violate some one's conscience by eating the meat would be stumbling and harming that person. Thus a stronger brother would injure a weaker brother. And this was what the Apostle meant. In the case of a brother who could not see as clearly as we, not only should we not seek to break down his conscience, but we should not permit even our influence to break it down.

It would be very proper for us in the case of a weak brother to explain the matter from our standpoint. This would not be seeking to break down his conscience, but to educate it. Then, if he should eat such meat with impunity—without the disapprobation of his conscience—we have thus made him a strong brother rather than a weak one; and this should be to his advantage. The Apostle urges that we should be on the lookout for the interests of the brethren.

SELF-DENIAL IN THE INTEREST OF OTHERS

St. Paul here is evidently laying down a broad principle of self-denial in the interest of others—a principle which applies primarily to the Church, but also to the world. He applies this principle, not merely to religion and to eating meat offered to idols, but he extends the matter, saying, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *anything* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

There might be some weak brother to whom *wine* might be a great temptation, a snare. The Apostle urges that, while there is nothing in the Scriptures to forbid the use of wine, and while he really recommended it to Timothy, whose stomach was weak, nevertheless, *our liberties should be limited by the surroundings*. We know that wine was used much more *then* than *now*, and is much more used in Europe than in this country; nevertheless, we know that the effect of alcohol is much more hurtful to the nerves of people *now*, because the race is so much weaker than in our Lord's day.

When there was no particular danger along this line our Lord and the Apostles seem to have used these things with moderation. They also counseled moderation—"Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31); and we should not use our liberty in any way that would stumble a brother in any sense of the word. God's people are to have *love*, to be willing to *sacrifice self-gratification in the interest of others*.

So far as we are able to discern, intoxication is one of the most terrible evils scourging our race at the present time. Many are so weak through the fall, by heredity, that they are totally unable to resist the influence of intoxicants. Is it too much to ask of those who have consecrated their lives to the Lord, to righteousness and to the blessing of others, that they should deny themselves in this matter, and thus lay down some liberties and privileges in the interest of the brethren, and of the world in general?

Similar arguments might be used respecting the use of tobacco, cards and the various implements which the Adversary uses in luring mankind into sin. The whole, be it noted, is the argument of *Love*. In proportion as we grow in the graces of our Lord, in His Spirit of Love, we shall be glad, not only to put away all filthiness of the flesh for our own sakes, thus to be more like the Lord, but also, at the instance of Love, we shall desire to put away from us everything that might have an evil influence upon *others*, whatever we might consider *our personal liberties* to be in respect to them.

Another illustration of this principle would be in the observance of Sunday. The Jews thought it wrong even to build a fire on the Sabbath; and any one who was found picking up sticks on that day was stoned to death. We do not consider it wrong to do on Sunday whatever might be done on other days. But would it be wise to use this liberty? Our conduct might have an injurious effect upon others and so discount all that we could say to them along religious lines. They would say: "These people are not good. They do not keep God's holy day." They would not understand.

It would be well for us to keep Sunday more particularly than any other people in the world. In fact, we very likely keep it better than others; and this is right. This error of Christendom has worked good for us. We can have a day full of spiritual enjoyment. If the world understood it as we do there would be no Sunday to keep. On our part we would be very glad if there could be three or four Sundays in a week. In fact, with us, every day should be Sunday. We are seeking to serve God, the main object of life being to preach the Gospel, and to enjoy the "good tidings"—the Message of God's Word.

Our relationship to God is that of the New Creation, a heart relationship; and the blessing which the Lord gives us is as newly begotten children—not along lines of the flesh, but along the lines of the spiritual and of heart development, which shall ultimately be perfected in the resurrection.

True, whom the Son makes free "shall be free indeed" (John 8:36), and we should all seek to "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (Gal. 5:1); but it is also true that we should be on guard lest we use our liberty in such a manner as to stumble others weaker than ourselves, not able to use the liberty of Christ discriminatingly, sometimes through lack of knowledge.

The liberty wherewith Christ makes free may be viewed from two standpoints: if it gives us liberty to *eat* without restraint, in a manner that the Jews were not at liberty to eat, it gives us liberty also to *abstain*; and whoever has the Spirit of Christ and is seeking to follow in His steps has already covenanted with the Lord to use his liberty, not in the promotion of his fleshly desires, ambitions and appetites, but in *self-sacrifice*, following in the footsteps of the Master, seeking to lay down his life, even, on behalf of the brethren—for their assistance. How different are these two uses of liberty! Its selfish use—as well as the selfish use of knowledge—would mean self-gratification, regardless of the interests of others; the *loving use* would prompt to *self-sacrifice* in the interests of others.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR BROTHER

Knowledge does not necessarily mean a great growth in spirituality. A mite of soap will make a very large air bubble; and so a comparatively little knowledge might puff one up greatly, without any solidity of character. There is, therefore, great advantage in measuring one's self by *growth in love* rather than by growth merely in *knowledge*—though, of course, to be great in *both* knowledge and love would be the *ideal condition*.

The Apostle inculcates this same lesson, asserting, "Though I have all knowledge and have not love I am nothing."

Knowledge without love would be an *injury*; and to consider it otherwise would imply that *real* knowledge has not yet been secured; but to the contrary of this the same Apostle says, "If any man love God, the same is known of Him." (I Cor. 13:2; 8:3.) We might have a great deal of knowledge and yet not know God and not be known or recognized by Him; but no one can have a large development of true love in his character without personally knowing the Lord and having obtained the spirit of love through fellowship with Him. Hence the getting of love is sure to build us up substantially (thus avoiding the inflation of pride) in all the various graces of the Spirit, including meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, knowledge, wisdom from above and the spirit of a sound mind.

Love, after securing knowledge and liberty, will look about to see what effect the use of liberty might have upon others; and will perceive that by reason of differing mental conditions—perceptions, reasoning faculties, etc.—all could not have exactly the same standpoint of knowledge and appreciation of principles. Love, therefore, would forbid the use of knowledge and liberty if it perceived that their exercise might work injury to another.

EVERY VIOLATION OF CONSCIENCE WRONG

But why? What principle is involved that would make it incumbent upon one whose conscience is clear to consider the conscience of another? Why not let the person of a weak conscience take care of his own conscience, and eat or abstain from eating as he felt disposed? The Apostle explains that this would be right if it were possible; but that the person of weaker mind, feebler reasoning powers, is likely to be weaker in every respect and, hence, more susceptible to the leadings of others, into paths which his conscience could not approve, because of his weaker reasoning powers or inferior knowledge.

One might, without violation of conscience, eat meat that had been offered to idols, or even sit at a feast in an idol temple, without injury to his conscience; but the other, feeling that such a course was wrong, might endeavor to follow the example of his stronger brother, and thus might violate his conscience, which would make the act a sin to him.

Every violation of conscience, whether the thing itself be right or wrong, is a step in the direction of wilful sin. It is a downward course, leading further and further away from the communion and fellowship of the Lord, and into grosser transgressions of conscience and, hence, possibly leading to the Second Death. Thus the Apostle presents the matter: "And through thy knowledge shall the weak one perish—the brother for whom Christ died?" The question is not, Would it be a sin to eat the meat offered to idols? but, Would it be a sin against the spirit of love, the law of the New Creation, to do *anything* which could *reasonably* prove a cause of stumbling to our brother, not only to the brethren in

Christ, the Church, but even to a fellow-creature according to the flesh?—for Christ died for the sins of the whole world.

Let us take our stand with the Lord and determine that, in regard to using our liberties in any manner that might do injury to others, we will *refuse so to use them*; and will rather *sacrifice* them for the benefit of others, even as our Master, our Redeemer, *gave all that He had*. Let us adopt the words of the Apostle and determine once for all that anything that would injure a brother we will not do—any liberty of ours, however reasonable in itself, that would work our brother's injury, that liberty we will not exercise; we will surrender it in his interest; we will sacrifice it; we will to that extent lay down our life for him.

"Thus sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh forevermore, that I make not my brother to stumble."—I Cor. 8:13, R.V.

JUNE 1

He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him—John 14:21.

May this intimate communion and fellowship with Christ impart to us each more and more of His own spirit, so that the world may take knowledge of us, that we have "been with Jesus"; and let the prayer of each be,

*Lord Jesus, make Thyself to me
A living, bright reality!
More real to faith's vision keen,
Than any earthly object seen;
More dear, more intimately nigh,
Than e'en the sweetest earthly tie.*

—Z '95, 75 (R 1789).

The proof of our loving the Lord is in having and keeping His commands. Such a love for the Lord is reciprocated by the Father and the Son, out of their appreciation of this quality in us. This prompts them to give us added expressions of confidence and love, culminating in our being privileged to have heart fellowship with them, from an understanding and an appreciation of their characters—P '33, 79.

Parallel passages: Deut. 30:19, 20; John 14:15-17, 22-24; 1 John 2:5; 4:13; 5:3; Prov. 8:17; 23:26; John 15:10, 14; 16:27; Heb. 12:6; John 8:31, 32.

Hymns: 315, 22, 312, 166, 113, 213, 299.

Poems of Dawn, 300: *The Touch of the Master's Hand*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 248 (R 5520).

Questions: What have this week's experiences been as to this text? How were they met? What resulted?

THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND

'T WAS battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But he held it up with a smile.
"What am I bid, good folks?" he cried;
"Who will start bidding for me?
"A dollar, a dollar ... now two, only two ...
"Two dollars, and who'll make it three?

"Three dollars, once ... three dollars, twice ...
"Going for three" ... but no!—

From the room far back a gray-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;
Then wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening up all its strings,
He played a melody, pure and sweet,
As sweet as an angel sings.

The music ceased and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said, "What am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars ... and who'll make it two?
"Two thousand ... and who'll make it three?
"Three thousand, once ... three thousand, twice,
"And going, and gone," said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand ...
"What changed its worth?" The man replied,
"The touch of the Master's hand.
And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and torn with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.

A mess of pottage, a glass of wine,
A game, and he travels on;
He's going once, and going twice,
He's going—and almost gone.
But the Master comes and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand.

R5520: LOYALTY PROVED BY PROMPT OBEDIENCE

"He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him."—John 14:21.

THE WORDS of our text are a part of our Lord's last discourse to The Twelve before His crucifixion. The words, "He that hath My commandments," signify, He that hath *received* My commandments, and is willing to become My disciple. The mere *hearing* of the command, or the mere *understanding* of the command, is not the receiving it. People misunderstand this point. Many hear the command, and yield a partial obedience to it, but

they do not *receive* it in the true sense of the word. This matter of a definite contract with the Lord is a very important one. Those who do not make it are not truly His disciples, have not really put themselves into His hands, and are in danger of shipwreck.

We may *know about* a certain blessing, but in dealing with the Lord we need to *finish* our contract. One who merely says, "I will try not to do anything *contrary* to the Lord's will; I will do whatever He forces upon me," is not in the right attitude to enter the School of Christ. There are certain steps by which we become Christ's disciples. A person may be a visitor at a school, but he has not become a member of the school unless he has met the terms—has accepted the rules and regulations under which the school is operated.

OUR LORD'S LAW OF LOVE

The Apostle Paul says, "Ye are not under the Law, but under grace," and yet the Lord speaks of our keeping His commandments. How shall we harmonize these two thoughts? We are to recognize a distinction between the Law, the commands which Christ gives, and the Law Covenant, to which the Apostle refers. We are not under the Law Covenant, which required that those who would have its blessings must keep its every requirement perfectly or suffer the curse, death. The arrangement under our Lord Jesus is that if His disciples, those already under His Robe of righteousness, seek to do His commandments, strive with their whole heart to do His will, they shall have eternal life through Him. The mediator of the Law Covenant was not competent to make any allowance for imperfections.

Our Lord here speaks of "commandments"—plural. We should, therefore, not understand these words to mean the same as when He said, "A new commandment I give unto you"; neither should we understand Him to mean the epitomized statement of the Law of the Ten Commandments—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." We understand our Lord to mean, Whoever receives My teachings, whoever will follow Me, will thus be demonstrating that he has love for Me; and such I will love. These "commandments" would seem to be the general teachings of the Lord as they bear on all the affairs of life. We do not understand them to be some set, particular statements, as in the 5th chapter of Matthew. He there designates a number of qualities that are necessary—meekness, righteousness, etc.; these are not *commanded*.

LOVE DELIGHTS TO SERVE

Our Lord's commands are not put in the form of compulsion, but whoever *loves* Him will *serve* Him. Speaking through the Apostolic Epistles, and in the Book of Revelation, Jesus has given us various expressions of what righteousness is, what love is. Whoever, therefore, desires to be with Him, to reign with Him, should wish to obey every hint coming from Him. There is nothing put in the nature of an arbitrary command—merely the statement of principles. But these become to us *commands*. To *know His will* is a *law* to such as love Him—they *wish* to serve Him. This seems to be the Divine arrangement

for this Age—that we should be left without a "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not," so as to prove the degree of our interest and loyalty.

Some of our friends say to us sometimes, Do you think the Lord will reject me if I do not leave the nominal church, or if I do not perform the symbol of water baptism? And we have to tell them they have misunderstood the whole matter. The Lord is merely showing us the line of duty and of privilege, and whoever does not take *delight* in doing the Lord's will would better not do it at all. The Lord seeks such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth. In the Millennial Age He will deal with the world through stripes and blessings; and obedience will be compelled. But now He says, Here is My will; you can read between the lines, if you desire. I do not put you under a Law Covenant, but I place before you a great opportunity. If you appreciate the privilege, become My disciple. You will not need to make any boast, but *show* your obedience, your appreciation—take a prompt and positive stand. I will not *insist* on anything, then, but will give you the *opportunity*.

The Lord will take note of those who appreciate His great offer, and when He comes to claim His Bride these are the ones who shall reign with Him.

JUNE 2

I determined not to know any thing among you, save, Jesus Christ, and him crucified—1 Cor. 2:2.

Our observation of those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than "this gospel" to engross time and attention leads us to advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the Gospel, leaving all other subjects, however interesting, to others now, and to the future life for ourselves, when all knowledge shall be ours. Those who for any avoidable cause turn aside from the ministry of the true and only Gospel, we have invariably observed, are quickly turned out of the way or greatly hindered in their course toward the attaining of the Kingdom—Z '95, 116 (R 1811).

Christ Jesus and Him crucified signifies our Ransom and our Example. It therefore comprehends our justification and sanctification and is a brief summary of what Christ is to His followers. Our interest in one another as God's people should have this thought permeating all our relations with one another. We may profitably as fellow-disciples of Christ concentrate our attention upon this thought to the exclusion of all other things—P '32, 62.

Parallel passages: Gal. 6:14; Phil. 3:8, 13, 14; Acts 5:30, 31, 42; 13:23, 26-33; 16:31; 17:2, 3; 18:5, 6; 19:4; 20:20, 21; 26:22, 23; Rom. 5:8-11; 1 Cor. 1:17, 24, 30; 2:3-8; 4:1, 2; 3:5-10; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6; 4:5; 6:1.

Hymns: 116, 13, 44, 78, 91, 130, 136.

Poems of Dawn, 245: *The Coming of His Feet*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 193 (R 5044).

Questions: Have I this week sought to serve Jesus only? How? Why? With what results?

THE COMING OF HIS FEET

IN the crimson of the morning, in the whiteness of
the noon,

In the amber glory of that day's retreat,
In the midnight, robed in darkness, or the gleaming
of the moon,

I listen to the coming of His feet.

I heard His weary footsteps on the sands of Galilee,
On the Temple's marble pavement, on the street,
Worn with weight of sorrow, faltering up the slopes
of Calvary,

The sorrow of the coming of His feet.

Down the minster aisles of splendor, from betwixt
the cherubim,
Through the wondering throng, with motion strong
and fleet,
Sounds His victor tread approaching, with a music far
and dim—
The music of the coming of His feet.

Sandaled not with sheen of silver, girded not with
woven gold,
Weighted not with shimmering gems and odors
sweet,
But white-winged and shod with glory in the Tabor
light of old—
The glory of the coming of His feet.

He is coming, O, my spirit, with His everlasting
peace,
With his blessedness immortal and complete,
He is coming, O, my spirit, and His coming brings
release,
I listen for the coming of His feet!

R5044: "THIS ONE THING I DO"

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."—1 Cor. 2:2.

THE TALENTED APOSTLE PAUL gives in another place his testimony as to the wisdom of shaking off some of our plans and arrangements and of relaxing our efforts in various directions in order to concentrate our energies upon those things which we can best bring to perfection, saying, "This *one thing* I do." (Phil. 3:13.) The Apostle's one business in life was to be, so far as he was able, acceptable to the Lord, personally, and to do with his might what he could to assist others into the same condition.

In harmony with this, the thought of our text seems to be that whatever the Apostle knew respecting other matters prominent in his day—customs of the Age, scientific questions, etc.—he would ignore. He would be a *specialist*. He would confine his thoughts, words and teachings along this *one line*; for he thought it was *worthy*. He had been at Corinth as an ambassador of Christ. He was not there to air his knowledge, but to tell the *message of the Kingdom*. He would make preaching the Gospel his one business, to accomplish which he felt that all of his knowledge and energy were too little.

The Apostle did not determine to ignore all of his knowledge without having a good reason, or purpose therefor. It was because he wished to concentrate all of his attention and influence upon one great subject. That subject was Jesus Christ, Jesus the Anointed; Jesus the Messiah was the main thought of all his preaching. He realized that the great Messiah was a part of the Divine Program which had been promised—the "Seed" which was to bless all the families of the earth; that Jesus was that great Messiah, and that all men should recognize Him, should flock to His standard.

But St. Paul would preach, not only that Jesus was the Messiah, but that He was the *crucified* Messiah, for he would not be ashamed of the Divine teaching. He would preach that God sent forth His Son; and that the Son had left the glory He had with the Father, had lived on the earth, and had "died, the Just for the unjust," for this very purpose—that He might manifest His obedience to the Divine arrangement. In thus preaching Christ and His crucifixion, the Apostle was not ignoring the fact that there was to be a Church; Jesus was the Anointed Head over His Body, the Church. Hence, in preaching Jesus the Anointed One, St. Paul was showing how the Divine Plan was being outworked under Divine supervision, and what the glorious results would be. To these things he had determined that all his time and attention should go.

How evident it is that today many ministers have lost something possessed by the Apostle, who thus recognized the importance of the Gospel of Christ! This loss very largely accounts for the various peculiar topics advertised for religious meetings; sometimes the topic is politics; sometimes temperance; sometimes woman-suffrage. The reason for this change from the old-time style of preaching is that during the Dark Ages the Gospel became perverted, misrepresented; and that now people are ashamed of what was formerly preached—"Be *good* and go to *heaven*; be *bad* and go to *hell*!" It is not a *great* message. We cannot wonder that an astute mind grasps the whole thing in a few minutes. We are rather glad, indeed, that ministers are ashamed to preach what their creeds profess, and that, therefore, their creeds must be kept in the background.

"NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST"

For us, however, who see the importance of the Gospel, the case is different. We know that this Gospel of the Kingdom, of which the Apostle was not ashamed, teaches that the elect Church is to be the Bride of Christ; that Messiah is to bless the whole world; that Jesus is the Messiah; that He was crucified, dead, buried, raised from the dead by His Father; that His crucifixion was a part of the great Divine Plan, and that without this very arrangement no salvation could be effected, either for the Church, or for the world in the future. Therefore, as the Apostle did, we are preaching Jesus, the Crucified One, who died for our sins, who rose again for our justification, and who, coming in glory with His Church, is the great Messiah, to bless the world through natural Israel.

Because we have found the Truth we, like St. Paul, feel constrained to preach nothing but this Message. The same truth that influenced Him should influence us. If, therefore, any of the brethren feel disposed to go out after the manner of Babylon and preach something else, here is the *reproof*—"Not ... *anything* save Jesus Christ and Him

crucified." This is the *only subject*. St. Paul would be as though he *knew nothing else*. This subject would be the *one* thing to which he would give his time and attention. Let it be so with us!

Beloved, as you value the glorious hope set before you, we beseech you that you give no heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, as the Apostle terms them (I Tim. 4:1); but that with fixedness of purpose you apply yourselves to the one thing to which you are called, and which as prospective heirs of Messiah's Kingdom you are privileged to do. Let us not forget that we are a "peculiar people," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions, and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into His marvelous light. Thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the spirit of the world, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us!

We expect such opposition; and we know that it will continue until our course has been finished in death. If we endure hardness as good soldiers for the Truth's sake, no matter how that hardness may come, in our efforts to do the Lord's will and to advance the interests of His Kingdom, then we are presenting our bodies as living sacrifices in the Divine service. To be really in His service includes both the careful and continual study of God's Plan, and the imbibing of its spirit, leading to an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment, and to activity to the extent of ability in its service, whatever the cost or sacrifice it may require.

If faithful in this service we have neither time nor disposition to give heed to other themes having no bearing on the *one thing* to which we have solemnly dedicated our lives. If we have consecrated all to *God* our time is not *our own*; and consequently we have none to spare for the investigation of theories built upon any other foundation than that laid down in the Bible. Nor have we time to devote to the ideas and pursuits which engross the world's attention, many of which are harmless or even elevating in themselves, but which would be harmful and degrading to us if we allow them to occupy consecrated time and to divert our attention from the *one thing* we ought to be doing.

The Apostle warns us to "Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness"; but counsels, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth"; "*Teach no other doctrine*, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith."—2 Tim. 2:16, 15; I Tim. 1:3, 4.

HOW NARROW THIS WAY!

Is not this a very narrow way? Yes, so narrow that our Lord foretold respecting it, "Strait [difficult] is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto [*the*] life, and *few* there be that *find it!*" (Matt. 7:14.) It is so narrow that it is wide enough to admit only the Lord's Plan and those who are willing to discard all other plans, projects and

questionings, and to devote themselves fully to its service; and who are quite willing to bear any reproach it may bring.

Are you endeavoring from day to day to vindicate the Divine character and to make known God's righteous ways? Are you diligently studying to make yourself thoroughly familiar with the Truth, so that you may indeed be a living epistle known and read of all men within the circle of your influence? Are you indeed a workman that need not be ashamed (2 Tim. 2:15)? Are you of those who have really given themselves to the Lord, saying truthfully to Him:

"Take myself—I will to be
Ever, only, all for Thee"?

If so, you are just narrow minded enough to say, "This *one thing* I do; and I make everything else bend to this one thing of showing forth God's praises and of helping others into His marvelous light; and to this end I cultivate and use what talents I possess as a wise steward of my Heavenly Father."

Dearly beloved, *we* impose neither vows nor bondage upon each other, but the *call* has its own limitations; the Master has directed us to teach all nations (for the Gospel is no longer confined to the Jewish nation), not astronomy nor geology nor any of the vain philosophies about which the world speculate, but—"*Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*"—Matt. 28:20.

This is what the Apostle Paul did. Hear him in his zeal for this *one thing* to which he had devoted his life: "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with the excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the mystery of God; for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. [I *riveted* your attention on this one thing! I kept this one thing continually before you.] ... And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power [of the Truth], that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—I Cor. 2:1-5.

St. Paul was an outspoken, uncompromising teacher. When he *knew* that he had the Truth, he spoke it with confidence, and boldly declared that everything contrary to it is *false doctrine*. He also taught believers that it was not only their privilege, but their duty to be *established* in the faith, to know on the evidence of God's Word, *why* they believed, and to be able to give to every man that inquired a reason for the hope that was in them.

Let it be so with us also. Each consecrated believer should ask himself, "How carefully have I studied that which I recognize as Divine Truth? How fully capable am I of handling the Sword of the Spirit?" Few indeed are those who can say they have fully digested and assimilated all they have received; and that they have let none of these things slip from memory; that they have so treasured it up in their hearts that it is their meditation by day and by night; that they have a ready answer—a "Thus saith the Lord"—for every man that asks them a reason for the hope that is in them, concerning

any point of doctrine; that they can clearly and intelligently portray the Divine Plan, quote the Divine authority for each successive step of it, and, if need be, point out its place in the Divine system of types. To gain such proficiency in the Word is the work of a lifetime; but every day should see a closer approximation to that proficiency, and will if we are faithful students and faithful servants of the Truth.

If all the consecrated were thus busily engaged in putting on the armor of God, and in proving it by actual use in zealous endeavor to herald the Truth and to help others to stand, there would be no time left for even good temperance reform work, nor for work among the slums of the great cities, nor for the doctrine of healing, nor any such things. We have no consecrated time for these matters, which are only side issues and not harmful in themselves, except as they divert attention and consume time which has been consecrated to another and higher use. All these works will be effectually accomplished in the "Times of Restitution" (Acts 3:19-22), now in the near future. Besides, there are others engaged in these works; we recognize and seek to accomplish the work set before *us* in the Divine Plan.

In all the history of the Church there has never been a time in which the great Adversary has been so active in diverting attention from the Truth by introducing unprofitable and irrelevant questions as at present. Just now, when the exaltation and glory of the Church are soon to be accomplished, and when the faithful are about to be received into the joy of their Lord, Satan is resorting to every device in order to beguile them of their reward and to frustrate this feature of the Divine Plan.

But really to frustrate any part of the Divine Plan is impossible. God has purposed to take out from among men a "little flock," "a people for His name"; and such a company is assuredly being gathered. Yet whether all those now in the race for the prize will surely be of that company, is still an open question. Take heed, beloved, that no man take *thy* crown. (Rev. 3:11.) If any come short of their privileges and prove unworthy of the rich inheritance, there are others who will quickly fill their places.

Our observation of those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than this "Gospel of the Kingdom" to engross time and attention, leads us to advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the Gospel, leaving all subjects outside of this, however interesting they may be, to those who prefer to devote time to them now; and to the future life for ourselves, when all knowledge shall be ours. We have invariably observed that those who, for any avoidable cause, have turned aside from the true and only Gospel, are quickly turned out of the way or greatly hindered in their course toward the "prize" of our "high calling."

May we, dear brethren, be able truthfully to express our position in the words of the Apostle: "This *one thing* I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"; "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."—Phil. 3:13, 14; I Cor. 2:2.

JUNE 3

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech, there are no words, their voice is not heard; but their melody extendeth through all the earth, and to the end of the world their words—Psa. 19:1-4, Leeser.

The magnificent pageantry of the heavens daily and nightly should elicit our praise and adoration, and should inspire in our hearts holy and reverent devotion. Let the noiseless activity, the perfect obedience to Divine law, and the blessed shining of the heavenly hosts, impress their wholesome lessons upon us—of zealous activity without commotion or ostentation; of perfect obedience to the will of Him who doeth all things well, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; and of letting the glory of the Lord which has illuminated us shine from us in turn upon every beholder—Z '95, 121 (R 1811).

Not only do all the various objects and arrangements of nature manifest the Lord's attributes to our attentive minds, but we find that these objects and arrangements are used to symbolize things that manifest His attributes and Plan. Thus the new heavens will make known His character in the coming Age. The nights with their evils symbolize various times with the evils suffered therein by various evil classes, especially in the Epiphany. The days symbolize the times of dispensational blessings, the preceding ones shadowing forth the following ones, *e.g.*, as in the harvests and parallel dispensations—P '26, 76.

Parallel passages: Gen. 1:1—2:7; Isa. 40:26; Job 9:8, 9; 12:7-9; 28:23-26; 37:16, 18; 38:4, 7-10; Psa. 8:3-9; 104:2-6, 24; 136:5-9; Jer. 51:15, 16; Rom. 1:19, 20; Heb. 11:3, 10.

Hymns: 283, 11, 45, 55, 89, 227, 292.

Poems of Dawn, 229: *God in Nature*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 101 (R 5209).

Questions: What have been my week's meditations regarding the present literal and symbolic world and the future literal and symbolic world? What effect did they have upon my veneration for God?

GOD IN NATURE

THE spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue, ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim:
The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display;
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale;
And nightly, to the listening earth,
Repeats the story of her birth;
While all the stars that 'round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though, in solemn silence, all
Move 'round this dark terrestrial ball,—
What though no real voice nor sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found,—
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
Forever singing as they shine,
"The hand that made us is Divine."

R5209: QUALITIES AND ATTRIBUTES OF JEHOVAH

THE SCRIPTURES declare a "beginning of the creation of God." His qualities and attributes were the same then that they are now; for the Scriptures also declare His unchangeableness—"the same yesterday, today and forever."—Hebrews 13:8; Psalm 90:1, 2.

The completeness of the Divine perfection is such that companionship is not necessary to the happiness of Jehovah. The One who "inhabith eternity" is self-centered. The creation of angels and of man was indeed His pleasure, because, benevolently, He desires to do good, to give capacity for pleasure and to afford it opportunity for gratification. Furthermore, the highest good of His creatures calls for an exhibition to the full of all the elements of Divine character—Divine Justice, Love, Power and Wisdom.

BELIEF IN SATAN LOGICAL

The declaration of the Bible respecting the Father's Power is that "the eyes of the Lord [the intelligence of Jehovah] are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." (Proverbs 15:3.) This statement implies that there are things *evil* as well as *good*; things which God approves and things which He disapproves. This citation comes the nearest to a suggestion of God's omnipresence contained in the Scriptures.

The fact that the Lord has *knowledge* of all conditions of things is not out of harmony with the other fact that He *permits* conditions which He *disapproves*, and which He declares that He will ultimately *destroy*. "All the wicked will He destroy."—Psalm 145:20.

If we accept the great Divine premise that the Bible is the Word of God, then we are bound to accept the declaration that there is a being called Satan, that he is the "god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4), and that he now works in the "hearts of the children of disobedience." (Ephesians 2:2.) These words imply not only that there are evil *principles* at work in this world, but that behind them there are evil *spirit beings*, of whom Satan is the inspirer and *through whom he is working*.

Certain statements are made respecting Satan which could not properly be applied to a principle of evil, or to a working of error; as, for instance, Jesus declared that Satan was a "murderer" from the beginning—and a "liar." (John 8:44.) Errors and principles are not murderers and liars. It would be a misuse of language to make such application. Only an intelligent being can be a murderer or a liar. Hence the whole tenor of the Scriptures upholds the assertion that there is such a being as Satan and that he is in opposition to God.

If we were to suppose the everlasting continuance of Satan as a being, as an adversary of God, the matter would seem strange to us, because irreconcilable with our conception of Divine Power. We have the statement of the Scriptures respecting his reign and ultimate destruction. (Hebrews 2:14.) With this information we have a reasonable, logical thought on the subject. When we consider the Scriptural presentation further, that originally Satan was *not* an *evil* being, but that he made himself evil by the exercise of personal liberty and became the enemy of God, the subject seems to be clear and reasonable. In fact, this is the only rational solution to the problem of his existence.

To suppose that there is no Satan is to suppose that God has permitted His Word to deceive mankind in this respect, or that the Devil is a manifestation of God Himself—a position which is unthinkable. Nor is it logical to say that there is a Devil, an opponent of God, and at the same time to maintain that God is all in all, and omnipresent—everywhere present. But we do not find this latter statement to be Biblical. The Scriptural proposition is that at the close of the Millennial Age, when Christ shall have conquered sin and Satan, when Satan shall have been destroyed, and when the Kingdom of the Universe shall be in absolute harmony, then God will be all in all. (I Corinthians 15:28.) *To all eternity* there will be *no opposition* to His will. There *is* opposition now, however, in many places and at many times. But ultimately, God will have full control.

THE OMNIPOTENCE OF JEHOVAH

To say that God is *all* Power is sophistry of language which often misleads the one questioning as well as the one attempting to answer him. The statement is not correct. If God is all Power, then He is not Love or Justice or Wisdom. He would thus be limited to the one great attribute of Power, or force. Such cannot be the thought entertained by any logical mind. It is, nevertheless, a form of statement that is often used, perhaps unintentionally, but very injuriously to the reasoning faculties.

The Bible nowhere says God is all Power. There is a marked difference between *being* power and *exercising* power. God is all-powerful. He has the ability to exercise power *in any* direction to the extent that He *wills*. If He had chosen, He could have so created Satan that he could not think or do other than in harmony with the Divine will; or He could have exercised His power to crush the Adversary and thus have destroyed him long ago. But He has permitted Satan to exist for six thousand years, in the sense that He does not restrain the Devil from doing evil. The Scriptures, however, tell us that God will eventually destroy him.

The scope of the exercise of Divine Power is the Universe, but it is difficult for our finite minds to comprehend the meaning of this word—*Universe*. Astronomers tell us that by the aid of photo-astronomy they can see nearly 125,000,000 suns—the centers of solar systems like our own, with supposedly more than a billion of planets more or less like our earth. These, we may assume, are in process of development, are in preparation for inhabitants, whom the great Creator will in due time provide. From the Scriptural standpoint, however, the great work of human creation began with our earth. What a boundless thought we have in the mere suggestion that the billion worlds are to be peopled, and that the lessons of righteousness and sin, of life and death eternal, now being taught to humanity, will never need to be repeated!

We stand appalled at the immensity of space and at the law and order which everywhere reign! We heartily assent to the words of the Prophet David, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." (Psalm 19:2, 3.) The person who can look upon this wonderful display of superhuman power and believe that these worlds created themselves, shows to the majority of us that, if he has brains, they are sadly disordered, unbalanced. Whoever, after mature thought, concludes that there is no God, that everything came to be what it is by chance or by the operation of some blind force—that person is described in the Scriptures in the following words, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."—Psalm 14:1.

As scientific instruments demonstrate to us the immensity of the Universe, we perceive that the Prophet used very moderate language indeed in his description of the majestic power and greatness of the Creator, when he represents Jehovah as weighing the mountains in His balance and holding the seas in the hollow of His Hand. (Isaiah 40:12.) From His standpoint, a thousand years are but as a watch in the night. (Psalm 90:4.) How insignificantly small we all feel in the presence of our God! No wonder some great men are inclined to say that humanity is too insignificant from the Divine standpoint to be worthy of the least consideration—much less to be objects of Divine care and providence!

THE OMNISCIENCE OF JEHOVAH

To say that God is all *Knowledge* is also an inaccurate statement. If God were all Knowledge, how could He be all Power? God *has* all Knowledge, possesses all Knowledge. But this is a different matter. If we say, "The boy has a hoop," we do not

mean that *he* is a hoop. To *be* a hoop and to *have* a hoop are not the same. God is *omniscient*; that is, He *knows all things*. This very fact proves that He is a personal God. There can be no knowledge without personality. Knowledge implies cognizance of external things. Amongst the things outside the Divine Person are things both good and evil.

When we read that God created man in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26, 27), we may know that man is not God. He was merely made in the *image* of God. Because God is perfect, therefore the human being made in His image would be satisfactory to God. That human being had knowledge. But he neglected the Word of God, and thus he learned something by his neglect. What he learned is mentioned in the Scriptures. "He is become as one of Us [the *Elohim*], to know good and evil." (Genesis 3:22.) This statement proves that God knows good and evil.

If God did not know evil from good, then He could not be our Instructor. By His laws, His principles, God sets before our minds that which is right and that which is wrong. Adam knew how to discriminate between right and wrong, but his disobedience increased his knowledge of both good and evil. In his fallen condition man cannot always determine between them. Therefore God gave Israel a Law, and man's knowledge of that Law assists him to discriminate between good and evil.

One of old time said, "Thou art a God which hidest Thyself." (Isaiah 45:15.) How true! As a result the world by wisdom knows not God. He is near in His Wisdom and Love, yet He can be seen only by those whose eyes of understanding have been opened. But we are glad that the time is coming when all the blind eyes shall see clearly. "As truly as I live," says Jehovah, "all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Num. 14:21; Hab. 2:14.) Then all shall see what God hath wrought, and our temporary blindness will but accentuate the glorious brightness of His Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power.

"GOD IS LOVE"

God is Love in the sense that the term Love represents the central principle of the Divine character. There is nothing contrary to love in God. The Scriptures do not teach that there is nothing except love anywhere—that God is everywhere and love is everywhere. But they teach that God is a loving character. This does not militate against the other statements that God is just, wise and powerful. But this quality of Love best of all represents the Divine Being. All of His Justice is in harmony with His Love. There is no exercise of Justice or Power in an evil sense, for all His attributes work together for good to all His creatures.

The Scriptures encourage us to reason from the known to the unknown. They tell us that although God is so great, so wise, so powerful, He is also just and loving. And the more we consider the matter, the more reasonable the Bible description of the Almighty appears. His Power we see demonstrated. The Wisdom of One so great cannot be

doubted. When we come to consider, Could One so wise and so powerful be unjust or ungenerous? Our hearts answer, No! No one is really great who is devoid of justice and love. So surely as our God is Jehovah, He must possess these qualities.

When we came in contact with the Bible, and particularly after we learned something of its teachings and got rid of the misrepresentations which gathered about it during the Dark Ages—then we began to recognize it as the Message of Jehovah to His creatures. It informs us that the great Creator of the Universe is not only Almighty and All-wise, but loving and kind, with Justice as the foundation of His Empire. (Psalm 89:13, 14.) From the Bible we learn, too, that our Creator has been pleased to make us in His own image, in His own moral likeness, to the intent that we may enjoy Him and the fruits of His righteousness to all eternity.

All the Power, all the Justice, all the Wisdom, of God must be used in accordance with His own character, which is Love. It will therefore be loving Wisdom, loving Justice, which He will use toward all creation in the exercise of His loving Power for their good. He created man. He permitted Adam to disobey His Law, telling us that He knew in advance what man would do and that He permitted man to do wrong.—Isaiah 46:9, 10.

In permitting sin to enter the world, God had two ends in view. He purposed to give an illustration to the angels respecting the results of obedience and of disobedience. He also intended that the human family should gain a lesson from this experience. Thus we know that God's arrangement from the beginning has been for a resurrection of the dead. "As all in Adam die, even so shall all in Christ be made alive."—I Corinthians 15:21, 22.

If we were to take any fragment of Scripture as a basis for a system of doctrine, we would find ourselves either teaching universalism on the one hand, or claiming that God has no Wisdom, or that He purposed the evil, or what not. We would get into all sorts of confusion. But when we see the perfect adjustment of God's Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, and realize that He has good purposes respecting the evil, that He has fully marked out what it shall do and what it shall not do, either in its present influence, or in its ultimate influence, this gives us confidence in the character of God.

THE PERMISSION OF EVIL

From only one standpoint can Divine Wisdom and Love be discerned in connection with the history of mankind. It must include the Age about to be ushered in—the period of Messiah's reign of righteousness. This will be the time when every member of Adam's race, sharing the penalty of sin and death because inheriting his weaknesses, will be set free from these; the time when the full knowledge of the glory of God shall be granted to every human being, and when a full opportunity will come to each, by obedience, to gain life everlasting.

The lesson thus far taught is the goodness and the severity of God—His goodness in bringing us into being, and His severity in the punishment of Father Adam's wilful transgression; also to both men and angels, Justice, *unswerving* Justice. The next lesson

to be taught to God's intelligent creatures is that God is Love. The foundation for these lessons is already laid in the Ransom-sacrifice of Jesus, through and on account of which He becomes the world's Redeemer and Restorer. A few can believe this Message by faith; but not many have the ear of faith or the eye of faith. Only the saints are able to appreciate this great fact at the present time.

That which is now secret and understood only by the few is shortly to be made manifest to every creature in heaven and in earth. All will then see and be able to appreciate the great fact that the redemption accomplished by the sacrifice of Jesus is world-wide and means a full deliverance from the sin-and-death condemnation which passed upon Adam and all of his race, to all who will accept the same as a gift from God. The remainder will be destroyed in the Second Death.

THE SECOND DEATH THE ESSENCE OF WISDOM

As for the Second Death, we easily see that if God created man in His own image, man must of necessity be a free moral agent; otherwise he would not be in God's image. If he was created a free moral agent, he must have the power or privilege to will wrong as well as right. If he exercise his power in the direction of evil, God has the power to destroy him. On the other hand, if he live in harmony with righteousness God has the power to grant him life to all eternity.

The destruction of the wicked in the Second Death is the essence of Wisdom. As to the declaration that God is too pure to behold evil (Habakkuk 1:13), the thought of the original seems to be that God's character is so pure and so righteous that He will not continue to behold evil. He will not permit evil to exist to all eternity, for this condition would not be pleasing to Him.

This very thought implies that there is evil to behold. If not so, how could He behold it? But this is all consistent with the Divine Plan. Ultimately all evil shall be destroyed. Ultimately all creatures which are "in heaven and on earth and such as are in the sea" shall be heard saying, "Blessing and honor and glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."—Revelation 5:13.

JUNE 4

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ—1 Pet. 1:7.

It is your faith that is on trial now. In the calmer days when the sun of favor shone brightly upon you, you were quietly laying the foundation of a knowledge of the Truth, and rearing the superstructure of Christian character. Now you are in the furnace to be proved; summon therefore all your courage; fortify your patience; nerve yourself to endurance; hold fast to your hope; call to mind the promises, they are still yours; and "cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward." "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him," and faith has gained her victory—Z '95, 135 (R 1822).

As the assayist in putting the gold ore into the fiery crucible seeks not its destruction, but its separation from the dross and its refining, so God gives us fiery experiences, not to destroy our faith, but to separate from it the dross of sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, and to make it in every way valuable, which will be manifested as worthy of praise, honor and glory at our Lord's revelation—during His Epiphany—P '36, 78.

Parallel passages: 1 Chron. 29:17; Psa. 26:2; 81:7; Matt. 13:19-22; 2 Thes. 1:3-5; Heb. 6:13, 18; Jas. 1:3, 12; Heb. 11:7, 17-19, 25, 29, 30, 32-39; Job 1; 2; Ezra 8:22; Matt. 8:23-27; 15:21-28; 9:28; 14:25-33.

Hymns: 197, 12, 57, 93, 110, 124, 137.

Poems of Dawn, 51: *Right Was the Pathway*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 320 (R 5114).

Questions: What things did I experience this week in line with this text? How were they borne? What was helpful or hindering amid them? What did they effect?

RIGHT WAS THE PATHWAY

LIGHT after darkness,
Gain after loss,
Strength after suffering,
Crown after cross.
Sweet after bitter,
Song after sigh,
Home after wandering,
Praise after cry.

Sheaves after sowing,
Sun after rain,
Sight after mystery,

Peace after pain.
Joy after sorrow,
Calm after blast,
Rest after weariness,
Sweet rest at last.

Near after distant,
Gleam after gloom,
Love after loneliness,
Life after tomb.
After long agony
Rapture of bliss!
Right was the pathway
Leading to this!

R5114: THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAITH THROUGH FIERY TRIALS

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. 1:7.

FAITH MAY BE said to have in it the two elements of *intellectual assurance* and *heart-reliance*. Both the head and the heart—the intellect and the affections—are necessary to the faith without which it is impossible to please God. With some, faith is all *emotion*; with others, it is all *intellectuality*. But neither of these elements alone can withstand the fiery tests to which faith is subjected. Both must be *present* and *remain*, if our faith be that which will endure to the end and be found unto praise, honor and glory at the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The trial of our faith to which our Lord and the Apostles refer is a trial, not only of our *intellectual knowledge* of Divine Truth, but also of our *heart-reliance upon God*. In both respects, the true child of God will find himself severely tried. Let him see to it that he has a "Thus saith the Lord" for every item of his belief. Let him study the doctrine and get a clear understanding of every element of the Truth. Let him become rooted, grounded, settled and established in the doctrines of God, and give earnest heed lest at any time he let them slip.—Heb. 2:1.

When he has his faith well grounded in the *fundamental principles* of Divine Truth, let every consecrated child of God see to it that he also continue to cultivate heart-reliance in the "*great and precious promises*." St. Peter tells us that a faith which has stood the tests of fiery ordeal and has come off victorious is very precious in the sight of the Heavenly Father. Whenever we pass through a fiery trial and still retain, not only our faith in the doctrines, but also our *confidence in God*, our *reliance in His promises*, our integrity of heart and purpose, and our zeal for Truth and righteousness, then our characters have

grown more Christ-like and hence more pleasing to God, who subjects us to discipline for this very purpose.

St. Peter intimates in our text that the faith of those called throughout the Gospel Age will receive a severe testing. He says, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." In the present time, when gold is comparatively a rare metal, it has a special value. Therefore, the Apostle compares it to the faith of the Little Flock, to whom alone, of all humanity, will be given the glory, honor and immortality promised to those who overcome.

Hence the trial of the faith of this class is very important. None will be admitted to membership in the Body of Christ who has not been tested and proved by the Lord. But let us remember that our testing is not to see whether we are perfect according to the *flesh*. On the contrary, God knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.—Psa. 103:14.

What God is seeking in us is the development and perfection of faith. We are tested to see whether we believe in Him as a faithful, wise, loving and true God; and in His Son as our Redeemer, who purchased us with His own precious blood, and as our Advocate, who now covers our blemishes, past, present and future, with the Robe of His imputed Righteousness. These are the elements of faith which He will test thoroughly and which must grow stronger as time goes by. Without strong, well-tested faith in God and His promises, we cannot please Him and become members of the Elect class which He is now selecting.

THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH FAITH IS TRIED

The trial of our faith is not left to *chance*. It is supervised by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who is represented by the Prophet Malachi as a refiner and purifier of gold and of silver, that He may purify the antitypical House of Levi, and separate the dross from the precious metal. (Mal. 3:3.) In one sense of the word, He came as that refiner at the First Advent. During the entire Gospel Age, He has been doing the refining work in His people, that the offering to the Father might be an acceptable one.

First of all, our Lord laid down His life in *fulfilment* of the *types of the Law*, thus demonstrating His absolute trust, loyalty, and faith in God. The Church of Christ must be similarly tested and proved in respect to their obedience, trust, loyalty to the Father. They must be willing, not only to trust God when things are favorable, but to trust in His providences when they cannot see the outcome. To attain this degree of faith, they must pass through manifold trials and testings, that they may demonstrate their faith and loyalty.

During the Gospel Age a peculiar, special and called-out class is being dealt with. We can see that God is not dealing with the world, but allows it to "lie in the Wicked One." (I John 5:19, *Diaglott.*) St. Paul tells us that during those times when the people were in

ignorance, God paid no particular attention to their conduct, except when it went to an extreme. (Acts 17:30.) But during the next Age, whoever does not repent when he hears the Gospel will make no advancement; but will, in conjunction with the Divine Plan, have punishments, stripes, for anything that he knowingly does that is wrong. This Gospel Age, however, is for the development of a specially *called-out* class—a *people for a purpose*—the Church of Christ.

The question naturally arises, Why should God test *faith* rather than *works*? The answer is that all kinds of works are dependent upon the ability of the worker, and that the whole race of Adam has become unable to do perfect works, on account of the fall of their first parents. None can be perfectly just, perfectly wise, perfectly loving; to be so in our present imperfect condition is impossible.

Therefore, in His Wisdom and Love, God avoids making His test along those lines in which we are absolutely incompetent, and makes it along the line of faith—in His Wisdom, His Love and His promises. To doubt any of these would be to weaken the basis of our hope. We realize that we are in a fallen condition, that we are dying like the remainder of the race. We have heard through the Word of God that He has provided a Savior, but we see that things continue much as they were, despite all that God and Christ have done. Our faith, however, assures us that God, who knows the end from the beginning, is working all things according to the counsel of His own will and that in due time He will establish righteousness in the earth.—Eph. 1:11; Psa. 72:1-7.

The language of one without faith would be, "I cannot see that God or Christ is accomplishing anything for the world. Man now learns to control himself better than did his ancestors and so he does not fight as did the savages of old, but uses more modern weapons. He builds hospitals and insane asylums; in this way he gets the sick and the insane off his hands and so has more time to devote to business." Present conditions have a strong influence upon the world. Very much depends upon how we look at a matter.

TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS INTEGRAL PARTS OF CHARACTER

From the standpoint of faith we see that Christ has come into the world and during the Gospel Age has been carrying on the work of selecting the Church, which is His Body, and that from these a light has shone out into the surrounding darkness, which has been more or less dispelled by it. The light of the Holy Spirit, shed abroad by the example of many Christian lives, exerts an influence today, and many have a veneer of politeness which may be mistaken for the fruits of the Spirit of God. But the outward conduct alone is not evidence of acceptable heart condition. God desires that truth and righteousness shall become integral parts of our characters and that the principle of Love shall dominate in everything. This development of character we do not find among *all* who profess the name of Christ.

Our faith, looking out into the world, asks of the Lord, "When will the promised time come in which Thy will shall be done on earth as in heaven?" The Scriptures reply that

the glorious time for the blessing of the world will not come until the Church shall have passed into glory; that Messiah will then reign for a thousand years in order to put down sin and opposition to Divine arrangements and to uplift those who desire to come into harmony with God; and that in order to accomplish this work He will establish a government based upon the principles of righteousness. By faith we accept this answer, and await God's due time for the blessing of all mankind.

Meantime, we will not permit ourselves to drift into unbelief while we delude ourselves with the thought that we or others are accomplishing something through "social uplift." We are glad to see efforts put forth to help the unfortunate; but we perceive that there is a force at work in the world that prevents success along this line. Present methods will not eradicate selfishness from the human heart; and until this is accomplished, God's will cannot be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

To bring about this desired result, the Kingdom of Heaven is soon to be established, according to the Word of God. If, while waiting for His due time to arrive, we participate in worldly ambitions and endeavors, our faith will become vague and perhaps die. Although the good that we may do will be in conflict with the darkness around us, nevertheless, it should always be shining forth in our words and in our conduct as the result of the glorious hopes that inspire our lives.

Faith is a quality possessed by all whom God is calling to membership in the Body of Christ, and the appeal of the Scriptures is only to those who have some faith and who are determined to increase it. When we begin our course as Christians, we have comparatively little faith, and it must be developed; our Christian experience is for the purpose of faith development. As St. Peter suggests, our faith, which is on trial, is much more precious than gold, although the gold be tried by fire. The exercise of faith tends to its development, and so our Father gives us numerous trials to test its strength.

THE FAITH OF THE ANGELS SEVERELY TESTED

God purposely permits us to be subject to manifold temptations for the testing of our faith, which is necessary because of the outcome of the trial. We may suppose that *prior to the existence of man* the angels had no such trials of faith and patience as the Church has had, for the angels saw God and knew of His works. Nevertheless, God has been pleased to give them a test of faith, which has continued during all of man's experience.

The primary cause of Satan's deflection, which resulted in his rebellion, was that he lost his faith in God. He formed the idea that he could manage the Universe better than could the Almighty, and thought to secure to himself a little corner where he could show how affairs should be carried on. He succeeded in getting control of our first parents, only to find that, instead of bringing a blessing, he had brought upon the human family the curse of death—the penalty of sin—and all the misery and crime now on the pages of history.

Satan's career became a very important test to the angels. Believing that God had all power, they did not understand why He would permit Satan to pursue so evil a course. They would have restrained the Adversary altogether. So when they saw evil going on unrestrained for centuries, some of them also evidently lost their faith. Thus came about the conditions mentioned in the sixth chapter of Genesis, when some of the angels preferred to materialize and live in human conditions. This was in violation of the Divine arrangement, and was the result of their loss of faith in God's Wisdom and Power. They had seen what Satan had done, although he had not succeeded in doing anything great; and their sentiment was, "Apparently God does not control affairs so completely as we have thought."—Gen. 6:1-4; 2 Pet. 2:4, 5; Jude 6, 7.

Thus we see that God tested the faith of the holy angels, especially when we understand that the evil conditions prevailing before the flood have continued to some extent. The holy angels had occasion to doubt, to fear respecting God's Wisdom, Love and Power. Thus they were all thoroughly tested—more so than humanity; for they saw all that there was to be seen. We admit that there are a great many things that we do not know and cannot see, but the angels have apparently a much wider scope of knowledge. Thus the test of their faith was much greater than is ours.

God tested the faith of the angels because He wished to know which of them had that absolute confidence which would enable them to trust Him, whether it seemed that He *had* or had *not* the power to control affairs. The lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin was both wise and necessary. Had the fall of man resulted in the everlasting torture of even a small proportion of the human family, we could not think that God was either wise or just in permitting this test to come upon His creatures.

For more than four thousand years God permitted mankind to go down into death. Then came a manifestation of His Love when He provided for their redemption; and a still further manifestation of His Power will be given in the next Age, when they will be raised from the dead. Furthermore, in the Bride class He is making a special illustration, both to angels and to men, of His Love for those who manifest heart-loyalty to Him, and of His willingness to lift those faithful few far above the angels and even to make them "partakers of the Divine nature." We see, then, that in God's dealings with the angels He had respect to their *faith*.

FAITH PROPORTIONATE TO KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S CHARACTER

The Scriptures say that "without *faith* it is *impossible* to please God." (Heb. 11:6.) If one lose his faith, there is no telling whither he may wander. The Apostle Peter's argument is that this special class who are being selected for exaltation to the Divine nature, must expect to have their faith tested, and that this testing is most important from the Divine point of view. If they have faith, it will control all of their affairs.—Compare Heb. 11:1, 6.

Our faith will be in proportion to our knowledge of the character of God. We shall find, upon observation, that in proportion to our faith we can endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Since our test is for so brief a time—a few years—it must of necessity be a very severe, a crucial one. God is subjecting our faith to a great heat in order to separate the dross. If we had not the faith, we might fear to take the steps which would bring us into this crucial position. Fear would lead us to decline to take the course that God indicates to be His will. Without faith we would shrink from the fiery trials, the heated furnace. If we have not the faith to stand the trials, then we are not of the kind for whom God is at the present time looking.

If we appreciate this matter, we shall see that "without faith it is impossible to please God"; and that confidence in Him will lead us to weigh His words of precious promise. These promises will make clear to us the reason why these testings are upon us, and will enable us to appreciate our testings as marks of His love for us. The Lord would have us be "a peculiar people," tried and tested, "zealous of good works," a people for a purpose; and so He develops us through suffering.

When the world is on trial during the Millennial Age, knowledge will have come in, and there will be *less opportunity* for the exercise of faith. Mankind will be in much the same condition as that in which the angels now are. For a thousand years, the world will be assisted upward, and at the same time they will have opportunities of cultivating faith—heart-reliance—in God. What *we* now see by *faith*, *they* will actually *know*—that the permission of sin has been working out a great Divine test for both men and angels. Thus gradually, throughout the thousand years, their faith will be established in practically the same way that the faith of the angels is now being established. They will *see* and will walk by *sight*, while we *believe* the promises and so walk by *faith*.

There is a difference between *intellectual belief* and *heart-reliance*. The person who knows God *best* will trust Him *most*. Our Lord Jesus in His glorified position trusts the Father most perfectly at all times. But with us, whose trust is imperfect, it is different. Not until the First Resurrection shall we have perfect trust. The greater the knowledge of God's character, the greater will be the heart-reliance upon Him.

During the Millennium, as *intellectual belief* gives place to *knowledge*, the heart-reliance of those who are loyal to the principles of righteousness will increase proportionately. It will *always* be in order to trust in God. The Great Creator is the Great Upholder of the Universe; and all of His creatures will ever be recipients of His bounty. If we understand the Scriptures, the only ones who will have deathlessness will be the Lord Jesus and the Church, which is His Body. (I Cor. 15:53.) All others will have dependent lives, and so will be objects of Divine care. In order to have everlasting life, they will need to have a heart-reliance upon their Creator. The more they learn of the unchangeableness of the Divine promises and character, the greater will be their trust.

The faith of the Church will be of a higher character than is that of the angels or than will be that of the world restored. The faith of the Church will have been wrought out amidst the darkness and obscurity of this Age, which are being permitted for the very

purpose of developing that faith; for the Church is called to occupy a place much higher than that of angels or men—called to be partakers of the Divine nature.—2 Pet. 1:3, 4.

When, during the Millennial Age, the world shall have learned their lessons along the lines of knowledge, God does not purpose to receive them everlastingly without a thorough test of their heart-reliance. In Rev. 20:3, 7-10, we read that at the close of the thousand years, Satan shall be loosed for a little season. Mankind will then *know* what is right and what is wrong, for the principles of righteousness will have been implanted in their hearts. The experience with Satan will be a test of heart-reliance, of loyalty, in that God will apparently not be in control.

Then all those not in the fullest sympathy with God and His Divine Plan will be misled by this test of faith. Thus they will demonstrate their true character. Those who prove disobedient will be destroyed in the Second Death. God tells us that in the consummation every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of His Name, and that every creature in Heaven and in earth shall give honor and praise to the Son.—Rev. 5:13.

JUNE 5

In Thee, O LORD, do I put my trust—Psa. 31:1.

There is nothing that puts the Christian at greater disadvantage in the presence of his foes than for him to let go, even temporarily, his grip upon the anchor of faith. Let him do so for a moment, and of necessity darkness begins to gather round him; he cannot see the brightness of his Father's face, for "without faith it is impossible to please God"; and while he grapples again for the anchor, the powers of darkness fiercely assail him with doubts and fears, based generally upon his human imperfections, which he should ever bear in mind are covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness. If we would have the peace of God reign in our hearts, we must never let go our anchor, "nor suffer Satan's deadliest strife to beat our courage down." The language of our hearts should always be, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him"—Z '95, 157 (R 1832).

The Christian's trust is not in self, nor in the arm of flesh; rather his heart rests in Jehovah; and what rest can be more secure than that experienced on the bosom of Jehovah, the self-existent, eternal, immortal, independent and unlimited One! The promise and oath of such a one are worthy of all trust. Our anchor finds in Him its rest—in His person, character, Plan and works—P '30, 78.

Parallel passages: 1 Chron. 5:20; 2 Chron. 14:11; 20:12; Job 13:15, 16; Psa. 18:30; 22:4, 5; 27:1; 31:6, 14, 15; 34:1-12; 118:5-9; Prov. 3:5; Isa. 26:3; Dan. 3:17; Mic. 7:7; Hab. 3:19; Rom. 4; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 11.

Hymns: 12, 213, 124, 197, 110, 126, 108.

Poems of Dawn, 66: *A Perfect Trust*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 341 (R 5990).

Questions: Wherein did I trust God this week? What helped or hindered therein? What were the results?

A PERFECT TRUST

O BLESSED peace of a perfect trust,
My loving God, in Thee;
Unwavering faith, that never doubts
Thou chooseth best for me.

Best, though my plans be all upset;
Best, though the way be rough;
Best, though mine earthly store be scant;
In Thee I have enough.

Best, though my health and strength be gone,

Though weary days be mine,
Shut out from much that others have;
Not my will, Lord, but Thine!

And e'en though disappointments come,
They, too, are best for me,
To wean me from a clam'ring world,
And lead me nearer Thee.

O blessed peace of a perfect trust
That looks away from all;
That sees Thy hand in everything,
In great events or small;

That hears Thy voice—a Father's voice—
Directing for the best:—
O blessed peace of a perfect trust,
A heart with Thee at rest!

R5990: ONE OF THE MASTER'S FORCEFUL AND BEAUTIFUL LESSONS

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

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

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

SOME HAVE HIS PROMISE—SOME HAVE NOT

Undoubtedly much that our Lord said to the Jews would not have been said to Gentiles; for the Gentiles were then under the general curse and condemnation—the whole world was alienated from God. The people of Israel alone had been brought back into covenant relationship with God, through the Law Covenant made at Mount Sinai; hence different words would be applicable to them. Having come into relationship with God, His promises were theirs. All things should work for their blessing—their cattle,

their fields, everything, would be blessed of the Lord, if they would be faithful to Him. Our Lord was, therefore, in line with this thought, exhorting the children of Israel to have greater confidence in God, greater trust in Him who had chosen them to be His peculiar people.

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

THE WORLD'S HEAVY BURDENS

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

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

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

PROPER CONSIDERATION OF THE LILY

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

The lilies of Palestine to which our Lord referred were evidently not the kind of flowers that we generally term lilies, but were apparently of some other plant family, and a very numerous species, we should judge, growing everywhere. Those who are accustomed to the flowers of Palestine point to a common reddish flower which they think was meant by "the lilies of the field."

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

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

"Just leave all with Him; lilies do, and they grow;
They grow in the rain and they grow in the snow.
Yes, they grow.
They grow in the darkness, all hid in the night,
Or if in the sunshine, revealed by the light,
Still they grow.
They ask not your planting; they need not your care

As they grow;
Dropped down in the valley, the field, anywhere,
There they grow—
In garments of beauty, arrayed in pure white,
All radiant in glory from heaven's own light—
Sweetly grow."

REST AND PEACE IN PERFECT TRUST

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

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

ASKING FOR DAILY NEEDS

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

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

for this rest, that all the Master's gracious promises and lessons of wisdom, comfort and instruction are given.

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

"HOW LONG, OH LORD, HOW LONG?"

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

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

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

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

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

* * *

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

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

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

JUNE 6

Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life—Luke 21:34.

What a work we realize to be before us, and what necessity for sobriety, vigilance, steadfastness! It is a life work, a life battle against a mighty foe entrenched in our flesh. The powers without are strong indeed, but the civil war within is by far the most to be dreaded. If we become in any measure intoxicated with the spirit of the world; if we give way to self-gratification, love of ease, pleasure, a little indulgence of any of the old disposition of envy, malice, pride, vainglory, vaunting of self, headiness, high-mindedness, wrath, strife, or any such thing—even a little, oh, how great is the peril to which we are exposed!—Z '95, 201 (R 1859).

The influence of the world, the flesh and the Adversary tends to fill us with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life. The attitude of watchfulness is necessary, if such an overcharging is to be prevented. Let us therefore be wakeful, alert, incredulous and studious as to ourselves, our thoughts, motives, words, acts, surroundings and the influences operating upon us, to avoid being overcharged. The overcharged one will surely fail of gaining the reward that is for the diligent and faithful only—P '35, 101.

Parallel passages: Rom. 13:11, 13; 1 Thes. 5:6-8; 1 Pet. 4:7; 5:8, 9; Matt. 13:12-15, 22; 25:13; 26:41; Luke 8:14; 1 Cor. 16:13; Rev. 3:2, 3; 16:15; Luke 12:40.

Hymns: 183, 184, 130, 136, 13, 20, 78.

Poems of Dawn, 18: *The Nominal Church*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 211 (R 5055).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences connected with this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? In what did they result?

THE NOMINAL CHURCH

THE Church and the World walked far apart
On the changing shores of time;
The World was singing a giddy song,
And the Church a hymn sublime.
"Come, give me your hand," said the merry World,
"And walk with me this way;
But the good Church hid her snowy hands
And solemnly answered, "Nay,
I will not give you my hand at all,
And I will not walk with you;
Your way is the way that leads to death;
To my Lord I must be true."

"Nay, walk with me but a little space,"
Said the World, with a kindly air,
"The road I walk is a pleasant road,
And the sun shines always there;
Your path is thorny and rough and rude,
But mine is broad and plain;
My way is paved with flowers and dews,
And yours with tears and pain;
The sky to me is always blue,
No want, no toil I know;
The sky above you is always dark,
Your lot is a lot of woe;
The way you walk is a narrow way,
But mine is amply wide;
There's room enough for you and me
To travel side by side."

Half shyly the Church approached the World
And gave him her hand of snow;
And the old World clasped it and walked along,
Saying in accents low,
"Your dress is too simple to please my taste,
I will give you pearls to wear,
Rich velvets and silks for your graceful form,
And diamonds to deck your hair."
The Church looked down at her plain white robes
And then at the dazzling World,
And blushed as she saw his handsome lip
With a smile contemptuous curled.
"I will change my dress for a costlier one,"
Said the Church with a smile of grace;
Then her pure, white garments drifted away,
And the World gave, in their place,
Beautiful satins and shining silks,
Roses and gems and pearls;
While over her forehead her bright hair fell
Crimpled in a thousand curls.

"Your house is too plain," said the proud old World,
"I'll build you one like mine;
Carpets of Brussels and curtains of lace,
And furniture ever so fine."
So he built her a costly and beautiful house,
Most splendid it was to behold;
Her sons and her beautiful daughters dwelt there,

Gleaming in purple and gold;
Rich fairs and shows in the halls were held,
And the World and his children were there;
Laughter and music and feasting were heard
In the place that was meant for prayer.
There were cushioned pews for the rich and gay,
To sit in their pomp and pride;
While the poor, who were clad in shabby array,
But seldom came inside.

"You give too much to the poor," said the World,
"Far more than you ought to do;
If they are in need of shelter and food,
Why need it trouble you?
Go, take your money, and buy rich robes,
Buy horses and carriages fine,
Buy pearls and jewels and dainty food,
Buy the rarest and costliest wine;
My children dote on all these things,
And if you their love would win,
You must do as they do, and walk in the ways
That they are walking in."

Then the Church held fast the strings of her purse,
And modestly lowered her head,
And simpered, "No doubt you are right, sir;
Henceforth I will do as you've said."
Then the sons of the World and the sons of the Church
Walked closely, hand and heart,
And only the Master, who knoweth all,
Could tell the two apart.
Then the Church sat down at her ease and said,
"I am rich and my goods are increased;
I have need of nothing, nor ought to do,
But to laugh, and dance, and feast."
The sly World heard, and he laughed in his sleeve,
And mockingly said aside,
"The Church is fallen, the beautiful Church,
And her shame is her boast and pride."

The angel drew near to the mercy-seat,
And whispered in sighs her name,
Then the loud anthems of rapture were hushed,
And heads were covered with shame.
And a voice was heard at last by the Church
From Him who sat on the Throne,

"I know thy works, and how thou hast said,
'I am rich'; and hast not known
That thou art naked, poor and blind,
And wretched before My face;
Therefore, from My presence, I cast thee out,
And blot thy name from its place."

R5055: "DELIVERED FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FLESH"

DURING THE GOSPEL AGE there has been but one condition upon which any may come to the Father. The Lord does not propose many ways, but only *one* way. "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life"—*now*. But when the Kingdom comes there will be a *highway*, a more favorable, an easier way, as the Lord states through the Prophet Isaiah. In it there will be no stumbling-stones; it will not be narrow and difficult, but *comparatively* easy; and throughout Messiah's reign of a thousand years, it will be the way by which the Adamic race may return to God. During that reign the whole world will be assisted, succored and disciplined, that they may be encouraged to go to the very end of the way.

In the present time, the *only* way is dark, narrow, difficult; the light has not yet begun to shine for the *world*. The Scriptures represent the Church of Christ in this Gospel Age as saying, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet." In olden times men had little lanterns which they attached to the toes of their sandals, and as they walked each step would be in the light. So the Lord has been dealing with the Church during the Gospel Age. The narrow way has been *dark*; but we have had the "sure word of prophecy," which, as a lamp, shines on the pathway and will shine "more and more unto the perfect day."

When that day comes men will not need the *lamp*; for then there will be *sunlight*. Then the knowledge of God will *fill* the *whole earth*.

SACRIFICE ESSENTIAL TO DISCIPLESHIP

One of the narrowing features of this way is that at the present time no one is accepted of God unless he makes a *definite covenant* with God. If he does not choose to make that covenant he may think he is a Christian, but he is not. In the world today four hundred million people are counted as Christians. Many have the idea that if they join the Church or do some good deed, they thus become followers of Christ. But the Bible very plainly states: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me." (Matt. 16:24.) This *self-denial* and *cross-bearing* is the sacrifice necessary to discipleship in Christ at the present time.

Many people are not Christians because they have not entered into a covenant with God. The Lord speaks of the class now called to discipleship, saying, "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice"—by a *complete consecration* of themselves; "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable

unto God, your reasonable service." (Psa. 50:5; Rom. 12:1.) If we have been accepted in Christ, if we have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, it is because we have entered at this strait gate and upon this narrow way, and have made this covenant of sacrifice to the Lord, giving our wills and all *earthly rights* to Him, that His will may be done in us.

After having entered this strait gate and narrow way, we should continue therein—not necessarily without *stumbling*, not necessarily without *making mistakes*; if we can *go on* ever so falteringly, to the best of our ability and with hearts loyal to the Lord, we shall be granted to sit on His throne—members of His Bride class.

THE CARES OF THIS WORLD OVERCOME MANY

As we are all aware the Bible shows that some who make this consecration, afterward become involved with the world, the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches. These fail to carry out *their agreement*. Thus they are holding back the very price necessary to make them joint-heirs with our Lord. Whoever rejects the *cross* will not get the *crown*. How many people are overcharged with the cares of this life! How many people are being deluded by the deceitfulness of riches!

There was a gentleman with whom the writer was once very intimate; we were like brothers. One day he said, "Brother Russell, I should like very much indeed to be out in the Lord's work and to do some kind of service for the Truth, but I have a wife, and I understand that the Lord holds me responsible for the care of my wife. I could not think of going out and leaving her dependent. But if the Lord in His providence should ever send me money so that I could go without my wife's suffering any serious inconvenience, I would be very glad to go out and preach the Gospel." The Lord took him at his word. He was then a bookkeeper; but the Lord opened the way, by the death of a member of the firm, for him to become one of the principal partners in that firm. Without any effort at all he prospered financially until he was worth at least half a million dollars.

One day we said to him, "Brother, we have a very serious matter that weighs on us a great deal." He said, "Tell me what it is and I will assist you, whatever it costs." You see how gracious he was! He thought that we were after his *money*! Dear friends, we thank God that we have never yet found it necessary to ask for money; and we do not suppose that we ever shall. We said, "Brother, we are in great distress, and no one but you can help us." "Tell me what it is," he replied. We said, "Dear Brother, we desire to call your attention to something which you said several years ago when you were poor." Then we recited our previous conversation as best we could, and said, "The Lord has given you the money; He has done His part; are you ready to do yours?" With streaming eyes he answered, "Brother Russell, I am so bound to my business—hand and foot—that it would be impossible now." The cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, according to his own words, had *bound him hand and foot*; but his heart was still loyal to God.

We have no desire to be his judge, but we are inclined to think that dear brother did not get into the Kingdom. While we do not know, yet we fear that his being bound "hand and foot" may have stood in his way, though we think that he was truly a child of God.

Are we to suppose that because he failed to make that sacrifice which he had agreed to make, he would go down into the Second Death? We hardly think so. We think that the Lord loved him and that he had a very loyal character. The Lord loves good characters. Our thought is that quite probably the dear brother will be in the Great Company; and we are very glad that there will be a Great Company class.

OUR HUMANITY MUST DIE

No one will get into the *Little Flock* class but those who faithfully lay down their lives in sacrifice to the end of the journey. God foreknew and predestinated that all who are of that class must be *copies of His dear Son*. If one is not a full copy of our Lord Jesus, if one has not left all to follow Him, then that one will not be of the Bride class.

The Scriptures mention two classes—the one as a Little Flock and the other as a Great Company—both parts of the "Church of the First-borns." In the type the priests were members of the tribe of Levi; but there were others of that tribe who were not priests. The Levites as a whole represent, we understand, the Church of the First-born ones who will attain the spirit plane of being, but who will form two classes, a "Little Flock" or priest class, and a "Great Company" or Levite class.

The voluntary sacrificing of the flesh is for one to give himself of his own free will to the Lord and to submit himself to the Lord Jesus as the great High Priest to carry out for him the work of sacrifice. What of those who make this *arrangement* and then fail to make the *sacrifice*? Their earthly life is consecrated; God has given them the Holy Spirit of adoption, and has accepted the arrangement whereby they gave up all their earthly rights. Such can never get the world's salvation. They voluntarily gave up all right to life on the human plane. When God gave them the Holy Spirit, He accepted the contract, binding on both sides. They will get the heavenly nature or *nothing*.

"DELIVERED OVER TO SATAN"

Those who do not go on to give themselves fully in sacrifice are delivered over to the Adversary to buffet them until their flesh shall be destroyed—until these earthly, clinging tendencies which were holding them from full loyalty to God are broken down and their minds become fully submissive and in harmony with God. That which they refused to give *voluntarily* will be *taken away* from them.

The only knowledge we have of this matter is from the Apostle's words. St. Paul, addressing the Church at Corinth, said that they had amongst them a brother who was not living according to his covenant, but who was living in a measure of sin. The Apostle reprimanded the Church for not having done their duty by the brother. Then said he, "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed ... to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (I Cor. 5:3, 5.) If the *flesh* is not *destroyed*, the *spirit* will not be *saved*, is the Apostle's argument.

This statement gives us an inkling of the Lord's will. In every case it is necessary that the flesh be destroyed. If the will is overcome by the flesh, the result will be the death of the *will* also; that is, the *Second Death*. But if the will desires to be in harmony with the Lord, then, although the enforced destruction of the flesh is not *sacrifice*, and such are not counted in with the *sacrificers*, yet they are saved "so as by fire" on the spirit plane, in the day of the Lord Jesus.—I Cor. 3:15.

Regarding the case that we have mentioned earlier in this article you might ask, Did that Brother lose the knowledge of the Truth? We will tell you; for this is a very interesting question.

In this Brother's case we do not know what were the sentiments of his heart, of course, for we are not able to judge those. But he left us and joined the Presbyterian Church. Then he joined the Christian Alliance people and tried to believe in faith-healing and to practice it, although he had possessed much knowledge of the Truth along these lines. After pressing along the line of faith-healing, etc., he had several attacks of sickness and had to call in a doctor, notwithstanding faith-cures. Finally, after very serious illness lasting a number of weeks, he passed away. We do not know enough about him to say to what extent his mind was turned toward the Lord. We had no opportunity of knowing; for his attitude had more or less cut us off from our previous intimate fellowship.

Another case was called to our attention by a brother who asked us this very question—"Do you think this to be a case of what we might call *"the destruction of the flesh"?*" It seemed to us that it was such a case. We cite it:

A brother living in a certain city received the Truth and rejoiced in it greatly. He found another brother, with whom he liked to meet and talk about the glad message. He seemed to show the right spirit, just ready for the Truth, and it was satisfying to his heart. But his wife was very indignant. She opposed him saying, "Choose between your religion and me; you cannot have both." She put the matter very squarely before him; and he chose his wife. It was only a little while afterwards, as the story came to us, that apparently the Lord put the poor brother where he was very sorry for his choice. He contracted some kind of loathsome disease, and in the midst of his terrible suffering his wife deserted him.

We hope that the Lord did not desert him and that eventually he was forgiven by the Lord; for it looked as if the Lord had taken that brother at his own proposition; that he was really a child of God, but not of the overcoming class. He loved his wife more than the Lord and was not worthy to be a member of the Bride class. So apparently he suffered such *entire destruction* of the flesh as he probably never expected to know. He must have loved his wife a great deal to give the Lord up for her.

Yet she deserted him at a time of great need! Even from the standpoint of the world it would seem wrong for a wife to leave her husband under those conditions. We may readily suppose that the brother came back to the Lord at the closing hours, learning his

lesson well, and perhaps making certain promises to the Lord. If so we doubt not that his spirit will be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

JUNE 7

The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, confirm, and strengthen you—1 Pet. 5:10; see Diaglott.

It is only through endurance of hardness as good soldiers of Christ that this desirable condition can be attained, namely, perfect self-control and ability to resist evil; established faith, patience and virtue; settled, abiding rest in Christ; and hope through His word of promise. This undoubtedly was the Apostle's own experience as he grew old in the Master's service, and so may it be ours. Let each departing year find us nearer the glorious summit of perfection!—Z '95, 202 (R 1859).

Our having the privilege of the Gospel-Age calling is one of the most marvelous exhibitions of God's grace. No wonder that its realization requires faithfulness under the most crucial tests of suffering! These sufferings effect three things in our development in the new heart, mind and will. They strengthen us in a right attitude toward evil, in good affections, in the graces and in knowledge; they balance the various parts and qualities of Christian character; and finally they perfect, crystallize, them, and all this is accomplished by the Lord through the power of God's Spirit, Word and providence—P '34, 95.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Tim. 6:12; Psa. 30:5; Isa. 54:8; Matt. 5:12; Rom. 8:18, 37; 1 Pet. 1:6; Eph. 3:16; 6:10-17; Col. 1:11; 2 Tim. 2:1; 2 Thes. 2:17; 3:3; 1 Thes. 3:12, 3; Jas. 5:8; 2 Pet. 1:12; Rom. 8:29; Luke 6:40; Eph. 4:12; Heb. 13:20, 21.

Hymns: 105, 305, 266, 272, 78, 201, 230.
Poems of Dawn, 305: *The Needed Strength*.
Tower Reading: Z '95, 105 (R 1806).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? How? With what results?

THE NEEDED STRENGTH

I WANDERED o'er the mountain side
Where rocks lay all around,
Within a tiny crevice there
A little tree I found.

Though crushed between two cold, gray rocks
The sapling still did try
To grow into a tree, and reached
Its branches toward the sky.

"You may as well give up," I said,
Your chances there are few;

Against such odds, you try in vain—
Life was not fair to you."

The years rolled by, and once again
I wandered through that land;
And in that crevice, I beheld
A tree both tall and grand.

And as I closer drew, I saw
The rocks were pushed aside,
The crevice, once so very small,
Was many inches wide.

"I might have known," I whispered then,
"That God, who made the seed,
Would put within its tiny form
The strength for every need."

How can we doubt our Father's care,
Who thus cares for a tree?
Will He not give His children strength
To be what we should be?

When obstacles are in the way,
Should we sit down and sigh,
And so fall short of what we'd be,
If we would only try?

We'll win, if we remember this,
For it is very true—
God's strength is quite sufficient for
All things we're told to do.

R1806: PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING.

"Who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and, being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. 5:7-10.

WE take up the examination of this scripture under the following five heads:—(1) In the days of his flesh; (2) What he feared, and from what he was saved; (3) He was a Son;

(4) In what sense he was made perfect; and (5) To whom he is the author of eternal salvation.

These words of the Apostle give us an insight to the experiences of our dear Lord which help us to appreciate the load he bore for us in the days of his flesh. We notice particularly this expression—

"IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH,"

because there are some who claim that in our Lord's existence there can be no distinction between days when he was in the flesh, and days when he was no longer in the flesh; for, say they, his resurrection life is his humanity, his flesh, glorified. Others there are who claim that he had no existence prior to his human life. But the reverse of both these ideas is not only implied in this statement of the Apostle, but is also definitely expressed in other scriptures, e.g., "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise *took part of the same*;" he "*was made flesh*, and dwelt among us;" "Though he was rich, for our sakes he became *poor*." Then he said, "*My flesh* I will *give* for the life of the world." (See Heb. 2:14; John 1:14; 2 Cor. 8:9; John 6:51.) Yes, his human body was the body of his humiliation, the "body prepared" for sacrifice (Heb. 10:4, 5), and which was sacrificed; and which, being sacrificed, was never taken back: it was *given* as the price of our redemption. Therefore he no longer lives the life in the flesh, the human life, but, having sacrificed that, he is now highly exalted and ever liveth as our divine high priest. "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now, henceforth, know we him [so] no more."—2 Cor. 5:16.

His humiliation, therefore, was not an eternal humiliation, but was followed by a glorious exaltation, even to the divine nature and to the glorious body which belongs to that nature—"the express image of the Father's person" (Heb. 1:3), who dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto, but which Christ's faithful followers may one day see; for it is written that "we shall be like him, and see him as he is"—not as he was. For this he prayed while he was yet in the flesh, saying, "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me shall be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory."—John 17:24.

And yet, though changed, our Lord is the very same Jesus; for, says the Apostle, "He that descended [into the grave] is *the same also* that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." (Eph. 4:10.) The change of nature from the human to the divine no more destroyed his identity in this case than did his change from the spiritual to the human nature at his incarnation. Of himself he said after his resurrection, "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore."—Rev. 1:4, 18.

It is with grateful hearts that we accept the statements of Scripture that the Son of God was indeed made flesh; and we thank God also that his days in the flesh were numbered and few. With him, as with us, they were "few days and full of trouble." Especially after his consecration to the work of sacrifice, they were days of affliction, sorrow, disappointment and trouble, days that led him often to the throne of the heavenly grace to find help in time of need. It was our Lord's custom, therefore, often to seek the place of

prayer after the busy days of service were ended. The mountains and the deserts were his closets, and not infrequently he spent the whole night in prayer.

It was from these seasons of secret communion with God that he drew spiritual strength, consolation and comfort. They were seasons of precious communion when he could open up his heart to the Father as to no one else; when he could tell him all his sorrows and burdens and fears; and when the Father manifested himself to him in tokens of loving approval and sustaining grace.

WHAT HE FEARED, AND FROM WHAT HE WAS SAVED.

What, says some one, in surprise, did our Lord have any fears? Yes, the above words of the Apostle indicate the great mental conflict through which the Lord passed on our behalf "in the days of his flesh." This conflict began in the temptations of the wilderness, immediately following his baptism, and reached its culminating point in the garden of Gethsemane, where, probably as never before, "he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared."

That which the Lord feared was not that the love or the promises of God would fail. He knew that "without faith it is impossible to please God," that God is a covenant-keeping God, and that all his conduct and dealings are founded on the eternal principles of truth and righteousness, from which to vary in the least iota would be a moral impossibility. But he knew, too, that the plan of human salvation was all made dependent upon the obedience of the anointed high priest to every jot and tittle of the law concerning him, as shown in the typical service of the tabernacle. Not only must the sacrifice be made, but it must be made and offered exactly as prescribed. If the typical high priest, Aaron, had at any time failed to conform to the directions given for the offering (See Lev. 9:16), if he had forgotten or ignored any part of the directions, or if he had substituted some feature of his own ideas, he would not have been allowed to sprinkle the blood of such imperfect sacrifice upon the mercy-seat; his offering would not have been accepted: he would have died, and could never have come out and blessed the people.—Lev. 16:2, 3.

Thus we see that in undertaking the great work of redemption, the high priest not only bore in himself the issues of life and death for the whole human race, but for himself as well. Figuratively speaking, he took his own life also in his hands. No wonder, then, if, under the weight of his responsibility, the Lord feared. The tension of the great trials to which he was subjected was too great for even the perfect human nature unaided by divine grace. And therefore it was that he so often sought the place of prayer. Consider the great fight of afflictions through which he passed—the subtle and deceptive temptations in the wilderness, the contradictions of sinners against himself, and the base ingratitude of those he came to save: consider also his poverty, his loss of friends, his labors and weariness, and homelessness, his bitter and relentless persecutions, and finally his betrayal and dying agony. Surely the tests of endurance and of obedience to the exact requirements of the law of sacrifice under these circumstances were most crucial tests.

What carefulness it wrought in the Lord; for he feared, lest the promise having been left him of entering into the rest that remaineth and the glory to follow the day of atonement, he should come short of the full requirements of his office as a priest to render acceptable sacrifice. So also, says the Apostle (Heb. 4:1), should we fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should come short of it.

When the Lord came to the last night of his earthly life, then it was that the questions came to his mind with increased force, Have I thus far done everything in exact accordance with the will of God? and now, in full view of the agony it will cost, am I able to drink the bitter cup to its very dregs? Can I endure, not only the physical agony, but also the ignominy and shame and cruel mockings? and can I do it all so perfectly as to be entirely acceptable with God in my own righteousness? Can I endure to see my disciples scattered and dismayed and my life-work apparently destroyed, my name and the cause of God covered with infamy, and my enemies triumphant and boastful?

Such was our Lord's last conflict. Doubtless the powers of darkness were busy in that awful hour, taking advantage of the circumstances and of his weakness and weariness to discourage his hope and to fill his mind with fears that after all he should fail, or had failed to do the work acceptably, and that a resurrection therefore was by no means certain. No wonder that even the perfect human heart sank before such considerations, and that an agony of emotion brought great drops of bloody sweat. But did he yield to the discouragement and give up the struggle when the crucial test was thus upon him? No; he took these human fears to his Heavenly Father, "to him who was able to deliver him out of death," in order that his human will might be reinforced by divine grace to go forward and complete his sacrifice acceptably to God—to freely submit to be led away as a lamb to the slaughter, and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so to open not his mouth in self-defence.—Isa. 53:7.

And his prayers to the Father were not in vain: "he was heard in that he feared." Though his words were few because no words could express the emotions of his soul, his chastened spirit was all the while making intercession for him with groanings that could not be uttered. (Rom. 8:26.) And God sent an angel to comfort and minister unto him; to assure him still of the divine favor, and thus to give him fresh courage, strength of mind and steadiness of nerve to endure all that was before him, even unto death. With this assistance of divine grace our dear Lord went forward from that moment with undaunted courage to finish the work that was given him to do. Calmly he could come now and say to his beloved, but weary and bewildered, disciples, "Sleep on now, and take your rest." The bitterness of the mental conflict was now over, and the light of heaven shining into his soul had chased away the deep gloom that had hung over him like a funeral pall, making him exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Yes, "he was heard in that he feared," the fear was all taken away, and, strong in the strength which God supplied, he felt that he was able to offer the acceptable sacrifice, to meet every jot and tittle of the requirement of the law in doing it, and hence that his salvation *out of* death, his resurrection, was sure.

This fear on the Lord's part was not a sinful fear: it was a fear such as we also who are striving to walk in his footsteps are told to have, lest we fail to realize the precious promises vouchsafed to us upon conditions that are positive and unalterable. (Heb. 4:1.) It was a fear begotten, not of doubt of the Father's ability and willingness to fulfil all his promises, but of a knowledge of the righteous principles which must in every case govern the Father's course of action, of the inflexible law which righteously affixed the reward of eternal life and glory to his fulfilling of his covenant of sacrifice, while at the same time he began to realize that of himself as a human being, though perfect, his heart and flesh would fail unless reinforced by divine grace. The Psalmist expressed this fear of the Lord, and the source from which his help came, when he said, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." (Psa. 73:26.) It was a filial fear, a fear entirely compatible with his relationship to God as a recognized Son; for

THOUGH HE WERE A SON

yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. His continual recognition by Jehovah as a Son was a guarantee of his perfection, and to sin at any time would have been to forfeit that relationship. On the same principle, we, the Church, are recognized as sons of God, because we have the righteousness of Christ imputed to us by faith.

And yet, though he was a recognized Son, and hence perfect, without sin, the Apostle speaks of him as being *made perfect*—as being perfected in *some sense* through a process of experience—of experience of humiliation and suffering. In what sense, then, we inquire, was he perfected? The answer is implied in the words of the text—"Yet learned he *obedience* by the things which he suffered; and, being made perfect [in this lesson], he became," etc. Although he was a recognized Son of God in whom the Father was always well pleased, and one who had never disappointed in the slightest degree the fondest hopes of that righteous Father; although he had always recognized the Father as the source of his being, and the fountain of all wisdom, goodness and grace, and as that superior Being to whom he owed the deepest gratitude for life and all its manifold blessings, in whom also dwelt all wisdom and honor and glory and power, and whose perfect will was therefore the supreme law, the expression of the most perfect righteousness and truth, the profoundest wisdom and the deepest love and grace; to whom, therefore, was due the most loyal and loving obedience at all times and under all circumstances; and although he was a Son who had always recognized and delighted to do the Father's will; yet he was not counted perfect in the sense of that established and demonstrated character which was the necessary requirement for the priestly office to which he was called. For this office he must be proved beyond all peradventure by the severest tests, and that before many witnesses, in order that all might know the strong foundation upon which they could build their hopes. It was for this purpose that his sense of loyalty was put to the severe test which it met in Gethsemane. Possibly even our Lord himself did not realize the strength of his righteous character until brought face to face with this last trial. There he was tried and proved to the uttermost, and under the fiery ordeal his character, always perfect to the full measure of its testing, gained by divine grace its glorious perfection of completeness.

Thus, through suffering, he learned obedience to the perfect will of God down to the lowest depths of self-abnegation; and God permitted it so to be, because such proving was necessary, both for the development and manifestation of that perfection of character which would be worthy of the high exaltation to which he was called.

It should ever be borne in mind that perfection of being and perfection of character are two different things. Perfection of being is the work of God, while perfection of character is the work of the intelligent creature, wrought out in obedience to divine law and under the divine direction and supervision. Adam was a perfect being, innocent, free and glorious in his pristine beauty; but in the work of character-building he soon failed, and hence lost his perfection. Character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant: at first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love; frequent watering with the showers of his grace; much cultivating through the applied knowledge of his character as a good foundation for faith and inspiration to obedience; and then, when thus developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. And, little by little, as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, beauty and grace until it is finally fixed, developed, established, perfected—through suffering.

In the case of our Lord, this valuable plant of character, perfect in its infancy, maintained its perfection through all the tests applied to it, until it was finally made perfect in completeness, being established, strengthened, settled. This brings us to the last topic of our text, viz.,—

TO WHOM IS CHRIST THE AUTHOR OF ETERNAL SALVATION?

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation *unto all them that obey him*; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec."

There is much food for thought in this introductory phrase, "And being made perfect,"—and that, too, as previously shown, through the painful discipline of suffering. Being thus made perfect, he is now a suitable one to fill the office of a high priest, a mediator between God and men. This office, it is declared, he will fill on behalf of all men who obey him. The disobedient and wilful, who do not love the right ways of the Lord, and who have no desire to walk in them, will receive none of the benefit of his mediation; but to those who do obey him he will be "a merciful and faithful high priest; ... for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor [to assist, comfort, relieve] them that are tempted.

Ah, that was why he was first made perfect through suffering. The heavenly Father knew through what suffering, ignominy, shame and sorrow his beloved followers all through the Gospel age must pass. His omniscient eye foresaw the fagot, the torch, the rack, and the thousand refinements of cruelty with which Satanic ingenuity would fight the Church on her journey through this wilderness to the promised land. He foreknew

how the fiery darts of the wicked, even bitter words, would wound them (Psa. 64:2, 3), and therefore "It became him [Jehovah] ... to make the Captain of their salvation perfect *through sufferings*." (Heb. 2:10.) He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, so that we might know that we have a high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and so come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb. 4:15, 16.) Ah, how carefully and wisely our heavenly Father foresaw and considered the interests of all his people! Through these glimpses of his character and dealings we can see how true were our Lord's words to his disciples,—"The Father himself loveth you."

But, aside from the process of perfecting for the office of priesthood,—through suffering,—there is the *fact* of the perfection of our High Priest, to be considered for our comfort, satisfaction and consolation. He is one who, though when surrounded by sin and tempted in all points to sin, yet "knew no sin; neither was guile found in his mouth." He was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners," yet acquainted with our griefs and bearing our sorrows. Through bitter experiences he was perfected as our High Priest—to mediate for us (1), by presenting to God an acceptable sacrifice which made our salvation a legal possibility; (2), by undertaking to cleanse, purge and purify us until we also can stand approved of God and blameless—a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

The absolute perfection, both personal and official, of our great High Priest, and the fact that he was ordained of God for this office, is the strongest possible demand and incentive for the Church's obedience to him, just as the heavenly Father's perfection and office were the all-sufficient reasons to our Lord for his obedience to the Father. God has not set over us a novice, nor one actuated by selfishness, nor by any ignoble motive; but he has made us a great High Priest whose every command is wise and good and in love calculated to lead us on from grace to grace until we also, like him, shall be established, strengthened, settled.

The discipline through which he leads to this glorious end must of necessity be, in some measure at least, such as he himself experienced, a discipline of suffering. And since the Church is called, not only to perfection in righteousness, but also to share with Christ in the priestly office as members of his body, it is theirs also to follow him in the pathway of humiliation and sacrifice, even unto death. To obey him now, in this age, signifies all of this; for this is the will of God and the will of Christ, even our sanctification.—1 Thes. 4:3.

In submitting ourselves fully to this great High Priest, the Church has the fullest assurance of his love, of his perfect integrity of character and purpose, of his superior wisdom and grace, and that in all things he is actuated by the purest and loftiest principles of virtue, love and benevolence. Never once has he been swayed from the most exact line of perfection, though assailed by the fiercest temptations. Every exhibition and testimony of his character inspires the fullest confidence, so that obedience to him signifies progress toward perfection at every step of the way. And to those who follow in this way he is the author of eternal salvation. Praise God for such a High Priest!—glorious in his perfection

and glorious in his office, one touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but himself having no infirmities, no shortcomings, no sins. If he were an imperfect human being with only some superior qualifications, but liable like ourselves to err, to fail in judgment, or to be moved by selfishness or inferior considerations of policy, or who with a beam in his own eye would seek to extract the mote from ours, well might we fear to commit ourselves to his direction, and wonder why the Almighty gave us such a high priest. But our High Priest is not so. His perfection is testified by Jehovah himself, and his great love for us has been manifested in a thousand ways, chiefly in that *he gave himself for us*.

Previous to his incarnation the evidences of our Lord's loyalty to the will of God—which always was the law of righteousness—were the acts of delightful service in cooperation with God in the works of creation and in things pertaining thereto. The humbling to human conditions was a step down from that exalted service, yet cheerfully and gladly undertaken. Then followed the trials of his earthly life; and last of all came the severe test of Gethsemane and Calvary. Here was a test of his fidelity to God which would cost him all that he had. Beyond this he could hope for nothing, save by the mercy and love of God, to whose wisdom, love and power he commended his spirit. (Luke 23:46.) It was indeed a crucial test, and though at the time he evidently could not see the necessity for every feature of it (Matt. 26:39, 42, 44), he nevertheless knew that the love of God was too great to allow a needless pain to afflict his beloved Son, and therefore he trusted him where he could not at the time trace his inscrutable ways.

JUNE 8

He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins—Jas. 5:20.

When we see others walking in forbidden paths, in the way of transgressors, we are not to follow them there in order to help them out; but to show them the right path by keeping in it and calling to them. When we see some confusing themselves with doctrines and teachings of men, which we know are *fundamentally* wrong, we are not to wade through those doctrines in order to help them out; but we are to remind them that the study of any doctrine which will not square with the *foundation* is not only a misuse of consecrated time, but that all trifling with that which we know to be error is wrong and dangerous, as all violations of conscience and principle are dangerous—Z '05, 203 (R 1860).

The sinner of this passage is in general one who has backslidden, as v. 19 shows. It refers especially to the Great Company, who sinned against their consecration vows. Their course put them continually into danger of going further into willfulness and finally of landing in the Second Death (Heb. 6:4-6). It has been the privilege of the Lord's people to seek to deliver such from their danger, and thereby to cover with the robe of Christ's righteousness a multitude of the transgressions of the wayward ones—P '33, 79.

Parallel passages: Psa. 19:7; 51:13; Matt. 18:3; Luke 22:32; Acts 3:19; Jas. 5:14-19; Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5; 1 Tim. 1:19, 20; Heb. 3:12-14; 10:25; Gal. 6:1; 1 John 5:16; Rev. 7:14.

Hymns: 275, 135, 194, 28, 104, 103, 101.
Poems of Dawn, 191: *O Prodigal, Return!*
Tower Reading: Z '02, 197 (R 3033).

Questions: Have I this week sought to recover an erring brother or sister? How? Why? With what result?

O, PRODIGAL, RETURN!

"RETURN, return! Thy Father's voice is pleading,
Tho' far astray, I bid thee turn again!
Thy robe is rent, thy tender feet are bleeding,
Thy heart is faint and sick with famine pain:
Return, My child: a welcome here awaits thee:
No longer in the distant country rove;
Resist the cruel tempter that belates thee,
And keeps thee from My dwelling and My love."

Return, return! Thy Father's loving-kindness
Thou long hast scorned, and done His grace despite;

Yet in His touch is healing for thy blindness,
And He can turn thy darkness into light.
Return in all thy rags of sin's defilement;
Return with all thy want and sore distress;
Thy Father's voice bespeaks His reconcilment:
Flee to thy Savior and thy guilt confess.

Return, return! Thy substance hath been wasted—
Thou hast not aught to bring but thy poor heart;
Yet art thou longing for the bread once tasted.
And for His paths of peace, and faith's good part?
Return, for why shouldst thou delay the pardon
Thy Father's great compassion waits to grant!
Arise and go, before thy doubts shall harden
The homesick yearnings of the penitent.

Return, return! Leave thou the swine and famine
And seek again the plenty of thy home!
Why dost thou toil among the husks of mammon,
When to His rest the Father bids thee come?
Return thou to His arms, His kiss, His blessing,
Accept the robe, the sandals, and the ring,
After thy sinfulness and guilt confessing,
By Jesus found, lost treasure of the King!

Return, return! The angel-hosts bend o'er thee—
They wait to bear the tidings' joyful sound.
They have beheld the Savior dying for thee,
And will rejoice to sing, *The lost is found!*
Return, for He will heal all thy backsliding—
Will love thee freely, and will thus forgive;
Come, weary soul, rest in His love abiding,
Thou hast been dead—arise today and live!

R3033: "LOVE—MAKING A DIFFERENCE."

"Keep yourselves in the love of God ... and of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire."—Jude 21-23.

WITH OUR MINDS all unbalanced through the fall, resulting from original sin,—tho not all fallen exactly in the same direction,—it is not surprising that we frequently find ourselves and other brethren in Christ in more or less confusion respecting the application of certain principles laid down in the Word of God. For instance, we are instructed that love is the fulfilling of the divine law; and that love of the brethren is one of the evidences of our having passed from death unto life; and that if we love not our brother,

whom we have seen, it is a sure evidence that we do not truly love our Heavenly Father, whom we have not seen. (Rom. 13:10; I John 3:14; 4:20.) In their endeavor to measure up to these requirements of the divine standard, some are in danger of erring in an opposite direction—in danger of manifesting a brotherly love where it should be withheld, and that in the interest of the brother. Let us note the different kinds, or degrees of love which the Heavenly Father exercises and manifests.

First, we have the love for the world. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" to die for us. (John 3:16.) Second, in a much higher and special sense, "The Father himself loveth you"—you who have accepted Jesus Christ as your Redeemer, and who, in his name and strength and merit have consecrated yourselves to him—you are seeking now to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. (John 16:27.) But that this special love of God can be lost in part, or eventually wholly, is clearly set forth by the Apostle's statement, "Keep yourselves in the love of God". (Jude 21.) If any, after having tasted of the good Word of God, the powers of the world to come, and being made partakers of the holy spirit, etc., shall walk after the flesh and not after the spirit, we may be sure that such will proportionately lose the love of God;—and, if he persist in this course, as a result will ultimately be "none of his." For, instead of loving such, who through their knowledge and attainments and disobedient course have become wicked, the Lord declares that he is "angry with the wicked," and that "all the wicked will he destroy."—Psa. 7:11; 145:20; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29.

As sons of the Highest, who are seeking to be like unto our Father in heaven, and like unto the copy which he has set before us in his dear Son, our Lord, we are to have for the world in general that broad sympathetic pity and mercy-love which would delight in doing any and everything possible to be done for their uplifting, in accord with the divine program, in the divine time and order. Like our Father and our Elder Brother, we are to love the brethren "with a pure heart, *fervently*"—with sincerity. This love for the brethren is nothing like the love for the world. It is not the pity-love, nor mere generosity. It is far more; it is brotherly love. All of the children of God are brethren, as new creatures; all these brethren have hopes, ambitions, interests and promises linked together in the Lord Jesus and in the heavenly Kingdom in which they hope to share. All these brethren are joint-heirs, fellow-heirs one with the other and with the Lord. They are partners; their interests are mutual and co-ordinating.

Additionally, they have a special mutual sympathy of compassion; for while, as new creatures, they are rich in divine favor and promises, they all have serious weaknesses, according to the flesh—draw-backs; altho the Lord is not reckoning with them according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, the intention, the heart desires, nevertheless, they each and all have besetments arising from these weaknesses and imperfections of the earthly tabernacle, which cause them to "groan," and to sympathize one with the other in their groanings. As the Apostle says, "We which have the first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our *body*"—the complete Church. Thus the sons of God have a further mutual sympathy and love and care for each other, an interest in each other, helpfulness toward each other, which is entirely beyond and above and outside of any feelings which could possibly be

appreciated by the world or exercised toward it;—because the world has no such conflict between the old nature and the new; no such covenant of sacrifice; no such acceptance in the Beloved; no such union of heart and purpose and aim and spirit. Oh, yes! the exhortation to love as brethren, fervently, is one which appeals to us specially.

But now we come to another point. Our love for the brethren cannot be exactly of the same measure and exactly of the same intensity or fervency toward all. There is something which gauges or regulates it. What is it? It is that we love God and the glorious principles of righteousness, which are represented in his character; and we love our Lord Jesus from the same standpoint, as being the very exemplifications of all that is good, noble, true, just, generous, loving; and our love for the brethren must, of necessity, be in proportion as we find the brethren to be copies of our Lord. We do not mean copies in the flesh, but viewed from the Lord's standpoint; copies in spirit, copies in heart, copies in motive, copies in intention, copies in loving zeal for righteousness, truth, etc. Thus, as we grow in the love of God and in the love of Christ and in the love of the principles which they represent, we grow also in love toward all men and toward the brethren, but particularly toward those who are growing most in likeness to the Lord. This is not partiality; this is not doing to others different from what we should wish them to do to us. This is following the Lord Jesus' example; for we find that amongst his apostles, even, all of whom were chosen, there were three specially beloved; and of those three one is specially noted as "that disciple whom Jesus loved." He was specially loved, because he was specially lovable; and so with us and the brethren. We should love them all warmly, fervently, but of necessity with varying degrees of fervor, and the fervor should increase with each in proportion as we note his growth in heart-likeness to our Lord.

And if this be so, what shall we say of those who, after having come to a knowledge of the truth, and after having tasted and appreciated its goodness, fall away into sin?—of those who cease to walk after the spirit, and begin to walk after the flesh? Can our love for them burn with the same fervency as before? By no means; it should not do so. As the Apostle says in our text, we should make a *difference*. In doing so we are following the example of our Heavenly Father; for we have just noted that only by walking after the spirit can any of us keep ourselves in the love of God. Only by following the same course, therefore, should any be able to keep himself in the love of the brethren. Any deflection should bring corresponding loss of brotherly love and fellowship.

This making of a difference is really essential to the purity and progress of the Church. If we make no difference between those brethren who walk after the spirit and those who walk disorderly, or after the flesh, we are taking away the very premium and blessing which the Lord intended should go to those who walk after the spirit; and we are giving a premium, which the Lord did not intend should be given, to those who walk contrary to his Word, after the flesh. It is as much our duty to withdraw fellowship from those who are unworthy of it as it is our duty to grant fellowship, and that with fervency, to those whom we see to be walking in the footsteps of Jesus. We are not to think that it is love that is prompting us to take the wrong course of encouraging wrong-doers,—it is not

love, but ignorance; and the remedy for ignorance is to learn of the Lord, from his Word and from his example.

The Apostle Paul calls our attention to our duty respecting the brethren, and how we should conduct ourselves toward them under varying circumstances, saying that faithful brethren should be esteemed very highly in love for their works' sake; that other brethren who are unruly should be warned; that those who are feeble in their mental comprehension of the truth should be strengthened; that those who are weak should be helped, supported; and that we should exercise patience toward all.—I Thess. 5:12-14.

We are at present specially referring to the proper attitude to be observed toward unruly brethren—they are not to be treated as those who are esteemed very highly in love for their works; otherwise they would be encouraged in being unruly. On the contrary they are to be warned, cautioned,—in love, truly, and with patience, but not with marks of the same love and esteem as tho they were walking orderly in the footsteps of Jesus and in harmony with the directions of his Word. The marks and evidences of our love and esteem must be sincere; and must be in proportion as we see in the brethren evidences of the right desires of heart,—to walk after the spirit of the truth. The Apostle Paul intimates how our disapproval ought to be shown, in cases which seem, in our judgment, to be of sufficient importance to demand a manifestation of disapproval.

Evidently the Apostle did not mean that the brethren should be watching each other for an occasion of fault-finding in every word and every act; but that, on the contrary, they should be so full of love one for the other that trivial matters would be entirely passed over, as merely of the weakness of the flesh, and not at all of intention, of the heart. The matters to be considered worthy of manifestations of disapproval and warning are, rather, those which are so open and manifest on the surface as to leave no room to question the fact that they are displeasing to the Lord, and injurious in their influence upon the brother or upon the household of faith. For instance, if the brother had been seen under the influence of liquor; if he had been heard to utter vile or otherwise improper language; if it were a matter of general knowledge that he was living in sin; these would be such grounds as we believe the Apostle had in mind. But evidently the Apostle had no intention of cultivating a spirit of fault-finding and judging one another as respects the heart and private affairs,—use of time or money, etc. These belong to our individual stewardship and none should endeavor to interfere with the proper liberties of conscience and conduct which the Lord has granted to each. The Apostle is very stringent in his condemnation of such judging of one another, which so often leads to roots of bitterness, misunderstanding, disfellowship, etc., and which, as the old leaven, should be purged out of our hearts and lives.—Rom. 14:10, 13.

But now, for those who "obey not our word," the apostolic Scriptural directions in respect to their conduct, etc., is "note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." Nevertheless, knowing the tendency of the fallen mind to go from one extreme to another, either of too great leniency or of too great severity, the apostle continues, "Yet count him not an enemy, but admonish as a brother." (2 Thess. 3:13-15.) To admonish as a brother does not mean to denounce roundly and severely; it means to

admonish in a spirit of love, gentleness, meekness, patience, and with a sincere desire to help the brother to see the fault which we are certain exists, and which we are sure is not evil surmising on our part.

The Apostle John shows us that this matter of distinguishing as between brethren that are to be esteemed and brethren that are to be warned, appertains not merely to conduct but also to doctrinal matters. Yet we may be sure that he does not mean that we are to disfellowship a brother merely because of some differences of view on non-essential questions. We may be sure that he does mean his words to apply strictly and only to the fundamentals of the doctrine of Christ: for instance, faith in God; faith in Jesus as our Redeemer; faith in the promises of the divine Word. These will be marks of a "brother," if supported by Christian conduct, walking after the spirit of the truth;—even tho the brother might have other views which would differ from ours in respect to certain features of the plan of God not so clearly and specifically set forth in the Scriptures. But for those whom we recognize as being doctrinally astray from the foundation principles of Christ, the Apostle intimates that very drastic measures are appropriate;—not persecutions, nor railing; not bitter and acrimonious disputes; not hatred, either open or secret; but a proper showing of our disfellowship with the false doctrines held and taught by them; a proper protection, so that our influence shall not be in any manner or degree used to uphold his denial of the fundamentals of the Gospel. This drastic course is outlined by the Apostle in these words: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine [confessing Christ to have come into the world, in the flesh, to redeem our race, etc.] receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds."—2 John 10, 11.

But, as our text intimates, we are to use discretion, judgment,— "and of some have compassion, making a difference." Some we may recognize as being merely entrapped of the Adversary, either in sin or in false doctrine, as the case may be, and not wilfully, intelligently, of their own volition. Toward such, still maintaining an attitude of firmness, we are nevertheless to express freely our trust that they are only temporarily wrong; and to seek to restore them, either doctrinally or in respect to their perverse moral course, to the position of fellowship with the Lord and with all the brethren who are in fellowship with him. Others we are to "save with fear, pulling them out of the fire." We may be obliged to speak very plainly to them; we may be obliged to tear open and expose before their eyes the sores of their own immoral course, showing them, as the case may be, the grossness of the sin or the grossness of the error in which they are involved; and doing so perhaps in strong language, if we realize that nothing short of this has availed to arouse them from their lethargy. In pulling them out of sin we are "pulling them out of the fire"—out of the Second Death—as the Apostle James says, speaking of this same class: "Let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death"—a brother who is a sinner, a brother, he explains, who has "erred from the truth."—James 5:19, 20.

Finally, we remark that the dealing of the brethren with the disorderly is not to be in the nature of a *punishment*; for it is not with us to punish. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Our warnings or reproofs or withdrawals of fellowship, are to be

merely in the nature of correctives, with a view, as the Apostle says, to the restoring of such an one. "Ye that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted";—if not in the same manner, possibly in some other manner, in which you are weaker.—Gal. 6:1.

As to what would be a sufficiency of *evidence* of repentance and reformation, each will require great wisdom and grace to determine. The heart in which brotherly love dwells richly, the heart which loves righteousness and hates iniquity, the heart which realizes its own imperfections, and that it is acceptable only through the Beloved and the New Covenant—that heart will rejoice at the first evidences of contrition and repentance on the part of the disorderly brother. If very full of love, his heart may go out to him almost too quickly; he may need to restrain himself; especially if it be a second or a third offense of the kind, or the circumstances otherwise very grievous. It will be apparently his duty to look for works in harmony with the repentance, and to wait to see some demonstration, in the nature of restitution for wrong done, or such an open and radical change of conduct as will give evidence that the heart has returned to its loyalty to God, to the truth, and to righteousness.

The erring brother, truly repentant, will not be averse to giving such evidences, nor consider it unreasonable that his professed reformation shall be thus attested. Indeed, we may expect that such will feel so humbled in respect to his attitude, and the disgrace which he may have brought upon the cause, that he will feel disposed of himself, either to remain absent for a while from the company of the brethren, in penitence, or, if acceptable to their company, he will feel disposed to take a back seat—a very humble position amongst the brethren. And if the repentant offender had occupied the position of a leader in the company, humility on his part, no less than discretion on the part of the brethren, would seem to indicate that he should not be restored to any official or leading position in the congregation for a considerable time,—until ample evidence had been given of the sincerity of his reformation.

But we close as we began, by urging that facts, evil deeds or evil doctrines, and not evil surmisings, knowledge, and not rumors, are the bases of Scriptural disfellowship. Hence the necessity for the observance of the Lord's rule. (Matt. 18:15.) While we are not to close our eyes to wrong in a brother, love will refuse to keep picking to find fault where none is openly apparent. And if fault is apparently discovered it is not to be "*discussed* among the brethren," but as the Lord directs should be taken direct to the offender by the discoverer and not so much as mentioned to others unless offender refuse to hear;—refuses to correct the fault. Oh, how much trouble would be saved, how many mistakes and heart-aches avoided if this rule were strictly followed!

JUNE 9

In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world—John 16:33.

There was no reward of earthly prosperity for the Lord's faithfulness, but the reverse—privation and persecution—was realized, even unto death. He was a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"; the reproaches of them that reproached God fell upon Him; though He was rich, for our sakes He became poor; so poor that He said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." ... And the servant is not above his Master: if they have persecuted Him they will persecute us also; and the reproaches of them that reproached Him will also fall upon us. The only present reward for which the followers of Christ may look is the heartfelt manifestation of the Lord's love and approval—Z '95, 206 (R 4072).

Among the tribulations that the Lord's people must endure may be enumerated the disadvantages of the present evil conditions, the continued opposition of the Adversary, the persecution of the world and the opposition of the flesh, particularly amid exhaustion, sickness and sorrow. The Lord gives us compensating spiritual blessings as an offset to these disadvantages, enabling us to rejoice amid present inequalities, and to hope for victory because of our Lord's victory over the world—P '32, 62.

Parallel passages: John 15:19-25; 16:2, 3; Acts 14:22; Rom. 5:3-5; 2 Tim. 3:12; Heb. 10:32-34; 12:5-13; Rev. 3:19; John 14:1, 27; Rom. 8:35-37; Gal. 6:14; 1 John 4:4; 5:4.

Hymns: 328, 38, 57, 93, 179, 222, 305.

Poems of Dawn, 189: "*Be of Good Cheer.*"

Tower Reading: Z '14, 291 (R 5544).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences relating to this text? How were they borne? What did they effect in me?

"BE OF GOOD CHEER!"

MATT. 14:27.

WHEN tempest-tossed on life's wild sea,
And fair skies disappear,
Above the storm He calls to thee,
" 'Tis I, be of good cheer!"

Though Satan's darts be fiercely hurled,
Beloved, help is near,
Trust Him who overcame the world,
And be thou of good cheer.

In tribulation's darkest hour,
Yield not to doubt or fear,
But calmly rest in His all-power,
Who saith, "Be of good cheer."

Press on, beloved, in the race,
The goal is very near,
Faint not, thou soon shalt see His face,—
Then, be thou of good cheer!

R5544: REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you."—Matthew 5:11, 12.

THESE words of our Lord are addressed to His disciples—not merely His Apostles, who were chosen to be His special messengers, but all His followers throughout this Age. A disciple is a pupil—one who is being taught by another. All who are Jesus' disciples are to take the message of our text to themselves. "Blessed are ye," signifies that *persecution* is a favor from God. Consider it as a favor from the Father when men shall revile you—not because of the reviling, but because they shall say these things of you *falsely*, for Christ's sake.

No one would choose naturally to be persecuted or to have evil spoken against him. The Scriptures say that a good name is more to be esteemed than great riches. But if it is for Christ's sake that we suffer, we may know that the Lord will recompense us. In the Lord's arrangement there is to be a time of "evening up" for all we suffer here. Thus we lay up treasure in Heaven. All that we suffer now is storing up for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if borne for Him.

From this standpoint we should really desire persecution. We are not to strive for it, not to endeavor to bring it upon ourselves unnecessarily; but realizing that if we lack persecution we lack one of the evidences of being true disciples of the Lord, we rejoice when in the providence of God it is our portion. Some, it is true, might be reviled for something evil or unwise that they had done. There would be no blessing in such an experience. The blessing comes when the accusation against us is false and is for the Truth's sake.

"All who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution." Hence we should investigate our lives to see whether we have this evidence that we are living godly. The Lord is the "True Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We are the lesser lights. In letting our lights shine faithfully, we shall bring upon ourselves persecution. Let us not imagine that escape from persecution in our own case is the result

of superior wisdom or tact on our part. "*All* who will live godly shall suffer persecution," is the promise, the assurance of Scripture. We should not court it, but should desire this evidence of our faithfulness, and should wish to be one of the "blessed" ones, of whom the Master speaks in our text. Then let us ask ourselves, Do I have persecution for Christ's sake? We should make a prayerful examination of our hearts to see whether we are fully loyal to God, to see whether we are letting our light shine out properly. If we lack this proof of sonship, we should inquire, What is the reason?

PERSECUTION A SURE RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS

A sister once said to the Editor, "I have no persecution, no opposition. Everything seems to be going favorably with me." She seemed troubled. We asked the sister to study her own heart to see whether or not she was as faithful as she knew how to be. Upon her reply we said, "Probably you take your persecutions with such grace that you are happy under them." The sister replied that she *would* be happy if she thought that was the case. Then we told her that the only other explanation we could think of was that the Lord was allowing her time to gain strength in order that she might bear what would come to her later. We told her to pray about it. A year or two after we again saw the sister. We recalled the circumstance, and asked her if she had yet had any persecution. She answered, "Oh, yes. I have had plenty of persecution, but I am happy and rejoicing in it!"

It is impossible to rejoice in persecution until we get the right focus on the subject. We cannot do this of ourselves, and need, therefore, to take the matter to the Lord and confer with Him. After we have had "a little talk with Jesus," our faith takes hold on Him. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to be exceeding glad and joyful in persecution and affliction for Christ. The Apostle Peter also declares, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as ... an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters; yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him glorify God on this behalf."—1 Peter 4:14, 15.

The Master was not surprised at the attitude of the chief priests and religious leaders of His day. He knew from the beginning that he would have their opposition and hostility, and He warned His disciples not to expect otherwise. As to the reason why there should be persecution against the Lord and those who faithfully follow in His footsteps, He himself tells us, saying, "The darkness hateth the light." Darkness stands for Satan, for sin, for everything contrary to righteousness. God is represented as the great light, "and in Him is no darkness at all." Light is healing, beneficial, health-giving.

They who are of the darkness hate those who are of the light, because the light reproves the darkness, and the darkness does not like to be reproved. Wherever righteousness is, it is a rebuke to that which is sinful, dark. Our Lord stood for the light. He represented the Truth, the Heavenly Father. And those who were in darkness were in opposition to Him in proportion to their darkness—some of these knowingly, others in more or less of ignorance. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all them

which believe not." Satan has been skilful in putting darkness for light and light for darkness.

IN GOOD CONSCIENCE MANY HAVE OPPOSED LIGHT

The fact that many of the world are in opposition to God and righteousness is not because as a rule they are evil of heart, but because Satan has succeeded in making the darkness seem desirable and the light undesirable. It was thus in the religious systems of Jesus' day, and we believe that it is the same in the religious systems of today. Saul of Tarsus was for a time one of those blinded by Satan. In persecuting the followers of Jesus he verily believed that he was doing God service. But when he was apprehended by the Lord and the light was revealed to him, he proved himself loyal to God.

And so we trust it is with some who today oppose the light and truth now being proclaimed. They are deluded; but if their hearts are fully loyal to the Lord, if they are true to their consecration vows, the Truth will be revealed to them before "the door is shut"; for "ye, brethren, are not in darkness; ye are the children of light." "The wise shall understand." Soon the knowledge of the Truth will come to the "foolish virgins," and they will wash their soiled robes in the blood of Christ—during the great tribulation shortly to come to the whole world. And soon, too, the light of the knowledge of God is to fill the whole earth. But so long as Satan is "the Prince of this world," and there are those in the world who have his spirit, and those who are followers of the Lord and have His spirit, just so long must there be conflict.

The opposition of the darkness to the light may be manifested in different ways. In the days of our Lord and the Apostles there were persecutions of Christians by Jews. Later, during the long centuries in which the Word of God was neglected and the Truth was obscured by gross errors, there were persecutions of Protestants by Catholics and of Catholics by Protestants and of Jews by both—all because of failure to study the Word of God and to follow its teachings. But very few in these dark times had access to the Word.

Some of the opposition to our Lord was open, and some of it was hidden. Many of the Apostles, like their Master, suffered death by violence; and many of the faithful down through the Gospel Age have suffered violent deaths. At the present time, outward persecution is not sanctioned by law, nor is it tolerated to any great extent.

PRESENT METHODS OF PERSECUTION

Persecutors have all along used the weapon of reviling, slander, saying all manner of evil falsely against those who are God's true people. As the Bible declares, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Today slanderous charges are made and villainous, opprobrious expressions indulged in by opponents of the Truth, and this is the chief weapon, because the defamers have not the power at present to use open, personal violence. Public sentiment and law would not permit it. But the persecution is of the same brand, the same spirit—merely governed by circumstances and conditions. Those who would say all manner of evil falsely, knowing the charges are false, are the very kind who

would crucify or burn at the stake, had they the power. Not being permitted to use personal violence by the present laws and the general sentiment, these are forced to content themselves with bringing all sorts of false charges—seeking to assassinate the reputation and destroy the influence of those who are proclaiming the Truth, the Word of God.

The right attitude of the persecuted ones is indicated in our text. Instead of feeling downcast and discouraged by these experiences, and thinking them strange, evidences that God is against us, we should conclude the very reverse. We should say to ourselves, "This is the same kind of experience that the Lord had, and that His people of the past have had." So, "Marvel not if the world [especially the religious world—the world that hated Him] hate you. Ye know that it hated Me before it hated you," forewarned our Master. So far from being discouraged, we are to rejoice—not that any could rejoice in the persecution for its own sake, for persecution is grievous; but we are to rejoice because "great is your reward in Heaven." What we do not get here of prosperity, we shall get *there*—in the Kingdom.

The Socialists say that they intend to have some of the good things *now!* They have not sufficient faith in the future blessings to be willing to wait. But the class addressed in our text are those who have faith in God and His promises, those who are associated with Christ, who understand that the experiences of this time are working out for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and they are content to await God's time. These are rejoicing in their hearts, realizing that they are enduring for righteousness' sake, that they are on the side of God, the side of right, the side of Truth, and realizing that these afflictions are only momentary, as it were; for the present life is but a mere span compared with the eternal life, the glorious immortality, so near at hand, in which we shall receive the blessings promised—joy forever with the Lord.

"FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED"

The Master gave all His followers fair warning that they were not to expect the world to appreciate their attitude. One might well reason that if one gave up sin and adopted a righteous course, the world would esteem him; that all would see the worthiness of his character and would show him special deference. But we must not expect this under the present reign of Sin. It would be a very broad way into the Kingdom, and a great many then might take this course for the favor of man, for the prosperity which it would bring them. The Lord could never demonstrate our fitness for the Kingdom honors under such conditions.

If our great Master was called Beelzebub, we cannot expect that the members of His Household will be treated any better. If He who was perfect was held up to scorn as the Prince of Devils, we may expect similar treatment to be meted out to His followers by those whom the Adversary has blinded; for we are less able to uphold the standard of righteousness than was He. When His enemies attempted to make His character appear vile in the sight of others, He did not retaliate. Jesus did on proper occasions point out the wrong-doing, the wrong character, of those who were the religious leaders and teachers;

but He did not do this in a retaliatory sense. On various occasions He accused them of being untrue, unholy, hypocritical; but He said nothing with a view to injuring them, but with the desire to show them their improper condition of heart, that they might profit by His instruction. He endeavored to help others to see the real condition of these blind leaders of the blind, in order to prevent them from falling into the ditch toward which their leaders were hastening.

THE MASTER'S CRUCIAL TEST

When the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law tried to trump up charges against the Master and to put evil constructions upon what He said, He was patient under all these trying conditions. He submitted to the treatment. It might be asked, Why did God permit His Holy Son to suffer such revilings? Why did He not smite down those who did so wickedly? The answer is that the Father wished to demonstrate the kind of character that was pleasing to Him, and He wished to test the loyalty of Jesus Himself. Would He be submissive and obedient or would He resent these affronts? Would He say, "I will have none of this! I did not come into the world to bear such indignities"? His painful experiences were thus tests of His loyalty to the Father.

Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that He should submit Himself, even unto death, and He had agreed to do this. Now the crucial test was: Would He continue loyal to the Father and carry out His purposes? If so, He would be worthy to be the Messiah, worthy to be the Divine Son of God throughout eternity. Our Lord's experiences had all been foretold in prophecy. In order to fulfil these prophecies it must be that He receive revilings, and He must accept them properly. The Apostle Peter shows that in this He was a worthy Example to all of His followers. As He who was holy, harmless, undefiled, did not seek to have the Father bring upon the revilers some punishment for their misdoings, so this is an example for us; so we should walk in His steps.

SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION STILL HERE

We realize that in our case there is none righteous, not one who is perfect. So we see that our enemies might have some cause to revile us. They might see some of our imperfections and have something that they could pick at and exaggerate. The Apostle Peter says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." As they said all manner of evil against our Lord falsely, we may be sure that they will say all manner of evil falsely against us. And as He bore it patiently, so are we to take patiently everything that comes to us, and to recognize that nothing can possibly happen to us except what the Father will foreknow and permit for our good and for His glory. Our Master left us a portion of His cup that the Father poured for Him. After the cup has all been drained, then will come the glory and the honor—but not now.

We might naturally expect under the changed conditions of the present day, that those who are loyal to God and His Truth would not be maltreated and persecuted as in Jesus' day. But we believe there is another way of viewing the matter. We believe that Jesus, if

He were here in the flesh today, would be persecuted and maligned by the worldly-minded, especially in the nominal Church systems. Now, instead of crucifying Him literally, or roasting Him at the stake, they would "roast" Him before the public—a more refined form of persecution—for the spirit of persecution is still here.

In proportion as the followers of Jesus are faithful to the teachings of the Master, in that same proportion they will be out of harmony with everything opposed to the spirit of Christ, and in that same proportion they will be misrepresented and persecuted. In Jesus' day there were plenty of people who did reverence to the Doctors of the Law, who made broad their phylacteries and were very exact as to the letter of the Law, the paying of tithes, etc. Jesus did not seek honor and high position. But He appealed to the people to turn from sin, to walk in His steps, to stand for the Truth as against all unrighteousness and untruth. This appeal touched no responsive chord in the hearts of the worldly-minded.

For this reason, we say that the world has not changed, that the world is still in opposition to the Word and its spirit—particularly the religious world. It is still true, however, as in the days of our Lord in the flesh, that the common people are inclined to hear the Gospel gladly, if not blinded by the religious leaders. But today, as in Jesus' time, many are influenced by the false representations of those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual shepherds. If then the world should come to be in sympathy with us as a people, and should speak well of us, and we should become popular, we should come under the condemnation expressed in the Master's words, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you; for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

THINK IT NOT STRANGE

If, on the contrary, we find that in spite of our best endeavors we are beset by opposition, and are viewed with suspicion, if unworthy constructions are placed upon our unselfish efforts to do good and to carry to others the glorious light which has so blessed our own hearts, let us not be surprised or feel aggrieved; for undoubtedly it is for the same reason that Jesus was opposed.

The spirit of light is the spirit of Christ. The spirit of darkness is of the world. All who have sympathy for that which is evil, or have been so blinded that light appears as darkness, will oppose the light. There has been so much of selfishness in the world, and the people have been so often taken advantage of and duped, that we cannot wonder that they are slow to believe that there are any who can be actuated solely by the motive of blessing their fellows.

It will be to the interest of some to promote priestcraft, and they will, therefore, seek to break down whatever is inimical to their interests. They say, "You are opposing us." We reply that we are only holding up the light. But they feel that the light that is reaching the people is undermining their influence. We believe that this is the secret of much of the strong opposition to the Truth that is prevailing in some quarters. There is a large number, we believe, who in many respects are good men, but who are fighting the light.

We may suppose that they do not realize what they are doing—that unwittingly they are holding on to the ignorance of error, in bondage to Sin and Satan. For this reason they are in antagonism to those who are lifting the veil from before the Lord's people and showing them the character of God, that He is Love. Hence the conflict which is going on.

Another phase of opposition is in respect to financial matters. When we claim that what is given to the Lord should not be obtained by cajoling the people, should not be pulled out of them, worked out of them, extorted from them, but that whatever is given should be a free will, voluntary offering, we are running counter to the custom of centuries. As one Baptist minister said to two of our brethren, "Think of Pastor Russell's advertising 'Seats free and no collections!' Where would *we* be if we did not have collections, or if the people got the thought that it is not the proper thing to pass the collection baskets?"

THE REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE SOON TO VANISH

As our Master was hated *without a cause*, so let this be our experience, as far as possible. Let us see to it that the hatred, the malice, the envy and spirit of murder which is heaped upon us is entirely undeserved. Let it be our earnest endeavor that our lives, as fully as we are able, shall reflect the light of the Truth, shall be as noble and upright as possible in all things; that our words and actions shall glorify the Lord whom we serve, and be eloquent of our love for all mankind, especially for the Household of Faith, whether enlightened by Present Truth as yet or not.

In a very little while, we believe, we shall be glorified with our Lord, if faithful. Then a new Dispensation will be inaugurated; and those who hate us now, chiefly because blinded and misled by the Adversary, will bow their hearts before us as the Anointed of the Lord, and we shall have the blessed privilege of uplifting them, of enlightening and forgiving them, of helping them to attain the perfect image and likeness of our God.

HOW FAR ARE OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED?

The question might arise with some, To what extent does God supervise the experiences of His children? The Master said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" Then how would it be with our cup? Is God not also our Father? Are not we members of Christ? Who, then, but the Father pours our cup? But we know that God is not a participator in any evil thing: how, then, has He anything to do with the evils that come to His people?

We answer, There are all manner of evil forces and influences surrounding us. These evil influences are of Satan and the fallen angels. "Our Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and the fallen angels also go about seeking how they may assault the children of the Lord. But they can have *no power whatever* against us except as the Father shall permit it. He will permit no evil influence to touch us to our injury as New Creatures, if we keep close to Him. And He will prevent

harm or injury to our persons, unless he sees it will outwork good to us, if we are rightly exercised by it.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR OUR GOOD

We have also the opposition of the world. But Satan, the Prince of this world, succeeds in blinding the minds of men, putting error for Truth, and darkness for light, in order to make the way of righteousness and obedience to God appear foolish and undesirable and extreme. Those who have more or less of the spirit of the world bring against the Lord's children in a perfectly natural way, aside from the direct influence of the Evil One and his cohorts, a certain amount of opposition. For instance, our Lord, as the time of His death drew near, was speaking to the Apostles about the great climax of His experiences—that He would go up to Jerusalem, that men would crucify Him, etc. Then Peter said, Lord, Lord, do not allow your mind to run in this channel! You have come to earth to be the great King! Do not let the thought get into your mind that you are to be crucified! And the Lord turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind Me, adversary!" He was the Lord's adversary for the time.

So the world often become adversaries of the children of God in their zeal for what they think the more honorable and advantageous course for us. They urge, Do not take such an extreme view of things, and you will get along better. This is opposition to our consecration vow; and when we resist their well-meant efforts, they seek to thwart us and to bring us back to their views and ideas. The ideal of the world for us as Christians would be, Do good, and work for social uplift, for civic reform; build hospitals, establish orphanages, etc.; but do not spend so much time studying that old Bible, or they will call you an extremist or a heretic. So the world tries sympathetically to influence us. And our Father permits these influences to be brought to bear upon us for our proving. We may be sure that the Lord so supervises our experiences that nothing can come to us in any way whatsoever but what will work for our spiritual good so long as we keep ourselves in His love—so long as we wholly abide in Him. And death itself is powerless to touch us until God's time for us shall have come.

Our flesh is our constant, ever-present adversary. It tries to say, No, no! Do not carry this thing so far! Our flesh is inclined to be in harmony with the world. But our New Creature replies, Jesus walked the way of sacrifice and suffering—and St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John. Then the flesh suggests that *they* were *special* persons. But we know that the Bible teaches us that the same course is to be followed by all of the Lord's faithful people, and that *all* these will receive persecution.—2 Timothy 3:12.

All will not be crucified, nor will all be thrust in a caldron of boiling oil or be sawn asunder or beheaded. We shall probably not have any of these experiences; but we *must suffer*. So we bid our flesh be silent, and we rejoice in the experiences that we do have; for "if we suffer [with Him], we shall reign with Him." (2 Timothy 2:12.) Of course we rejoice! And the *world* says that we are going *insane!*

THE PRECIOUS PROMISES OUR STRENGTH

We are to remember, dear brethren—and this is to be a parting thought with us—that nothing can by any means harm us, aside from our Father's will. We are promised that not one hair of our heads shall be hurt—figuratively. And we have the guarantee from the Lord that "all things shall work together for good to those that love God," who put *their trust* in Him. Whatever would not be a blessing to us will not be permitted. Our trials and tribulations, rightly received, are to work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

As we look back, we can see that all who have walked in the narrow way have received persecution. Whoever has been in accord with God has been out of accord with the course of this world. There were the Baptists, and then the Methodists, who in the early days had persecution because they had more light than others. The Presbyterians also for a time, because they had greater light than others, received persecution.

THE NIGHT ALMOST OVER

And we must expect the same today. Persecution will come to those who have the courage of their convictions. The Lord tells us that the anointing that we have received of Him is for the very purpose that we may show forth His praises. (1 Peter 2:9.) We must examine ourselves to see if to any extent we have kept our light under a bushel. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews, St. Paul recounts the sufferings of the Prophets and worthies of old. Some of them were stoned to death, some sawn asunder; they were killed and persecuted in a variety of ways. These godly men endured much for righteousness' sake. "And *all* who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer* persecution."

But the night is almost over. Soon the Lord will rise up. He will stretch forth His hands—His Power—and His children shall be delivered. Soon will come the glorious Reign of Messiah. Then all who will live righteously shall have peace. Altogether, dear friends, our text is very precious—one that should encourage our hearts and help to guide us on our way, and bring us comfort and rejoicing in these closing days of our pilgrimage.

"Our God is love; He loves to hear our voices;
In Christ we share the riches of His grace;
He loves to fold His arms of comfort round us,
And let us nestle in the children's place.

"He loves to answer prayer, though not it may be
In just the way that we should think the best;
But in His own prospective, perfect judgment
He gives the blessings and withholds the rest."

JUNE 10

Lord, teach us to pray—Luke 11:1.

In brief, our prayers, to be acceptable to God, must express confident faith, loving esteem and reverence, full sympathy with the Divine Plan and submission to the Divine will, childlike dependence upon God, acknowledgment of sins and shortcomings and desire for forgiveness, with humble craving for the Divine guidance and protection. These may not always all be expressed in words, but such must at least be the attitude of the soul.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed"—Z '95, 213 (R 1864).

We need the Lord's instructions in order properly to pray. We would not know for what to ask, why to ask, nor how to ask without His instructions. How necessary then, that we come to Him, with humble petitions that He teach us how to pray. Well for us that we prove as apt pupils as He is an apt Teacher of prayer. He will manifest to us its nature, elements, incentives, objects, conditions, cultivation, repression, expression and results—P '26, 76.

Parallel passages: Psa. 5:1-3; 42:8; 109:4; 116:2; Dan. 6:10; Matt. 6:5-15; Luke 2:37; 18:1-13; Acts 6:4; 10:2, 9; Rom. 1:9; 12:12; Eph. 1:15, 16; Col. 1:9; 1 Thes. 3:10; 5:17; 1 Tim. 5:5; 2 Tim. 1:3.

Hymns: 323, 324, 35, 239, 1, 273, 56.

Poems of Dawn, 116: *Communion With Our Father*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 19 (R 5832).

Questions: Have I learned this week better to pray? What helped or hindered? What were the results?

COMMUNION WITH OUR FATHER

OFT when alone in prayer I kneel
Before my Father's throne;
I cannot tell Him all I feel,
Nor make my wishes known.

With heart subdued, and head bowed low,
I lean upon His breast,
And while the tears unbidden flow,
My love for Him confess.

I have no boon to ask of Him,
Save that His will be done,

To make me holy, pure within—
An image of His Son.

But as He smiles and draws me near—
His Spirit from above
Floods all my soul with peace so dear,
And fills my heart with love.

Though from my gaze He hides His face,
My soul, from self apart,
Hath found its happy resting place
Close to His loving heart.

R5832: "LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY"

"Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks."—1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18.

IN THE beginning, when Adam was in harmony with God, he was in the condition represented in the Scriptures as covenant relationship with God. The Word declares that Adam broke this holy Covenant. (Hosea 6:7, margin.) He became a sinner; and his children, born later, were sinners with him, through heredity. Instead of being born in covenant relationship with God, the children of Adam were born aliens. But God has had dealings with a few who exercised special faith and a desire to come into harmony with Him. Abel, the second son of Adam, was one of these. He approached God with an animal sacrifice and was accepted. Enoch and Noah also came into a condition of fellowship with the Lord by faith, even though they were still legally under the condemnation passed upon Adam, the Ransom-price not yet having been given.

Later on, God entered into covenant relationship with Abraham, because of his great faith and obedience; and afterwards with his son Isaac; then with his grandson Jacob. Still later, God entered into relationship with the seed of Jacob, under the Law Covenant at Sinai. The Lord had changed the name of Jacob to Israel—"a prince with God" (Genesis 32:24-30); and the whole nation of Israel, the descendants of Jacob, were received as God's people, and were treated as if without sin. They had the privilege of going to Him in prayer. But the sins of the Jewish nation were only typically blotted out from year to year. The blood of bulls and goats could never really take away sin, and the Jews held only the relationship of servants to God.

The Gentiles were altogether without God. They had no privilege of prayer. We come down to the beginning of the Gospel Age and to the case of Cornelius. We read that he was a just man, who gave much alms to the people and prayed always. But his prayers could not be accepted, even after Jesus died. The death of Jesus did not bring Cornelius into covenant relationship with God. But when the seventy symbolic weeks of Jewish favor had been fulfilled, the due time had come for the Gospel to go to the Gentiles. God was then ready to receive him, and He sent an angel to him, who gave him this message

from the Lord: "Cornelius, thy prayers and thine alms have come up for a memorial before God." The prayers and the alms of Cornelius had risen up as an incense before the Lord.

Had God not accepted these offerings before? No. They had been noted of God, but had not been received. God's way of receiving—except in a limited or typical way previous to the Gospel Age—is by certain definite means which He has appointed—through an Advocate in this Age, and through a Mediator in the next. "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me," says Jesus. Even when the due time had arrived, Cornelius could not come until God sent him word how to proceed.

KNOWLEDGE OF TRUTH NECESSARY

The angel of the Lord said to Cornelius: "Send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter, who shall tell thee *words* whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." (Acts 11:13, 14.) Those *words* were necessary to his saving—to the bringing of him into covenant relationship with God. Cornelius, being obedient, sent for Simon Peter, who gave him the necessary instruction for drawing nigh unto God through Jesus. And unless we come to the Father through Christ, our prayers would not be received any more than those of Cornelius had been.

What St. Peter told Cornelius was to the effect that God had provided a great Sin-Offering; that Jesus had tasted death for every man; that now, in advance of dealing with the world, God is taking out a Little Flock, to be joined with Christ in the blessing of the world. When Cornelius heard the good Message, he believed with all his heart; and likewise those who were with him. Doubtless he had heard of Jesus before, but now he understood the matter. He had been in the right condition of heart all along. He had been praying and fasting. But even so he could not be accepted of God except through Jesus. He must have Christ as his Advocate.

HOW JESUS BECOMES OUR ADVOCATE

But what does it mean to have Jesus as our Advocate? It means that first, we must accept Him as our Ransom from sin and death. Next, He tells us, "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." By merely believing that Jesus died, and that He was holy, etc., no one can become His disciple. "The devils also believe, and tremble." But justification to life comes when we receive the Lord on His terms. Then He becomes our Advocate.

No one has a right to expect an answer to prayer except one who has become a disciple of Christ through full consecration. And whosoever cometh to the Father by Him shall in no wise be cast out. (John 6:37.) There is but one exception to this rule, and this is a class of minors, children lacking the full age of responsibility and of comprehension of these matters, one or both of whose parents are disciples of Christ. That age of responsibility would vary—in some it might be from twelve to fifteen years of age, and in some even later. But whoever reaches the point of full comprehension and responsibility,

and does not consecrate himself to the Lord, would lose the privilege of prayer. In the case, then, of a minor child, either of whose parents is consecrated, he would have a right to look for answers to his prayers to God.

The Lord does not hinder any one from bowing the knee. Savages do so right along, but their prayers do not ascend up to God. The Jews were at one time an exception as regards prayer, but they were a typical people. That arrangement, however, was temporary, and has passed away. But soon they will again have the privilege of prayer, through the great Mediator; and all the world may join them in this privilege. Jesus will not be the Advocate for the world. This arrangement is only for the Church of the present Age.

OUR LIVES TO BE A PRAYER

Prayer seems to be the natural attitude of the human mind toward the Almighty. Even the heathens have a disposition to pray. Their fears, their hopes, all lead them to appeal to some great Power beyond themselves. But the people of God, who know of His Wisdom, Power and Love, and who have met the conditions of acceptable prayer, are alone authorized to come to the Throne of Grace. We realize what a blessing it is to have access to God, access to His presence—to have the ear of the Almighty Ruler of the Universe. We know that with the emperors and kings of earth it is very difficult to gain a hearing; and that with people of great prominence it is not easy to secure an audience. Yet the great God has made provision that His people may come to Him and make their petitions known.

The unrepentant sinner cannot come to God. But Divine Wisdom has made arrangement by which the sinner can get rid of his sin, and can then come to Him in prayer and communion. The Jews had typical sacrifices, a typical Atonement Day, and a typical forgiveness of sins. But the forgiveness of our sins, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice, is actual, and brings us to the place of acceptableness with the Father. He is pleased to have His children come to Him in prayer. And it is our glad privilege to offer Him worship and praise—the homage of our hearts.

We would make a distinction between worship and prayer. Worship is a bowing down, an acknowledgment of the majesty of God, an act of reverence, of adoration. But prayer is the offering of a petition. So when the Lord's people are encouraged in His Word to come to Him in prayer, it is with the understanding that they are informed before they come as to what is pleasing to God for them to request. We have an example given of what a proper prayer would be in the one which our Lord taught His disciples.

The Holy Spirit is the blessing most to be sought. This Spirit of God may be possessed in a greater or a lesser measure. We are given a measure of the Spirit when we are accepted as the disciples of Christ; and that flame of love there started is to become a consuming power in our lives. It is to burn out everything contrary to God, that our life may be a burning and shining light. In proportion as we recognize that we are deficient in the Spirit of righteousness, the Spirit of Truth, in that same proportion we should be

importunate in prayer. Whoever realizes his need, and knows the Source from which he can obtain the needed supply, will come to the Throne of Heavenly Favor. We are not to neglect the duties and responsibilities of life in order to spend much time each day upon our knees, but our entire life is to be a ceaseless prayer.

From the time we become the Lord's children, we should strive more and more to attain the character-likeness to Christ, and we should continue in prayer and not faint. We should seek for more and more of the Spirit of the Lord, and should see that we fulfil the conditions by which we may obtain the filling of the Spirit. In this sense of the word, we should pray without ceasing, continuing to present the petition until we receive what we desire. But we shall not obtain the fulness of our desire until we are changed into the higher life, into the perfection of the new nature, in the resurrection. Then we shall pray no more. Then we shall be fully satisfied. Prayer will be swallowed up of praise.

OUR LORD'S SAMPLE PRAYER

In the prayer taught us by our Lord, we first give honor to God, recognizing Him as our Father, acknowledging His greatness, and expressing the desire that His Name be hallowed. We remember the Kingdom that is promised; and we tell Him of our desire of heart for that Kingdom to come. We pray that His will may be fully done on earth. This implies that we have given up our own will, that we wish to have God's will wholly done in our mortal bodies.

In this prayer there is a brief mention of our daily temporal needs: "Give us this day our daily bread"—no stipulation of fruits and vegetables, of delicacies, etc.—but simply our necessities for the day. We ask no more—we wish no more. Then we pray that our trespasses may be forgiven, **EVEN AS WE FORGIVE**. Finally comes the petition for our protection from evil influences. This expresses the appreciation of the fact that there are temptations from those with whom we have contact, and from the powers of evil—the powers of the air—and from our own flesh; and that we need Divine aid. The petitions of this prayer, however, are very brief.

BECOMING MODESTY IN PRAYER

It would seem as though many have a wrong conception of prayer. We hear some people trying to tell the Lord things that He knows better than they. It is always improper, even in our intercourse with men, to tell a person better educated than ourselves anything about that which he knows far better than we. Jesus and the Apostles never undertook to give any instructions to the Father regarding His Plan, so far as we know. And when any one attempts to give the Lord instructions, he deceives neither the Lord nor others who hear; for He knows and they know that such a one is not addressing *God*, but the *people*. We have before mentioned an announcement in a Boston paper that on a certain occasion "Rev. So-and-so delivered the most beautiful prayer ever offered to a Boston audience."

Undoubtedly if we had the right conception of prayer—the Bible conception—our prayers in public would be very brief. The Scriptures are the only criterion, the only

guide. They give us no account of any instance where the Lord's saints offered lengthy prayers in public. Praying in an unknown tongue would also be valueless, the Apostle Paul tells us, unless some one present interpret the same; and if one prays in an incoherent manner, so that he cannot be understood by those who hear, prayer might as well be offered in an unknown tongue. "How shall any say, Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? While this shows that the Lord wishes us to take into consideration the hearers, we are not to pray to them, but are to turn the thoughts of all toward God, to an appreciation of His Goodness, of His Wisdom, Love and Mercy.

Leaving out all thought of *teaching* the people at that time, we should seek to direct all in a reverent manner to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, in thought, that they may humble themselves before God. That which Christian people sometimes attempt to do in *prayer* should be done in *preaching*. According to the declaration of the Word, it has not pleased God to save by prayer those who believe, but by preaching. (Romans 10:14; 1 Corinthians 1:21.) This does not mean necessarily public speaking, but includes also more private proclamation of the Truth and also preaching by the printed page. We are to follow the direction of the Word in all ways.

While we thus speak of public prayer, and in respect to the propriety of brevity, and of the examples of Scripture concerning this, we would not give the thought that one should be limited in his private devotions. He who was perfect set us an example of private prayer. Our Lord sometimes prayed all night. But we presume that with the most of us it would be better not to do this; for we would be weaker for service the next day. In our weakness and imperfection we are probably not able to appreciate the peculiar position of our Lord. We would have nothing that we could say to the Lord which would keep us all night in prayer, except that which would be repetition. And our Master said: "Use not vain repetition"—"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." We are to ask rather for the condition of heart whereby we may be able to receive whatever He shall see fit to send, that we may get a blessing out of each of the Lord's providences.

So, then, summing up the matter, our petitions in public should be modeled considerably after the sample our Lord gave His disciples—a brief expression of earnest desire for the coming of God's Kingdom, an acknowledgment of sin, a request for Divine forgiveness and help and supply of our needs, and a rendering of worship and praise. We think this should be about the range of our private devotions also, as a rule, respecting ourselves. It is eminently appropriate, however, that we remember one another at the Throne of Grace in private, and in a general way in public. But evidently the instruction of Scripture is that we should not seek to use prayer as a means to gain earthly favors, or tell the Lord what we wish done, or to be heard of men, but that we are to put first the spiritual things, the things for which we have been instructed to pray.

CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTABLE, EFFECTIVE PRAYER

When Jesus said to His disciples, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him," He was setting before them a glorious standard in respect to the Heavenly Father. But later on, this standard was very largely lost. During the Dark Ages the God of Love was made to appear anything but loving and kind, and as having no real interest in the majority of His creatures. It was made to appear that the few in whom He had an interest were those who were relentless, cruel and vicious toward all outside their pale.

How terribly our God has been maligned by those who have claimed to be His special representatives! How differently was He depicted by the Son who knew Him so well! Hear Him: "Be ye like unto your Father which is in Heaven; for He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." When the Apostles asked Jesus whether they should call fire to come down from Heaven upon the Samaritans who refused to sell them bread, what was the Master's reply? "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of! The Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." And He was the Image of the Father, and came not to do His own will.

Man is in a sadly fallen condition and needs to be restored to the image of God, to the likeness of God, to the condition of love, mercy and sympathy of which God is the embodiment. Yet, notwithstanding our fallen condition, parents love to give good gifts to their children. What parent, if his child should ask for a fish, would give him a serpent? Or if he should ask for bread, would give him a stone? And as we have received these traits from the Lord, and still have them to a considerable extent even in our blemished condition, we may form some idea of how He who is the Perfect One, the Infinite One, would delight to give good gifts to His children—"*How much more* shall your Father in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" And His very best things are the spiritual things.

PROSPECTIVE SONS BEFORE PENTECOST

We are to remember that our Lord when on earth was in the fullest sense the Representative of the Father in the flesh. He was indeed "God manifest in the flesh." And those who were of the right attitude of heart were able to see the character of the Father in the Son. Those who believed on Jesus were accepted and treated in many respects as though they had been already fully received of the Father. The Scriptures, however, declare that the Holy Spirit had not yet come. We see that the Spirit could not be given in begetting power until Jesus had died, and had entered into the presence of God to make reconciliation for the sins of the Church. Forty days after the resurrection of Christ, He ascended to Heaven to present His merit, imputing it on behalf of all who would become His disciples during the Gospel Age, the period of the High Calling.

Even though the Holy Spirit had not yet been bestowed, Jesus told His disciples that they might pray, "Our Father." This was in view of the condition of sonship into which they were so soon to be ushered. God is not the Father of any others than those who come to Him in His appointed way—through His Son as the Ransom-price, having made a full

surrender of themselves and their all to God. While our Lord was still in the flesh, His true followers were sons in a prospective sense. And yet, after the Master's death and resurrection, He told them to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on High. The Father would defer the answer to some of their prayers. He would not give them the blessing just at the time it was asked. There might be some good reason for withholding it until some future time—as in the granting of the Holy Spirit in begetting. Yet they were to hold themselves in the proper attitude of faith, that they might be ready for the blessing when it should come from on High.

Their prayer might properly have been: "Heavenly Father, we have learned that at the proper time Thou wilt give us the Holy Spirit. We perceive that Thou hast already given Thy Spirit to Jesus our Master; that at the time of His baptism He received an unction from on High. And so we wait for the Holy Spirit—we wait to receive this unction, this blessing from Thee." And those who tarried in the upper room after the ascension of the Lord, received at Pentecost this very blessing, the Holy Spirit—in its due time.

JESUS THE ONLY WAY

If we come down to the present, and inquire what we may pray for, the Lord answers through His Word that we may not pray except upon these same terms; namely, faith in His Son as our Redeemer, and a full dedication, devotion, of ourselves to walk in the footsteps of the Master—our blessed Exemplar. No man can come to the Father but by Him. All such will be accepted, up to the required number of the Elect. It would, therefore, not be right to encourage any to come to the Father in prayer until they have become members of His family by a full consecration.

In the case of Cornelius, the Roman centurion, which we have cited in this article, we have seen that he was a just man, a good man. But he did not belong to the Jewish nation, to whom God had given His Law. The only way in which Cornelius could have come into God's favor prior to His appointed time—three and a half years after the cross—was to have become a Jewish proselyte. But when it became chronologically due time for the Gospel to go to the Gentiles, this good man was notified, and gladly accepted the conditions and became a son of God, through faith in Christ. He received the begetting and anointing of the Holy Spirit, just as the Jews had previously received them. All this shows us that God has a particular course marked out by which any may become His children. Unless they come in the appropriate way and in the appropriate time, none will be accepted as sons of the Highest.

PRAYERS THAT COME UP AS A MEMORIAL

God's dealing with Cornelius would indicate that in the case of any who now come to God, and pray to Him, not knowing the appointed way, their prayers would, like those of Cornelius, come up as a *memorial* before God. As the Lord took notice of the prayers of Cornelius and the desires of his heart to worship and serve God, so we may suppose that He would take notice now of prayers and desires to come close to Him. He might not send some one like Peter to give them instruction at this time. That would depend upon

His decision as to whether this would be the course of wisdom, as to whether such a one was suited to His present purpose. But any prayers offered in sincerity would not pass unnoticed, but would receive reward in due time, whether now or later.

Suppose that one were living in a heathen land where Christ was not known, and suppose such a one was feeling after God and praying according to his light. The Lord could not accept him as His child under those conditions; but He might, if His Wisdom approved, guide that honest seeker to a knowledge of Christ, whether it would come through tracts in the mail, through a sermon, or through meeting one of the Lord's ambassadors who could communicate with him in his own tongue. We are sure that every hungry soul will receive the light and the knowledge necessary to his salvation in the Lord's own good time. After hearing of God, and of the manifestation of His love in Christ, it remains for each individual to accept or to reject the Message. If he fails or refuses to make consecration to God when he receives the light, no prayer he would offer would be accepted.

THE CHIEF OF ALL GOOD GIFTS

We read that the Heavenly Father will give good gifts to those who ask Him; that is, He will give that which would be good for them. We are not to dictate to Him what His blessings are to be. We are not to ask for all manner of earthly things. In the case of the Jews, they asked chiefly for the earthly blessings; because Heavenly blessings were not promised them. But we who come into the relationship of sons of God are to pray for what He has specifically promised us—the Holy Spirit. And our Father in Heaven will give us those things which are best to fit and prepare us for the Heavenly Kingdom.

The Lord will give whatever temporal blessings are to the best interests of the New Creature. Everything that He would give will be a good gift. We do not always know what would be best for us. A parent dealing with a child might find it necessary at certain times to give medicine instead of food. The parent gives this for the good of the child. So with our Heavenly Father. Sometimes He gives us tests of faith, tests of loyalty, tests of love. All these experiences are designed to develop in us strength of character, and to thereby fit us for further and more advanced blessings.

The Father deals with us as New Creatures in Christ. If, for instance, some of His children are becoming overcharged with the blessings or cares of this life, God might give to such some kind of a purgative as respects earthly things. Such a one might break a leg or have some other earthly calamity—something that would work out for his good as a New Creature. If the Lord's consecrated people would all come to the point where their chief desire, their highest aspiration, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might be filled with the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of a sound mind, that they might know and do His will, what a great blessing it would bring! It is the will of the Lord that His children should have in large measure this chiefest of all blessings, but He grants it only on certain conditions. He withholds it until they learn to appreciate its value and to so earnestly desire it that they will apply themselves diligently to meet these

conditions, and will continue in supplication until their importunity shall bring down the answer.

THE UNSPEAKABLE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER

The Apostle Paul exhorts the saints that they "pray always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance." These words do not signify that we should be always upon our knees or continually uttering a prayer. But we should never cease to pray, and our prayers should be *in the spirit*—earnest, sincere. The children of God are not to "say prayers," they are to *pray*. There is much formal prayer—much saying of prayers—which do not get higher than the head of the one who repeats the words. The Scriptures speak of this as drawing near to God with the lips when the heart is far from Him. It would be better that we should not approach the Lord at all than that we should do so in an improper manner.

It is a most wonderful privilege to draw near the great Creator and Lord of Heaven and earth; and we should come in the spirit of reverence and devotion. Our Lord declared that the Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in Truth. We must come only in the name of Christ. He is the only Way of approach. And we must come thoughtfully and earnestly. We should not think of uttering a single word that we do not mean and have not thought upon. We believe a great many have done themselves injury by going through a form of words in a mere formalistic manner. This is not prayer. True prayer is the language of the heart. Therefore the greater our earnestness, the more acceptable the prayer will be, and the greater blessing shall we receive.

We are not to come to God without *faith* and without an earnest desire for His blessing. We are to enter into the spirit of our petition, that the Lord may see the earnestness of our heart in the matter. There seems to be a difference between the thought of prayer and that of *thanksgiving*. Prayer, as we have said, is the offering of petition. None may come to the Lord with recognition, except those who have come into Christ. Others are strangers and aliens. But any one may express thanks to God or render worship, adoration, homage.

PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER NECESSARY

There is a difference also between prayer and supplication. Prayer would be any petition, great or small; whereas supplication would mean a special desire for a thing—an earnest entreaty. Whether it be ordinary prayer or be supplication—an intense form of prayer—we should always come in the spirit, with appreciation of the fact that we are coming into the presence of the great Jehovah, and that it is a privilege accorded to only a very few at this time.

And we are to "watch thereunto, with all perseverance." If we really believe that the Lord has indicated that we should pray, and that it is His will to give us the things we need, and above all His Holy Spirit, then we should be alert to note when we receive the answer to our petitions. If we pay no attention to our prayers after they are uttered, never

look to see whether they are being answered, this would indicate that we have not really appreciated our need. It would seem that this is the reason why God does not answer many of our prayers more quickly. We should learn to watch for the answers to our prayers, and thus learn the lesson of appreciation and gratitude to Him as we realize that He has granted us our request.

We are, then, to pray with *perseverance*, not watching merely for a few hours for the fulfilment, nor merely for a day or a week. The Lord might see best to defer the fulfilment of our petition, either to test our faith or to bring us into a better condition to receive the blessing. Perhaps we have all had these experiences, and were thus more hungry for the answer when it came. We are to be sure that the Lord is never indifferent to the pleading of His children, and will pursue the course which is best for us, just as would a faithful teacher with his pupil, and as would a loving parent with his child. Our Father in Heaven wishes to give us His best things, and will not withhold anything that is really good. (Psalm 84:11.) But He requires sometimes that we shall wait for a considerable time. At other times, there may be a speedy answer to our petitions.

Whether we are on our knees or in the busy walks of life our hearts should go out continually to the Lord for His guidance in all our affairs and experiences, that we may serve Him in a manner that will be pleasing and acceptable to Him, that we may be shielded from temptations that without His aid would be beyond our endurance, and that He will in His own due time deliver us from all evil and imperfection and grant us a place in His Heavenly Kingdom. Dear brethren, let us constantly put into practise the injunction of our Master, "Watch and pray, lest ye *enter into* temptation."—Mark 14:38.

SHOULD WE WRESTLE IN PRAYER?

But although the Scriptures enjoin upon us *persistency* in prayer, and the parable of The Importunate Widow also teaches this, nothing in the Word of God, in our judgment, warrants us in doing what some people call "wrestling with God in prayer." We believe that our God is willing to give us the things that are best for us, and anything that God is not willing to give us we should not desire. We should not strive to induce the Lord to do anything that He is unwilling to do, but should wish that only His will be done. At the time when Jacob wrestled with the angel, we would understand that he did the right and proper thing. Any of us in the same position would have done well if we had followed his course. That was a rare occasion. Jacob was returning to his home for the first time since he had fled to Padan-Aram from his brother Esau, and he feared that Esau might still seek his life. And now the Lord had manifested Himself to Jacob in the form of this angel. The angel could have broken away, but he permitted Jacob to get into that earnest attitude where he said: "I will not let thee go unless thou bless me!"

But *we* do not need to wrestle with God for His special blessing. We already have this blessing. We are not servants crying for a crumb. The Lord has put upon us His best robe; He has given us His Holy Spirit. But He has promised us certain things conditional upon our asking, and He wishes us to continue to come to Him in faith, in simple, earnest prayer—not *wrestling* in prayer.

THE KINGDOM AT THE DOOR

The world is full of woe and wretchedness because of sin. And our hearts cry out, How long, O Lord, how long until Thou wilt deliver Thy people and establish righteousness in the earth? So we pray day by day, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth!" Should we grow tired of this? No; for the Lord has bidden us to continue to wish for it, to pray for it.

The Kingdom *will* come! And the Lord wishes us to have this thought—*Thy Kingdom is coming!* To give up praying would be to give up our faith. Continue to hope, continue to believe, continue to pray without ceasing! Continue to say: "Thy Kingdom come!" Continue to long for the time when that Kingdom will bless all the families of the earth. This is very different from *wrestling*, according to our view of the meaning of that word. This is importunity, this is persistency, this is continuance. And *in everything* we are to give thanks. But we would not want to hasten the Lord's time one minute. Even though we pray, "Thy Kingdom come," this does not mean that we wish to have the Kingdom come before the Father's time. But we whose eyes are anointed know that the time will not tarry long, but that it is nigh.

Whatever may be our natural inclinations as regards constancy and definiteness in prayer, we must take our instructions from the Word of God. We must overcome our natural tendencies along this line. Let us as true, obedient children conform our views and our conduct to the words of counsel which our Father has given us. Let us remember the promise of the Master, "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."—John 16:24.

"Breathe on us, Lord! Thy radiance pour
On all the wonders of the page
Where hidden lies the Heavenly lore
That blessed our youth and guides our age.
Grant *faith*, that treads the stormy deep,
If but Thy voice shall bid it come;
And *zeal*, that climbs the mountain steep,
To seek and bring the wanderer home.
Give *strength*, blest Savior; in Thy might
Illuminate our hearts, and we
Transformed into Thine image bright,
Shall teach and love and live *like Thee!*"

JUNE 11

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended—Phil. 3:13.

If any man consider that he has attained a satisfactory spiritual state, from that moment he may date the beginning of his spiritual decline. No present attainments can be satisfactory to a sincere follower of Christ who studiously endeavors to copy the Perfect Pattern. It is only when we turn our eyes away from Christ that self complacency can be exercised; for in full view of the Pattern our shortcomings are ever manifest. And if in pride of heart we do lose sight of them ourselves, they only become the more manifest to others. Only in the realization of a continual growth into the likeness of Christ should the Christian find satisfaction—Z '95, 250 (R 1884).

The Lord laid hold on Paul that he might attain and maintain under the hardest of trials a Christlike character. At the time of writing these words, Paul had not yet crystallized such a character. Many a person with but a meager proportion of Paul's character, would have been self-satisfied; not so the Apostle, whose sober self-estimate enabled him humbly to recognize his lacks and to strive to attain and maintain his ideal—P '36, 78.

Parallel passages: Job 25:5; Psa. 131:1; Prov. 15:33; Isa. 57:15; Jer. 45:5; Mic. 6:8; Matt. 5:3; 23:12; Luke 10:21; 17:10; Rom. 12:3, 10, 16; 1 Cor. 13:4; 9:24-27; 15:58; Phil. 1:21; Rom. 7:1; 2 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 5:14.

Hymns: 266, 114, 192, 198, 196, 201, 315.
Poems of Dawn, 130: *Keep Striving*.
Tower Reading: Z '12, 255 (R 5080).

Questions: What experiences did this week bring me as to this text? How did I meet them? What did I gain from them?

KEEP STRIVING

KEEP striving: The winners are those who have striven
And fought for the prize that no idler hath won;
To the hands of the steadfast alone it is given,
And before it is gained, there is work to be done.

Keep climbing: The earnest and steadfast have scaled
The height where the pathway was rough to the feet;
But the faint-hearted faltered, and faltering, failed,
And sank down by the wayside in helpless defeat.

Keep hoping: The clouds hide the sun for a time,
But sooner or later they scatter and flee,
And the path glows like gold to the toilers who climb

To the heights where men look over landscape and sea.

Keep onward—right on, till the prize is attained;
Front the future with courage, and obstacles fall.
By those, and those only, the victory's gained
Who look not to self, but to God above all.

R5080: THE MARK OF CRYSTALLIZATION OF CHARACTER

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:13, 14.

IN THE EPISTLE to the Philippians, St. Paul expresses his full appreciation of his opportunity to gain a prize, something worthy of laying hold upon, of grasping fully, of getting possession of. What was that for which the great Apostle was striving and which he had not yet attained? He spoke of this thing as a *prize*, which he was pressing along to win.

We may view "the mark for the prize of the high calling" from two standpoints, both of which are correct. From one standpoint, this mark is that of *heart-likeness* to God's dear Son, of perfection of intention, of love for righteousness, for God, for the brethren of Christ, and for the world, even our enemies. This degree of character-development should be attained as early as possible in our Christian experience, and should be such that, were we to die at any time after its attainment, God would count us worthy of a share in the First Resurrection.

From the other standpoint, this "mark for the prize of the high calling" is that of crystallization of character in the likeness of our Lord. After having attained a heart-likeness to Christ, we must *hold it fast*, and see that in all the testings which the Lord permits to come upon us, we are counted by Him as overcomers, not in our own strength, but in that of our Redeemer. This mark of *crystallized* character is not attained so early in our Christian experience as is the mark of character-development. But by fighting the good fight until the end of our course, we *crystallize* our characters in love for the principles of righteousness, for God, for the brethren and even for our enemies. If thus faithful, we shall win the prize of glory, honor and immortality.

PERFECTION, NOT CONSECRATION, THE MARK

There is no reason to think that our *consecration* is the mark; for our testing, our proving comes *after* our consecration, and not *before* it. No one would be at the mark merely because he is consecrated, but because he had endured the testing, thus proving that his consecration was from the heart and that he was sincere in the devotion of his every power to the service of God. We cannot suppose that the mark is reached the next

moment after consecration. Some degree of character-development must be possessed; there must be some mark of character, in order that God may count that person worthy of everlasting life.

God's standard of character is perfection, which must be manifested by loyalty and obedience under whatever tests He permits to come to individuals upon *any plane* of life. No one will get the prize of everlasting life unless he successfully passes those tests. We realize that the Church has been under trial throughout the Gospel Age, as to her worthiness to obtain "glory, honor and immortality"—joint-heirship with her Lord.—Rom. 8:17.

From the Scriptures we learn that throughout the Messianic Age the world will be tried by The Christ, and that even after passing that test they will not receive the reward of everlasting life until God shall have proved them at the end of Christ's reign by loosing Satan for a "little season." (I Cor. 15:24; Rev. 20:7-10.) The fact that the world is thus to be tried by both The Christ and God confirms the thought that God has a standard, or mark, of character to be attained by all those who are loyal and obedient to Him—on any plane of existence.

While this mark of character to be attained by the world during Messiah's reign is not the one to which St. Paul refers in our text, nevertheless there is such a character-mark to be reached by mankind. Those who then attain the mark will have everlasting life on the human plane. But those who attain the mark to which the Apostle refers will be given eternal life on the divine plane.

THE MARK OF CHARACTER-CRYSTALLIZATION

The Apostle was a noble example of one who had reached the mark. So far as we know, he was ready to die at any time; hence it was not this mark of character-development to which he had not attained. He had not yet attained to the *prize itself*, and could not do so until his change should come. He was constantly pressing along, trusting that God would give him all the things that are in reservation for "them that love him." (I Cor. 2:9.) We could not think the Apostle to mean that he would reach this mark of character-development *just at the moment before death*. This would be an absurdity of thought.

Our Lord Jesus was at the mark of perfect character at the time of His consecration; and He maintained Himself at the mark. As a sacrifice He would have been acceptable at any time. It was His part to consecrate His life and not to hold it back. It was the Father's part so to arrange matters that the Jews might not take our Lord until the Father's hour for Him had come. In everything that He did He submitted Himself to the Father's will. Our Lord spoke of His "cup" as the one which the Father had prepared for Him.—John 18:11.

If our Lord had determined for Himself the time and the manner of His death, then *He* was pouring the cup. If the Jews had determined these points, then *they* were pouring the cup. But neither our Lord nor the Jews did so, for both time and manner were foretold by

the Prophets. Our Lord took the cup and accepted it *as the Father's providence for Him*. If the Father's providence had led to His death a year sooner or two years sooner, if the Father's will had been expressed in our Lord's crucifixion at an earlier time, even then it would have been well with Him. But He "learned obedience by the things which He suffered."—Heb. 5:8; 2:10.

At Jordan our Lord was shown to be perfect and to have made a perfect consecration, both by the descent of the Holy Spirit and by the voice of Jehovah. (Matt. 3:16, 17.) He had also a perfect body—though it was earthly—in which the New Creature operated. But His *obedience* must be *tested*—His *loyalty even unto death*. Whatever the degree of testing to which our Lord might have been subjected, it was just the *right amount*, according to the Father's wisdom. Our Lord would have been just as much an overcomer had He died at any time after His consecration. But if He had died sooner than He did, it would merely have proved that the Father did not require as much *evidence* of our Lord's faithfulness and loyalty as He did require.

OUR LORD AN OVERCOMER AT CONSECRATION

Here some one may ask, "Is it proper to say that our Lord was an overcomer as a New Creature at the time when He made His consecration?"

Our answer is, Yes. An *overcomer* is a *victor*. The word does not imply that a man has completed the victory, however; for we sometimes say, He will lead them from victory to victory. So with our Lord. He continued faithful as an overcomer down unto death; but He was not counted as an overcomer unto death. Between the Father and our Lord as a human being there was no Mediator, and as a New Creature there was neither Robe to cover nor Advocate to represent in case of any deviation from the will of God; and the slightest deflection therefrom would have meant the Second Death.

The Scriptures give us two pictures of our Lord as an overcomer at His consecration, where He gained the first great victory over His flesh. The first of these pictures (Lev. 16:11), the killing of the bullock on the Day of Atonement, represents the death of our Lord's humanity at the moment when He consecrated Himself at Jordan. There He gained a victory and continued victorious until the end of His course.

The second picture is found in Rev. 5:2-7. Here our Lord is represented by a newly slain lamb. He was not this newly slain lamb at His death when He had finished His course, but at His consecration, when He began His course. The proclamation which the Revelator heard was, "Who is worthy to open the Book, and to loose the seals thereof?" We read that John wept much. "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book and to loose the seven seals thereof ... And He came and took the Book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the Throne." Our Lord alone was worthy of the honor of receiving the Divine Plan into His care. We also read that John looked and saw the newly slain Lamb open the Book.—Rev. 6.

After our Lord had entered upon His consecration He was the newly slain Lamb. Then the Father gave into His hand the scroll of the great Divine Plan of the Ages—the scroll written on both inside and outside. The outside He was already able to read. But the inside, which contained information on spiritual things, remained sealed.

As soon as our Lord came up out of the water after His baptism, He was begotten of the Holy Spirit and began to understand spiritual things. "The heavens [higher things] were opened unto Him." The time when He began to be considered the slain Lamb, the time when the scroll was delivered to Him, was the time of His consecration.

SUBMISSION THE FIRST REQUISITE—PATIENT ENDURANCE THE SECOND

A good illustration of the process of character-development and crystallization is afforded by the work of a potter. First, he must select the right kind of clay, for some clays would produce very coarse ware, others would crack or warp in the drying, and still others would not stand the intense heat. Having selected the proper clay the potter subjects it to very many processes of grinding, mixing and wetting until it comes from the mill a soft, plastic mass of the consistency of tough dough, ready for the potter's use. Then comes the moulding into the article desired. The dish is formed, or shaped, with care and dried. Next it is placed in the kiln and fired with an intense heat for two or three days and nights. Then it requires a long time to cool before it can be removed from the kiln. But even then it is only a porous, leaky vessel, altogether unfit for use until it has been dipped into a liquid glaze, or slip, which it readily absorbs.

Again it is subjected to the heat of the glaze kiln, which not only melts the glaze, but converts it into a perfectly transparent glaze all over the surface, making the article beautifully smooth and comely. But if the vessel is of very choice porcelain, to be made still more attractive to the eye by decorations, the ornamentation and gilding must be done at this stage, and the vessel must again be placed in the kiln for a third firing. Some vessels which have stood all the other tests, fail at this point and are cast into the waste heap. But if the vessel passes successfully the last test, it is ready for the service for which it was designed.

So in our Lord's case. Not only was He perfect as a man, but His own *will* was in complete subjection to the *Father's will*. When trials came, there was no swerving, no twisting, no bending. He was of the proper material. His heart (applying this word to the mind) was of the proper character. So must it be with us. Those who will be accepted and found worthy of the great reward will be of His character-likeness in this respect; they will be *loyal* to *God's will*. Not only will they endeavor both to ascertain and to do the Father's will, but they will be in heart submission to that will *in every degree*. The "cup" they will be required to drink is the same that our Lord drank—and "*all of it!*"

To follow in His steps, we must first reach this mark of character-development; and having done all, we must *stand* there. It is well to repeat the thought that it will not do for us to think that one reaches the mark of proper character-development just at the *moment*

of death. Character should be attained as soon as possible. But having reached this character-development called the "mark," it is for us to *stand faithful*, and not be thrust away from it by the opposition of the world, the flesh and the Devil. All such opposition must be endured before we can win the prize. Some of the noblest characters, who have been in an acceptable condition, and used of the Lord, did not get to the *mark* until they had passed through certain severe experiences.

"WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST"

The thought of the Apostle seems to be, Here is a certain line of conduct and character-development which God has marked out; and it is the same for all who are in the race. The life of Christ is the rule. If we would attain the mark, obtain the prize, we must follow this line, or rule, or mark.

The Apostle Paul had but one mind or will. "This *one thing* I do," he said. He was not a double-minded man, at one time thinking he would like to serve the Lord, at another time himself, and then again the Adversary, etc. He had accepted the Divine proposition to give *all* his talents to the service of the Lord. He had before his mind the great promise that God had made. For him there was but *one thing* in life.

The Scriptures tell us that during the Gospel Age God has sent out a special call, or invitation, and that those who have accepted that call have "exceeding great and precious promises" of wonderful things to look forward to. All who accept the call should practically forget all the trifling things of life in order to attain these promises. There is but one way to win the prize—by manifesting to God faithfulness, obedience and loyalty. *Character*, not *talent*, makes us acceptable. God could give any one intellectual powers as good as ours or better. He will not grant any one a place in the Kingdom on account of physical strength or endurance. He will not admit any one to the Kingdom because of worldly prosperity or honor of men, or because of riches.

CONDITIONS REQUIRED IN THE RACE

What then is God seeking? To what has He called us? The Apostle Peter says that God has "called us to glory and virtue." (2 Peter 1:3.) Certain conditions God requires of those who will run in the race. He requires that none be proud, but that they possess humility. And He will have no one in the Kingdom of His Elect who is weak, vacillating, so far as his *mind* is concerned. He may not have a strong *intellect*; but he must manifest to God that he has a strong *will* and *firm determination*, and that he has cut off everything in life in order to win the prize. He must also demonstrate his *loyalty* to God. He must not merely seek glory, but he must recognize and appreciate his responsibilities to God.

Loyalty is one of the great tests of character—loyalty to *God*, to His *Word*, loyalty to *principle*. Whatever follows, the Christian must be submissive to God, trustful and faithful. To such alone could we expect God to give the great blessings promised to overcomers. Hence we see that the Apostle was quite right in giving up *all* that he might

serve God, that he might please the Father, and thus attain to this glorious reward of joint-heirship with His Son.

"EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVETH"

Not necessarily all who *make a consecration*, but all whose consecration God *accepts*, all whom He begets of His Holy Spirit to become New Creatures, will have the opportunity of reaching this mark of *crystallization* of character before they die. These will have full testing—"Every son *whom He receiveth*." (Heb. 12:6.) This promise guarantees that they shall have trials and difficulties to develop them in the proper character-likeness of our Lord; and that none of their experiences will be cut short of this attainment. God will see to it that they have the full opportunity to develop character-likeness to Christ. Those who turn to sin wilfully, deliberately, will fall into the Second Death. Others may fall from the priestly class into the Great Company. But even these must have sufficient time to manifest their loyalty to God.

At the time of His consecration, our Lord was at the mark by virtue of His *perfection*. We are not at the mark at the time of our consecration; for we are *imperfect*. But we wish to do the Lord's will; and we have given ourselves to ascertain what that will is in order that we may render intelligent obedience thereto. In our Lord's case He had no such imperfection to overcome as we have. At the time of His consecration He loved His neighbor as Himself, and He loved God with all His heart.

When we consecrate ourselves, we agree to do this; but we do not know what it means; just as St. Peter "wist not" what he said at the time of the transfiguration in the Mount: "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." (Matt. 17:4.) Neither did the two Apostles know what they were asking when they requested Jesus that they might sit the one on His right and the other on His left hand in the Kingdom. Our Lord said to them, "Ye know not what ye ask."—Matt. 20:22.

Since at the time of our consecration we do not fully understand what we do, therefore we do a great deal of running to reach the mark. This our Lord had no need to do; for He was perfect. At consecration He was at the mark of perfect character, so that had He died at any subsequent time He would have received the reward of the Father, who said, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17.) At His baptism our Lord was at that mark of character which merited the promised reward of the Father, and to which we must attain before we can secure everlasting life, either on the plane of glory or otherwise.

Stephen, who was martyred very soon after Pentecost, must have lived habitually near to the Lord; for he, like Nathaniel, was an "Israelite indeed" in whom was no guile. The fact that the Truth of God came to such as these men means that so far as their heart attitude was concerned they had been very near to the Lord under the Law as their schoolmaster (Greek, pedagogue,) so that when brought to Christ they could quickly learn of Him. So it appears to be with us now. The differences in our natural education in

right and wrong, in truth and error, are such that we cannot tell just how long it will take for each to attain to the character-likeness of our Lord and thus to prove worthy of eternal life.

"PUT YE ON THE LORD CHRIST"

We have suggested that the Lord's people, at the time of their consecration and begetting of the Holy Spirit, are not ready for the Kingdom, but require development, which time alone can accomplish. Notwithstanding this suggestion, is there not a sense in which God's people are regarded *perfect* at the time of their consecration—at the moment of their acceptance? Our answer is, Yes; they are *counted* so, but are not so actually. The flesh is reckoned perfect so that God can accept their offering.

But at this time the New Creature is merely a babe in Christ and has not yet attained to the stature of manhood. Therefore, the necessity exists for entering the School of Christ and for "putting on Christ," as the Apostle expresses it. We begin to put on Christ after consecration, and after our begetting of the Holy Spirit. The babe grows into a child, and the child into a man. (Eph. 4:14, 13.) The work of growing up into Christ is necessary before the child of God would be fit for the Kingdom. The difference between a babe in Christ and one fit for the Kingdom is that the latter has been tried and tested and has proved himself to be an overcomer.

When our Lord Jesus was at Jordan He was an overcomer. (Heb. 10:9.) He was perfect and had correspondingly a larger appreciation of what He did than we have respecting our course when we consecrate. But He tells us, "Fear not, little flock," "be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—Luke 12:32; John 16:33.

Yet even in our Lord's case, while He was an overcomer at the moment of His consecration, He really did not win the prize of the divine nature until the end of His race-course, until there had been *demonstrated* a sufficiency of worthiness for that high exaltation; and we know that the Father continued tests of obedience even unto the death on the cross. It was not until after this that our Lord was fully accepted as an overcomer, to whom it was granted to sit with the Father in His Throne.

THE GREAT TEST IS TO REMAIN AT THE MARK

The possession of perfection necessarily means that one is at the mark, as in the case of Adam. The test is, not whether one can *reach* the mark, but whether one will *remain at* the mark—"having done all, to *stand*." (Eph. 6:13.) When we reach the mark of character which God approves in every sense of the word, let us *continue there*. When our Lord came into the world He was perfect, loyal, at the mark—God's standard, perfection. Whether or not He would be moved away from the mark by the contradiction of sinners against Himself, was to be proved. But none of these tests led Him to abandon His determination to continue at the mark. So it should be with us—to the best of our ability.

The Spirit of God is the same whether manifested in Himself or in angels or in men or in New Creatures. We do not find the Spirit of God manifest in the majority of men, because of sin. We would find the Spirit of God manifest in angels. We should find the Spirit of God very manifest in the saints, who should carry with them into the new relationship all that they have naturally of the character-likeness to the Lord. The graces of spirit exhibited in the Lord's people are properly to be considered fruits of the Holy Spirit; for their possessors have become New Creatures, have entered into the race for the prize of the high calling. Some saints might be able by reason of natural qualities to make more rapid progress than would others in developing and perfecting these fruits and graces of the Spirit.

"RESPECT UNTO THE RECOMPENSE OF THE REWARD"

Sometimes the question arises, Should not the Lord's people preferably strive for character-likeness to Christ, with no particular desire as to what the Lord's reward will be? We answer, No. We should have "respect unto the recompense of the reward." In order to have the proper respect for the reward which God promises, it is necessary that we hold it up before us continually, and that we never lose sight of the prize.

Our Lord Jesus does not deprecate this looking at the prize. Listen to His words: "Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine Own Self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." (John 17:5.) Thus He prayed to the Father for the reward which the manifestation of His obedience would bring. So it should be with us; not that we have a right to insist that our efforts be rewarded, but that we should think of the blessing which God has promised those who love Him, as "exceeding great and precious." Many in the nominal church do not see these things.

Let us keep the goal distinctly before our eyes. Doubtless the Lord meant the knowledge of the prize to serve as a stimulus for our upbuilding and strengthening. We look for "glory, honor and immortality"; and it is right for us to seek for them. Any other attitude would be false modesty. If the thought that it is presumption for us to aspire to the high calling comes before our minds, let us remember that our Lord wants us to be so inspired by the "great and precious promises" that we will work for these things which He has set before us, and that it would be presumption for us to *refuse* what He *offers* to us.

FREE MORAL AGENCY A FACTOR IN CHARACTER-DEVELOPMENT

Character may be viewed from two different standpoints. When Adam was created, he was a man of great and good character—"crowned with glory and honor." He was perfect, the image of God. There is a difference, however, between a character thus *given*, and one that is *developed* and *tested* by the exercise of *free will*. Our Heavenly Father desires that His intelligent creatures exercise their wills. Therefore instead of giving Adam a part of His own character-likeness and eliminating that which we call moral choice, He chose to give Adam His character-likeness, including free moral agency. "So God created man in His own image." God foreknew the fall of man and all the

circumstances connected with it. He knew that the permission of evil for a time would ultimately result in great blessings for all. He knew that the time would come when every creature in heaven and in earth would be obedient to Him, not only because there was no opportunity of doing otherwise, but from *choice*.

Those who are appreciative of God's character should desire to have this character-likeness. Only such will merit everlasting life amongst either angels or men. God is testing along these lines the worthiness of those who are on trial for life eternal. Hence, "The Father seeketh such to worship Him" as "worship Him in spirit and in truth"—intelligently.—John 4:23, 24.

WE MUST "LOVE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATE INIQUITY"

In the formation of character, we see that the lessons which we learn in the School of Christ are very helpful to us. Originally, man was made in the image of God. Yet in us the image is blurred, indistinct. Those who learn the lessons now and appreciate them to the full will be given no further trial. Those who have not had a sufficiency of opportunity will have a full trial in the Age to come. Under the discipline, the chastenings and the rewards of that time, they will learn how much better is righteousness than sin, Truth than error. They will develop in the character-likeness of God, which Adam lost, and will see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. They will learn both to *will* and to *do* righteousness. All who fail to learn this lesson will be judged unworthy of eternal life.

We see that the angels willed of themselves whether they would be obedient, or be disobedient and enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. All the holy angels, who are now in favor with God, are such as have had their testing and have come off victors. Their example will prove more and more a lesson to us as we come to understand it. As a result of this knowledge, we see in God the noblest sentiment that could actuate our Creator and Father in dealing with His creatures; and we are glad that we have chosen to do His will concerning us.

Finally it is important that we should keep in mind the fact that since true love on our part will manifest itself in *obedience*, then *disobedience* is an evidence of a *loss of love*, as viewed from the Lord's standpoint, a deflection from loyalty, a failure to endure the tests. We must agree that the Lord's standpoint of judgment is a reasonable one. Should one ask, How would it be if we should disobey through ignorance? The answer is, that the Lord has made provision against our ignorance: first, He has given us the Word of Truth, "that the man of God may be perfect [perfectly informed], thoroughly furnished unto all good works"; and second, He has promised to supply such helps to the spirit of holiness and the understanding of His Word, as will enable us to do what is pleasing in His sight.—2 Tim. 3:17; John 16:13, 14.

Love is the crown of all graces, "the fulfilling of the Law." Without a fervent, glowing love, it will be impossible to render obedience or to stand the tests for development and crystallization of character arranged for by Divine Love. Our Lord tells us that He was beloved of the Father; and the Father Himself declared, "This is My beloved Son." We

can readily see why our *Lord Jesus* was greatly beloved, for He expressed and fully manifested the Father's love. But it *astounds* us to know that this same love is exercised by the Father toward *us!* "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon *us*, that *we* should be called the *sons of God!*" "The Father Himself loveth you!"—I John 3:1; John 16:27.

LOVING OBEDIENCE BRINGS JOY AND PEACE

Let us, dearly beloved, be more than ever careful respecting the Word of the Lord; let us not by negligence give evidence of a decay of love. Our Lord points out that His continuance in the Father's love, as the well-beloved Son, with all which this implies, was because of His *obedience* to the *Father's will*; and that following the same line, He must require that *we* should be obedient to Him if we would *abide* in His *love* and share His Throne and glory.—John 15:10.

Our Lord's instructions and commandments are not intended to terrify us, nor to deprive us of happiness. On the contrary, "These things have I spoken unto you that *My joy* may be *in you*, and that your joy might be *filled full*." (John 15:11.) Those who give surest evidence of living nearest the Lord well know that obedience to the Lord's words, together with the privilege thus obtained of abiding in Him and His love, is the greatest joy, a joy which wholly outweighs all the trifling pleasures which the world has to offer. It is the joy and peace which "passeth all understanding," which rules in the heart, and which brings with it the promise, the assurance, "not only of the life which now is, but also of that which is to come."—I Tim. 4:8.

JUNE 12

This one thing I do—Phil. 3:13.

We observe the Apostle's singleness of purpose—"This *one thing I do*." He did not try to do several things; if he had, he would surely have failed. He devoted his life to the one purpose to which he was called, and to that end dropped every other aim in life. He did it, too, in view of the fact that all through the present life his chosen course would bring certain loss, privation, toil, care, persecution and continual reproach. In this singleness of purpose he was relieved of many temptations to turn aside to enjoy some of the good things of this present life, or to pursue some of its illusive bubbles—Z '95, 250 (R 1884).

The Apostle Paul is to us an example of singleness of purpose. We may be sure that to his varied talents all sorts of appeals with enchanting incentives were made to enlist them for other objects than the one which he made his goal in life; and his sturdiness in refusing to divert his activity from this one thing may well deserve our admiration and imitation. We cannot be a jack of all trades and a master of any one. Realizing that "a rolling stone gathers no moss," let us bend all our energies to attain this one thing—the making of our calling and election sure—P '30, 78.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 2:2; Matt. 10:42; Luke 9:51, 61, 62; Mark 10:45; John 4:31-38; Acts 1:14; 2:1, 46; 4:24, 32; 5:12; 21:10-15; Rom. 15:5, 6; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 1:27; 3:18.

Hymns: 130, 136, 78, 1, 8, 160, 267.

Poems of Dawn, 270: *Retrospection*.

Tower Reading: Z '01, 6 (R 2753).

Questions: Do I have singleness of purpose? What is my purpose? How do I show it?

RETROSPECTION

HE was better to me than all my hopes,
He was better than all my fears;
He made a bridge of my broken works
And a rainbow of my tears.
The billows that guarded my sea-girt path
Carried my Lord on their crest;
When I dwell on the days of my wilderness march
I can lean on His love for the rest.

He emptied my hands of my treasured store,
And His covenant love revealed;
There was not a wound in mine aching heart,
But the balm of His breath hath healed,

Oh, tender and true was the chastening sore,
In wisdom that taught and tried,
Till the soul He sought was trusting in Him
And nothing on earth beside.

He guided my steps where I could not see,
By ways that I had not known
The crooked was straight and the rough made plain
As I followed the Lord alone.
I praise Him still for the pleasant palms
And the water-springs by the way;
For the glowing pillars of flame by night
And the sheltering cloud by day.

And if to warfare He calls me forth,
He buckles my armor on,
He greets me with smiles and a word of cheer
For battles His Sword hath won;
He wipes my brow, as I droop and faint,
He blesses my hand to toil;
Faithful is He as He washes my feet
From the trace of each earthly soil.

There is light for me on the trackless wild
As the wonders of old I trace,
When the God of the whole earth went before
To search me a resting place.
Hath He changed for me? Nay, He changeth not:
He will bring me by some new way,
Through fire and flood and each crafty foe
As safely as yesterday.

Never a watch in the dreariest halt
But some promise of love endears;
I read from the past that the future shall be
Far better than all my fears,—
Like the golden pot of the wilderness bread,
Laid up with the blossoming rod,
All safe in the ark with the Law of the Lord
In the covenant care of my God.

R2753: PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things

which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:13, 14.

FEW IN the nominal church see any particular mark or any particular prize with definiteness;—to be sought and to be attained. The majority are merely fleeing from an imagined eternal torment, which pursues them as a fear, a dread, a nightmare, a horror, from the cradle to the tomb. Others of the Lord's people (chiefly of "this way") have had the eyes of their understanding illuminated by the holy spirit through the divine Word, and have gotten a glimpse of the great *prize* which God has set before the elect Church of this Gospel age. No wonder if these are enthused with the glorious spectacle which (the natural) eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive of, but which "God hath revealed unto us by his spirit!" No wonder, either, if they have given more attention to the prize than to the mark which must be attained ere the prize is won.

Full of enthusiasm and appreciation of divine love, these have entirely lost the fear of eternal torment, and have learned that this doctrine is of Satan, and not of God; from man, and not of the holy spirit; from the dark ages, and not the teachings of the inspired words of Scripture. They have learned, too, that what scriptures seem to give any color of sanction to this blasphemy against God's character and plan are certain parables, symbols and dark sayings which misinterpretations have more or less glossed and colored in the common translations of the Scriptures.

It is quite common for this latter class to think and to speak of "running for the *prize*," and to measurably lose sight of the fact that it is not the prize that we run toward, but the *mark*: that the prize is entirely beyond our grasp;—as the Apostle expresses it above, "I press toward the mark." Whoever reaches the mark of character which God has established for the elect will receive the prize; and whoever fails to reach that mark of character will fail to get the prize. It is therefore a very serious error to run for the prize and forget or ignore or disregard the "mark," which must first be attained.

The thought that a certain standard or mark of character is necessary to all who will pass divine approval as "overcomers," and hear the Lord's "Well done!" is an astounding one to many. Many have thought of the Christian race as merely an avoidance of open sin; others have included an avoidance of secret faults; others have gone still further, and have included a general disposition to sacrifice many interests of the present life; others have gone still further, and have understood the test of discipleship to be full self-surrender to the Lord, a full sacrifice of earthly life and all of its interests to the will of our Head, the Lord;—but almost none have the thought that all our sacrificings and experiences and self-denials must lead up toward and eventually bring us to the "mark" of character which God has set for the "elect;"—else they will not get the prize of joint-heirship with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom. Nothing, probably, has contributed so much to this oversight of a "mark" or fixed standard of character than the false interpretation given to our Lord's conversation with the dying thief on Calvary.

It is indisputably reasonable, that God has some standard or test by which he will determine who are worthy to receive the great blessings and honors offered to the elect—who are worthy to be members of the body of Christ and to share his Millennial Kingdom—what shall constitute *faithfulness* in those who "seek for glory, honor and immortality," and who are "the called and chosen and *faithful*." The Apostle, in our text, unquestionably declares that there is such a mark, and that all who are running with any hope of attaining the desired prize must be running toward that mark, and must attain it or lose the prize. And we see, too, that the Apostle judges himself according to this standard, and declares that at the time he wrote he had not yet reached this mark or standard of character-development. Such reflections cannot but awaken in the hearts of all who are in this race earnest desires to see distinctly the mark toward which we must run: and it should stimulate each and all of us to run the more patiently and the more perseveringly, and to watch day by day the measure of our progress toward the grand mark which the Lord our God has set before us.

We notice that the Apostle has in mind foot-races, and we see the forcefulness of the illustration: (1) As the racers must enter the race-course in a legitimate manner, so must we get on our race-course in a legitimate manner, through the only door—faith in the precious blood which redeemed us and justified us before God. (2) Those who enter the course must be regularly recorded or registered as runners; they must positively declare their intention, else they will not be in the race. So with us: having been "justified by faith," and having been informed of our privileges in connection with this race, and the attainment of its prize, it was incumbent upon us to declare our intention—to make a covenant with the Lord, and to thus be regularly entered—our names being written, not upon earthly church rolls, but in the Lamb's book of life—"written in heaven."—Heb. 12:23.

With foot-racers there is a prize offered also, but it is not the prize that is hung out to their view while on the race-course; it is not the prize toward which they run, but the mark. There is the quarter-mile mark, the half-mile mark, the three-quarter-mile mark, and the mile mark at the close of the race; and each racer watches for and encourages himself as he passes one or another of these marks by the way, until finally he reaches the last one, the mark for the prize. And this watching of the marks by the way, and reckoning up to the standard, is a great incentive to him—an encouragement as he speeds along, a reminder if he is going slackly. So, too, it is with the Christian runner in the narrow way *toward the mark* of the great prize which God has promised—joint-heirship with his Son, the Lord of glory. It will encourage us to note the marks on our way, and to perceive our progress—if we are coming nearer and nearer and nearer to "the mark for the prize"—the mark which wins the prize. And if any be careless, indifferent, slack, in his running, nothing could be a

WHAT IS THIS GREAT "MARK" OF CHARACTER SET BEFORE US BY OUR GOD?

We answer, it is stated under various names; as for instance, our Lord Jesus mentioned it when he said, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.)

The same mark is mentioned by the Apostle when he says that God predestinated that all who will be of the elect must be "conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom. 8:29.) These two statements differ in form, but are the same in substance. The same mark is mentioned again by the Apostle when he says, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." And again he tells us that "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." (Rom. 8:4; 13:10.) Here, then, we have an aggregated definition of what constitutes the "mark" of Christian character, in the elect: it is godlikeness, Christlikeness, Love. The requirement, therefore, would seem to be that the Lord's people, holy and elect, must attain to the same character or disposition of love that God possesses and that was manifested also by our Lord Jesus.

But some one will say, How can we, "who by nature are children of wrath, even as others," ever hope to attain to so high a standard or mark of character as this, that we should love as God loves, as Christ loves? We answer, that we need never hope to attain to this high standard as respects the flesh, for so long as we are in these mortal bodies, and obliged to use their brains, we will necessarily be more or less opposed by the selfishness which through the fall has come to have such complete possession of our race through the mental, moral and physical derangements incidental to six thousand years of depravity.

The attainment of this mark of perfect love is to be an attainment of the heart, of the will—the new will, "begotten, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," through the holy spirit. Nor do we find, nor should we expect that the new mind would come up to this standard at the beginning of our Christian experience. The new mind, altho inspired of God through the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word, is nevertheless our own will, and more or less circumscribed by its channel and instrument, the human brain. Hence the Apostle informs us that the new mind must constantly fight a battle against the flesh, and that its victory means the death of the flesh—that it cannot be actually perfect until the "change" shall come, by which this newly begotten will shall receive its spiritual body in the first resurrection. But since the receiving of a spiritual body in the first resurrection will be the receiving of the prize, we see that the race toward the mark and the attainment of that mark must be made by the new mind while it is still in this mortal body or "earthen vessel."—2 Cor. 5:2-4.

In a word, the new mind must grow, must develop. As the Apostle exhorts, we, as new creatures, must grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of God—the growth here corresponding to the running in the figure under consideration. We must run or press nearer and nearer to the mark day by day, week by week, year by year, until it shall be attained,—if we would gain the prize. Nor is it merely a question of time, for we all know some who have been a long time in the race and have made comparatively little progress in the cultivation of the gifts of the spirit, the sum of which is comprehended in the one word, perfect love—the mark.

And we probably all know some others who have been a comparatively short time in the narrow way who have made great progress,—going from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, from glory to glory—rapidly nearing the mark. And we know

some who, so far as human judgment can discern, have reached the mark; but of these more anon.

That we may clearly comprehend this subject, let us notice how small were the beginnings of this grace of love in our hearts; and let us hope that many, as they trace the matter here, and compare it with their own experiences, will be able to find large developments in their own characters—that they have passed one after another of the quarter-mile marks in the way, and that they are rapidly nearing, if they have not already reached, "the mark of the prize."

(1) The beginning of our experience as Christians the Apostle expresses, saying, it was not that we first loved God, but that "he first loved us"—that attracted us to him. (1 John 4:19.) A sense of justice told us that since God had so loved us as to redeem us at so great a cost, and to provide for us so great salvation, it would be as little as we could do—it would be *our duty* to love and serve him in return. This beginning of love we will designate as *duty-love*. It lacked in many respects qualities which now permeate our love for God, which is of a higher, a more advanced character, because we have grown in grace, and in knowledge, and in love. The Apostle seems to speak again of this same duty-love, when he says, "The love of Christ *constraineth* us [draws out our love in return]; for we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead [under divine sentence, the curse]; and that we who live [who have been justified to life through faith in Jesus' redemption] *should* henceforth live not unto ourselves but unto him who died for us." (2 Cor. 5:14, 15.) Here again it is the "*should*"-love or duty-love,—the first, the crudest, the simplest development of our love toward God, our starting-point in the race toward perfect love.

(2) After we had exercised the duty-love and sought to obey God, not only in the avoidance of sin, but also in sacrificing our earthly interests and rights for his sake and the truth's sake, in obedience to his will—in obedience to duty-love—we began to find in our hearts an appreciation of the *principles* of righteousness; we began to love righteousness—justice, mercy, love: not at first with a fervency of love, but rather with respect for the glorious qualities of the divine character, plan and law. This was our first quarter-mile mark, so to speak—love of principles of righteousness.

(3) The more we learned to love these elements of divine character, the principles of righteousness which find their perfect representation in the divine being, and through which the divine being is revealed to the eyes of our understanding—in that proportion the true love to God (based upon principles rather than upon duty), comes into our hearts. So to speak, here in the race-course we had gained the second quarter-mile mark—love of God's character; even tho we had not yet discerned the length and breadth and heights and depths of that character, we had begun to love the Lord in the true way—from appreciation not only of what he had done for us, but also and specially for what he is;—from appreciation of his character.

(4) Love of God from this latter standpoint as the representative of every grace and every virtue, as the representative of righteousness, and the opponent of every injustice

and inequity, led us to seek and to follow out these principles amongst our fellow-men, as well as in our own characters. As we began to love truth, purity, nobility of character, wherever it could be found, we found some of it in a mottled and streaked condition even in the world of mankind: we found that the original law of God, written in the heart of father Adam, altho largely erased and obliterated from the hearts and consciences of his children, is not wholly gone;—that to some extent, especially under the influence of Christianity in the past eighteen centuries, some features of this perfect law may be dimly discerned amongst men.

But our scrutiny, backed by our increasing love of these principles of righteousness, found nothing satisfactory amongst natural men—nor even amongst those professing godliness—professing to be followers in the footsteps of Jesus. We found these all, like ourselves, far short of perfection, far short of the glory of God. But as the true love, of right principles, burned in our hearts more and more fervently, we learned to *sympathize* with the entire "groaning creation," and to "*love* the brethren;" for in the latter we perceived a class inspired by the same spirit by which we ourselves had been begotten of God, the spirit of the truth; we saw some of them struggling as we had struggled, with appreciation only of the duty-love; we saw others who had gained a higher conception than this, who had learned to appreciate the principles of righteousness and to love them, and to hate iniquity, and further, to love the God who is the embodiment of these. And the realization that these "brethren," like ourselves, were gradually approximating the divine standard—"pressing toward the mark"—filled us with interest in them and in their battle against sin and its weaknesses, and against the Adversary and his beguilements. We became more and more interested in their welfare and overcoming in proportion as we were striving and making progress in the same "narrow way." This love of the brethren we did not have at the beginning; it marks a distinct progress in our race toward the "mark;" we might term it the third quarter-mile mark. But altho a grand attainment was achieved when this love of the brethren reached the point of willingness to "lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16), yet it was not the *full* attainment of the "mark" for which we are running.

(5) The "mark of the prize" is a still higher attainment in love;—the one which we understand the Scriptures to point out as the very highest attainment is that of *loving our enemies*—not merely tolerating them, abstaining from injuring them, etc., while thinking evil of them; but far beyond this, it signifies the full purging out of all anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, not only from our actions but also from our words, and even from our thoughts, our sentiments. It means such a *complete triumph of love in our hearts* as not only loves God supremely and delights to sacrifice in his service from love of the principles represented in his character, and love for the brethren, which makes us careful of their feelings and interests, and ready to lay down our lives on their behalf, to deliver them from evil, or to avoid putting a stumbling block in their way, but it means additionally that the love of God has been so thoroughly shed abroad in our hearts that we can love and do love every intelligent creature, and delight to do good unto all men, and to serve all men as we have opportunity, especially the household of faith.—Gal. 6:10.

This does not mean that the love which we have for the world must be of the same kind that we have for the Lord, who is the personification of righteousness, and for the "brethren," who are striving to have Love, the righteousness of the Law, fulfilled in them through Christ. It means rather a sympathetic love; a benevolence such as God himself exercised toward the whole world of mankind. It does not mean that we are to love the world in the sense condemned by the Apostle when he said, "Love not the world, neither the things of the world." (1 John 2:15.) It does mean the attainment of the condition indicated in the expression, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever should believe on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.) It is a love for the world, which will not only be glad to see them lifted up out of degradation and sin to holiness and purity and righteousness, but which will be glad to cooperate to these ends as opportunities may offer—not, however, anticipating God's love and the development of his plan of the ages; but co-working with God in that great plan which he has promised shall eventually bring, during the Millennial age, blessing to every creature through the elect class now running in this race for attainment of the "mark," to win the great prize of joint-heirship with his Son. This perfect love, which, including the other developments, extends even to enemies and those who injure us and speak evil of us falsely for Christ's and righteousness' sake, is the fourth mark in the race—"the mark for the prize."

While it is well for us to notice these various steps in the progress of our race toward the "mark," we are to remember that the illustration does not fit perfectly, but that rather while there is this order of progression it is less distinctly marked in our experiences, in which duty-love but gradually leads into the higher forms, remaining, but subordinately, to the end. It is a part of the blessed arrangement of God that those who are running in this race are not reckoned with according to the flesh, but as "new creatures," according to the spirit, the mind, the will, the intention. We may never hope to attain to this grand "mark" of perfect Love in our flesh, so that every act and every word would give full proof of the real spirit of love which fills our hearts. Some may have greater weaknesses and defects in the flesh than others, and hence may be less able than others to uniformly and thoroughly show the real sentiments of their hearts. But God looketh at the heart; it is the heart that he sees running in this race; it is the heart which is to attain to this "mark" set before us in the Gospel—this mark of perfect love, which includes even our enemies. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

If now we see clearly that perfect love is "the *mark* of the prize," we see something to strive for in our daily lives; a condition which we can by God's grace attain, and which must be obtained if we would be counted worthy a place in the Kingdom. The Lord is not selecting the members of the Bride of Christ by an arbitrary election; neither is he selecting them on the lines of a mere sentimentality; he is selecting them on the lines of character, heart-development; and those who attain this likeness to his Son, this "mark" of the prize, this standard of what is pleasing and acceptable to the Father—these, and these alone, may have confident hope of joint-heirship with our Lord. How important, then, that each runner in this race follow closely the Apostle's injunction to lay aside every weight and hindrance, and to run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel—"looking unto Jesus," the author of our faith, until he shall have become the

finisher of it (Heb. 12:1)—giving us grace to conquer, and keeping us through his Word and through his providence unto the end of the race.

Each one on this race-course should examine himself, rather than examine others, in respect to progress in this narrow way; for each knows his own heart condition and the weaknesses of his own flesh better than any other knows these, the Lord alone excepted. Let us each note just where he is in the race-course, rejoicing that he is in the race at all; considering it a great privilege to be thus called and privileged to enter in this race. If we find that we have passed the first quarter-mark, let us rejoice and press on. If we find that we have passed the second also, let us rejoice so much the more, but not slack our running. If we find that we have passed the third quarter we may properly rejoice so much the more, and press with vigor on; and if we have attained to the fourth mark, of perfect love, which includes even enemies, we have indeed cause for great rejoicing. The prize is ours, if we but remain faithful. But, as the Apostle says, "Having done all, *stand*"—with all the armor on; stand in various testings which will then, as much as ever along the race-course, be brought to bear against us to divert us away from the mark, before the great Inspector and giver of rewards shall say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."—Eph. 6:13-17.

It is indispensable to those who have reached the mark of perfect love that they shall keep actively engaged in the service of the Lord, laying down their lives for the brethren; because he who loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, what assurance hath he that he really loves God, whom he hath not seen? (1 John 4:20.) Such must stand, not only as representatives of God and of the principles of righteousness, but as representatives of those strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and in the faith of his Word,—ready and willing and efficient in the encouragement of other runners in the race-course, that they likewise may attain to the "mark." As the Apostle says: "As many, therefore, as are perfect, should be of this mind; and if in anything you think differently, God will reveal this to you; but to what we have attained, let us walk by the same line. Brethren, become joint-imitators of me, and watch those who are thus walking, as you have us for a pattern."—Phil. 3:15-17, *Diaglott*.

JUNE 13

I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness—Psa. 17:15.

*Now let our thoughts on wings sublime
Rise from the trivial cares of time,
Draw back the parting veil, and see
The glories of eternity.*

Let thoughts of God and Christ and the worthy saints of the past and present, of the Kingdom inheritance, of the blessedness of our future work in cooperation with Christ, of the magnitude and benevolence of the Divine Plan, and of the glory and blessedness of our gathering together unto Christ when our work of the present life is finished, fill our minds and inspire our hearts. And to these contemplations let us also receive the additional comfort and blessedness of personal communion and fellowship with God through prayer and study of the Word and the assembling of ourselves together for worship and praise—Z '95, 251 (R 1884).

By God's likeness here we understand His character, nature and rulership to be meant. He has held these up to us as the goal of our attainment. The vicissitudes of experiences preparatory for their attainment make it impossible for us to be satisfied with our present condition, though content therewith. So completely will the longings of the faithful be realized in the resurrection, that perfect satisfaction with their lot will be their blessed experience forever, which prospect urges on to faithfulness—P '35, 101.

Parallel passages: 1 John 3:2; Psa. 4:6; Gen. 17:1; Luke 1:6; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:1-8; Job 19:26, 27; Isa. 61:10; Matt. 5:8; 1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 22:4; 1 Cor. 15:23, 41-48; 1 Thes. 4:13-17.

Hymns: 105, 21, 32, 53, 92, 133, 201.
Poems of Dawn, 230: *Resurrection*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 345 (R 5578).

Questions: What has the resurrection hope been to me this week? How did it affect me? What were its results?

RESURRECTION

I MOURNED the summer rose that died;
I said: "It will return no more."
But lo! its beauty glorified
I saw next summer's sun restore.

New-born, it crowned with radiant grace
The stalk where last year's blossom came;
I marked its hues, I knew its face;

'Twas the same rose—yet not the same.

I could not trace amid its bloom,
The atoms of a former flower,
Nor tell what waste from nature's tomb
Had robed it for its perfect hour.

I asked not if its form expressed
The very substance that decayed—
But there, in every trait confessed,
My lovely favorite stood displayed.

And when I knew the parent tree
Had planned the rose ere spring begun
To set its prisoned being free,
I felt the old and new were one.

O! not in watched and labeled dust
Lies beauty's resurrection form;
Live in God's mind her likeness must,
His memory keeps her ashes warm.

There is no pattern lost; where'er
The perished parcel blends with earth,
The cast no changes can impair,
Nor death deface the seal of birth.

Of every face that fades away,
Somehow, in custody Divine,
The mould that shaped the featured clay
Preserves its image, line for line.

What though this dust, dispersed, complete,
Shall never, grain for grain, be found?
'Tis but the shoes the pilgrim's feet
Put off to walk on holy ground—

Wherever, from the grave estranged,
To life awaked, he only knows
New grace hath clothed his form and changed
The faded to the freshened rose.

R5578: THE RISEN CHRIST

"Why seek ye the living amongst the dead? He is not here, but is risen."

—Luke 24:5, 6.

THE resurrection of the dead is an astounding proposition. Its accomplishment will be the greatest manifestation of Divine Power ever made to angels and to men. The awakening of Jairus' daughter, of the son of the widow of Nain, and that of Lazarus the friend of Jesus, are nowhere styled resurrections of the dead. They were merely awakenings, the last of these being the most wonderful because, Lazarus had been dead four days, and putrefaction had set in.

The resurrection of the dead promised in the Bible is to bring back the personality and the consciousness of thousands of millions of humanity who have died, who have gone to dust under the Divine sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die." "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." There could be no resurrection—no escape from that Divine sentence—except in the way God has arranged; namely, that Jesus took the place of the original sinner, Adam. Purchasing him back from the death sentence meant the purchase of all who died in him. Thus we read that Christ died, "the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."—1 Peter 3:18.

Fallacious ideas have gone abroad to the effect that it will be the body merely that will be resurrected—that God will collect from the four winds every particle of dust which once composed a portion of a human body, and will reorganize the race out of the same particles of matter which once composed it. The absurdity of this proposition grows upon us as we consider that the carcasses of the dead have more or less gone into vegetation, and thus into other animals and other humans. This is well illustrated by the story of the apple tree, the roots of which penetrated a coffin and assumed the shape of the corpse. The apples were eaten by various people, and some of them by swine, which in turn were shipped to various parts of the country.

This anecdote well illustrates the unreasonableness of the common misunderstanding of the Bible teachings. The difficulty has been that we lost sight of the fact that the Bible declares that it is the soul which dies. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4, 20.) Our bodies are being changed and renewed, Science tells us, every seven years. The body in which Adam sinned, therefore, passed away—and many other bodies—during the nine hundred and thirty years of his experience. But his soul, his personality, himself, died but once, nine hundred and thirty years old. It is the soul that dies, that has been redeemed, and that is to be resurrected. "Thou sowest not that body which shall be."

OUR LORD NO LONGER HUMAN

Christ, as the Logos with the Father, was a living soul, or being, on a high spirit plane. For man's sake He humbled Himself and became a bondsman—"took a bondsman's form, and was found in fashion as a man"—a human soul. As a human soul, or human being, He died—"He poured out His soul unto death." He made "His soul an Offering for sin." "He shall see [the reward of] the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."—Isaiah 53:10-12.

It was Jesus the human soul that died, but He was raised from the dead a Soul of a higher order. At that time, as He foretold, He ascended "where He was before"; that is to say, on the spirit plane. He was "put to death in flesh, but quickened [or made alive] in spirit." (1 Peter 3:18.) He took the fleshly nature merely for the great purpose of giving man's redemption-price; and after He had surrendered that ransom-price by giving Himself up to death, the Father raised Him up to glory, honor, the Divine nature—"far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named." (Philippians 2:9.) He that ascended thus in His resurrection was the same that had previously descended from the Heavenly to the earthly condition, as St. Paul says.

Because in His resurrection Jesus was so different, from this viewpoint we are prepared to understand why He conducted Himself so differently after His resurrection from what He had done before. After His resurrection He appeared and disappeared, we read. He showed Himself to His disciples for a few moments at a time, and then vanished from their sight. Never before had He done anything of the kind. After His resurrection He appeared in different bodies, different forms, different clothing. To Mary He appeared as the gardener. To the two walking to Emmaus He appeared as the stranger. He appeared not only as a different person, but also in different clothing; for His clothing had been parted amongst the soldiers.

How evidently He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in spirit! It was the Spirit Jesus who showed Himself, assuming different human forms and clothing, as best suited the occasion. This Spirit Being could, and did, come into the assemblies of the disciples when the doors were shut and fastened for fear of the Jews. He created, or materialized, a body and clothing in their presence; and after a few moments He vanished out of their sight, dissolving the body and the clothing, while He, the Spirit Being, remained invisible. Thus He was with the disciples for forty days before He ascended; yet they saw Him not, except a few minutes at a time on seven different occasions.

Those forty days were very necessary for teaching the Jewish disciples, and all of the Lord's followers since, two great lessons:

- (1) That He was no longer dead, but alive;
- (2) That He was no longer a man, but a Spirit. "Now the Lord is that Spirit."—2 Corinthians 3:17.

IMPORTANCE OF OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION

That our Lord was no longer flesh, but a Spirit Being with celestial glory, is clearly established by St. Paul's narrative of his own experiences. He explains that it was necessary that the twelve Apostles should be able to bear witness to the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead. There could have been no Gospel Message of hope of Divine favor through a dead Savior. If Christ had not risen, then who would there be who could ever establish the Messianic Kingdom? Who would there ever be who could give to the Church a share in the First Resurrection and make them sharers in His Heavenly glory? If

Christ had not risen, who would there be who could call forth from the tomb the sleeping billions, awakening them, through the Voice which speaks peace through Jesus Christ, to the opportunities of everlasting life through obedience to the Kingdom?

The Apostle calls all this forcibly to our minds, saying, "If Christ be not risen from the dead, your faith is vain; and all who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished." (1 Corinthians 15:16-18.) From this we see that St. Paul in no way shared the views of those who unscripturally claimed that Jesus, while dead, was really alive; and that the resurrection of the dead is a mere formality, quite unnecessary to the carrying out of God's Plan. The Divine teaching is that the dead know not anything, and that the resurrection of the dead is an absolute necessity to any future life or hope or blessing.

The fact that Christ has risen from the dead is a guarantee of God's power to raise the dead. Additionally, it is a guarantee that Jesus accomplished the work which He came into the world to do. It proves to us that He must have kept the Divine Law perfectly; else He would not have been worthy of a resurrection from the dead. It proves, additionally, the value of His death—the efficacy of it as the offset of Father Adam's sin, and thus as the Ransom-price for the sins of the world.

POST-RESURRECTION MANIFESTATIONS

St. Paul tells that he saw Jesus after His resurrection. He tells us that our Lord's appearance to him was as that of a bright light shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday. He tells us the effect that it had upon his character and upon his eyesight—that one glance at the glorious Jesus destroyed his sight, which was afterwards partially restored by Divine mercy. This was the eighth appearance of Jesus to His disciples. In seven of them He appeared in flesh; in one He appeared in glory above the brightness of the sun. He was the same at all times, but the manifestations were different.

The manifestations in the flesh during the forty days correspond exactly to those manifestations which Jesus had made long previously, one of which was to Abraham. He ate and talked with Abraham; but Abraham knew not that he talked with the Lord, and thought of Him only as a man, because He appeared in human form and ordinary clothing. He vanished from Abraham's sight as He vanished from the Apostles' sight and from Saul's. He was a Spirit Being when He appeared to Abraham; and He was a Spirit Being after His resurrection, when He appeared to His Apostles. It was in the meantime that He was made flesh for the very purpose of suffering, the Just for the unjust.

Having accomplished the suffering, there was no further reason why our Lord should remain flesh. The Lord of Glory in Heaven is not flesh, not a man. If He were, He would be "a little lower than the angels." But the Apostle assures us that in His resurrection He has ascended far above the angels.—Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 1:3, 4.

It was just as easy for Jesus to appear in one form as another, in one kind of clothing as another. He appeared in various forms, that the double lesson might be impressed that He was not dead, and that He was no longer a man. His second appearance with the

wounds to convince St. Thomas is especially noteworthy. He was ready to give any demonstration that was necessary, because, unless His disciples really believed in His resurrection, they could not do the work that was before them, nor could they even receive the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit was not given except to those who believed in Jesus—who accepted the fact of His death as the Sacrifice for sins and who trusted in Him as the Savior through whom would come the Divine blessing, begetting them of the Holy Spirit and restoring them to fellowship with God as children of God.

FURTHER SCRIPTURAL PROOFS

If further evidence be necessary that Jesus is not a flesh being—that He is no longer a man—that evidence can be found in the Apostle's assurance that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, and that therefore every member of the Church must be changed before he can enter into and share Christ's Kingdom. The change will be from earthly state, or condition, or soul, to spirit condition, or soul, or being. The Apostle declares that we must all be changed, that we may be like our Lord. If our fleshly body must give place to a spirit body in order that we may be like our Lord, it is manifest that He is a spirit body, a spirit being, a spirit soul. This also agrees with St. Paul, respecting the resurrection of the Church. He says, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spirit body."

A totally different thing, however, is brought to our attention by the same Apostle in Philippians 3:21, where he declares that the Lord Jesus will "change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." The thought here is in respect to the Church as a whole, and not the individual bodies of the Church. The Apostle is speaking of our vile Body, in the singular. The thought is that Jesus, the Head of the Church, had His experiences of humiliation prior to His death and His resurrection. The Head of the Church was exalted, was glorified, more than eighteen centuries ago. Since then, all who have espoused His Cause have become identified with a Body, or company, that is despised of men, a humiliated Body, of which St. Paul says, "We are counted as the filth and offscouring of the earth." But at the Second Coming of Christ the humiliation of the Church, His Body, will cease, because the Lord will gloriously change His Body in the First Resurrection. Thereafter it will no longer be a Church, or Body, reviled but glorified.

JUNE 14

God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble—1 Pet. 5:5.

Above almost everything else, beloved, let us guard well our humility. It is only when we are little in our own eyes that God can use us with safety to ourselves. And yet He does not shield us from every test of fidelity. If therefore the Lord give you a little exaltation today, a little encouragement of success in His service, receive it humbly, meekly, remembering your own unworthiness and insufficiency except as God is pleased to work through you; and be just as ready to receive the humiliations of tomorrow as necessary for your discipline and the proper balancing of your character. If the success of yesterday makes you fret under the humiliation of today, beware! You are not as roundly developed spiritually as you should be—Z '96, 19 (R 1919).

The proud have too high an opinion of themselves, rely upon themselves and seek self-exaltation. The humble of our race have a lowly estimate of themselves, trust God rather than themselves and abase themselves in His interests. The proud, aspiring to positions beyond their abilities and worth, frequently seek to displace others, and always interfere with God's order. Such, of necessity, God must resist; while the humble are continually being advanced by God, for their abilities and worth warrant favors, to which they do not selfishly and wrongly aspire—P '34, 95.

Parallel passages: Jas. 4:6, 10; Isa. 57:15; 66:2; Matt. 20:26-28; Mark 10:43-45; Job 22:29; Prov. 15:33; 29:23; Dan. 4:37; Luke 14:11; 18:14; 1 Pet. 5:6.

Hymns: 63, 47, 114, 134, 191, 229, 307.

Poems of Dawn, 29: *Not I, But Christ*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 363 (R 5361).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

NOT I, BUT CHRIST

NOT I, but Christ, be honored, loved, exalted;
Not I, but Christ, be seen, be known, be heard;
Not I, but Christ, in every look and action,
Not I, but Christ, in every thought and word.

Not I, but Christ, to gently soothe in sorrow;
Not I, but Christ, to wipe the falling tear;
Not I, but Christ, to lift the weary burden;
Not I, but Christ, to hush away all fear.

Not I, but Christ, in lowly, silent labor;

Not I, but Christ, in humble, earnest toil:
Christ, only Christ! no show, no ostentation;
Christ, none but Christ, the gatherer of the spoil.

Christ, only Christ, e'er long will fill my vision;
Glory excelling, soon, full soon, I'll see—
Christ, only Christ, mine every wish fulfilling—
Christ, only Christ, mine All in All to be.

R5361: JESUS AND THE CHILDREN

"Gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another; for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."—1 Peter 5:5. R.V.

THE Master knew that the time of His death drew near. He wished to break the information gently to His loving disciples. Therefore He passed hastily through Galilee, en route for Capernaum, as stated in our lesson, rather seeking to avoid the curious. He desired this opportunity for breaking to His disciples the news of His soon-to-be-completed sacrifice. While He had previously declared that none could touch him because His hour had not yet come, now He declared that He would be delivered up into the hands of men, and that they would kill Him, and on the third day He would rise from the dead.

But the disciples understood not and feared to ask explanation. They were only natural men; for none were begotten of the Holy Spirit until Pentecost. (John 7:39; Acts 1:8.) As Jews, they had the thought of the Messianic Kingdom uppermost in their minds. Jesus had authorized them to preach the Kingdom at hand, and had promised them a share in the Kingdom. Until now they were not ready for the further information that the Jewish nation would fail to accept Him, and that thus the Kingdom blessings would be put off for centuries.

The Apostles had heard Jesus utter so many "dark sayings" and parables that they were bewildered, and wondered what interpretation to give to these words about His death and resurrection. But their minds naturally drifted to the great hopes that were before them—that Jesus would soon be the King, and they would then be in honored positions as His associates in the Kingdom. They even went beyond this, and disputed amongst themselves as respects the honorable positions they would occupy and as to which would be greatest—the Lord's prime minister. So little did they understand the great trials and disappointments which were only a few days in advance!

Jesus gathered them about Him and inquired respecting their dispute; but they were ashamed to tell the topic. Then He gave them advice to the effect that the selfishly ambitious who would be seeking honor rather than service would be disappointed. In His Kingdom self-seekers would have the lowest place. As illustrating the matter He took a child and set him in their midst and said, "Whosoever shall receive one such little child in

My name receiveth Me, and whosoever receiveth Me receiveth [not Me alone, but] Him that sent Me."

By this the Master sought to show His disciples that it was not their own greatness that was to be considered, but God's favor. The humblest one amongst them, if favored by God, would have a high position. They were to have the spirit of sympathy and of appreciation of the Divine work of grace in each other. They were to receive each other as representatives of Jesus; and more, as representatives of the Father. If they entertained such views of one another, surely they would be kind and gentle toward all, and would seek to be helpful—"in honor preferring one another."—Romans 12:10.

BLESSING THE CHILDREN

The second part of our lesson recounts that the great Teacher was a lover of children even though, so far as the record shows, He did not generally give His time to them. When fond parents brought their children, desiring Him to bless them, the disciples, feeling that the Lord's time was too valuable to be thus used, rebuked them. But Jesus very earnestly directed that the children should be allowed to come. He took them up in His arms and put His hands upon them and blessed them, thus exhibiting His own sympathetic love and humility of heart. He could preach to one Samaritan woman by the well or take time to fondle children, notwithstanding the weight of the work that was upon Him and the fact that His course was nearly finished.

But as the subject of the Kingdom was uppermost in His teachings and in the minds of His disciples, He took another opportunity of teaching them a lesson. They had, perhaps, been feeling too sure that they would be members of the Kingdom class. They had not yet learned what crucial tests would be applied to those who would be counted worthy to sit with the Redeemer in His Messianic Throne of glory and to participate with Him in blessing all the families of the earth. He therefore said: "Permit the little children to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of God."

We are not by these words to understand that the Master meant that His disciples, those whom He usually addressed in His discourses, would not be in the Kingdom, and that all in the Kingdom would be little children. Quite to the contrary. Little children will not be in the Kingdom at all. Only developed, tried, perfected characters will constitute the overcomers who will sit with the Master in His Throne.

The thought that the Lord would impress here, as elsewhere expressed, is that even His twelve Apostles would not be in the Kingdom unless they became childlike, teachable, plastic, trustful. The proper child, unspoiled by its elders, is disposed to be very trustful; and, until deceived, it is disposed to believe every word of the parent and to trust implicitly to the parent's wisdom and power. All who become children of God must reach this condition of heart as respects the Heavenly Father. Whoever does not attain this condition will not be fit for the Kingdom.

Impressing His subject still further, the Great Teacher said: "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter therein." This expression clarified the subject. The followers of Jesus are not to be little children, but must be childlike, because only the childlike followers will ever participate in the Kingdom. The receiving of the Kingdom mentioned evidently means the receiving of the Message of the Kingdom; for manifestly none can receive a kingdom until the kingdom has come or has been offered.

Thus with the Jewish nation: The offer of the Kingdom came at the close of Jesus' ministry, when, after the manner of the kings of Israel, He rode into Jerusalem upon the ass, thus offering Himself as their King. The worldly scribes and Pharisees were too wise to receive Jesus, and plotted for His death. His disciples were as trustful as little children, and fully believed the Message of God's Word that there would be a Kingdom and the further Message that Jesus was the appointed King, who in due time would take His power and reign for the blessing of the world.

This was illustrated when Jesus sat upon the ass. The multitude, crying "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" treated Him as the King. The disciples, fully acquiescing, as little children, doubted nothing. On the other hand, the "wise" scribes and Pharisees called out that the multitude must be stopped from thus shouting. They should be told that Jesus was not the Messiah, that they were deceived. But Jesus merely answered that what they witnessed had been foretold by the Prophet Zechariah (9:9)—that there must be a shout. And the Lord declared that if the people did not shout the stones would be obliged to cry out, in order that the prophecy might be fulfilled.—Luke 19:40.

It seems remarkable that, after all the Bible has said respecting Messiah's Kingdom and the work which it is to accomplish in the blessing of Israel and all the families of the earth, so few seem to believe the Message, so few seem to be willing to receive it as little children. The majority today, like the scribes and Pharisees of old, are too "wise" to believe in the possibility of the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom. They realize the need of the Kingdom, but they have certain theories of their own which blind them to the Truth.

Some mistakenly hold that the Kingdom of Christ was set up at Pentecost and that He has been reigning ever since, conquering the world. Alas, how unreasonable this seems, when we know that even under the most favorable conditions the heathen of the world double every century! How strange that some Christians have prayed so long that God's Kingdom would come and rule the world and put down the wicked and exalt the obedient, until finally the Divine will would be done on earth as completely as it is now done in Heaven—and yet all this without really, properly believing that the Kingdom which was offered to Israel, and which they refused, is evidently to be established—at the Second Coming of Jesus and the resurrection change of His Church!

Another large body of Christian brethren, Roman Catholics, hold still a different theory; namely, that Messiah's Thousand-Year-Reign began in the days of Pope Leo III,

A.D. 800; and that He has reigned in the world ever since. This view holds that it was most necessary for Jesus to come a second time to establish His Kingdom; but that in the year 800 A. D., Jesus established His followers in kingly power, and made the Pope at Rome His representative and vice-gerent. The word vice-gerent, as we all know, signifies one who reigns instead of another. The claim is that Christ has been reigning for now eleven hundred and thirteen years, fully and officially represented by the Pope.

Neither of these views is satisfactory, and neither is Scriptural. Surely the conquest of the world has not been going on for the last eleven hundred years, as we might have hoped, if God's time had come for Messiah to take the long-promised Kingdom. Surely what St. Paul said of his day is true now also: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not"—"the children of disobedience"—to hinder the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ!

The glorious Gospel of Christ is, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." His glorious Message further is that His Church shall sit with Him in His Throne, a Royal Priesthood; and that in His Day the righteous shall flourish and all the evil-doers shall be cut off in the Second Death. Well did the Apostle warn us not to depart from "the faith once delivered to the saints." Well were we told that many would depart from that faith, giving heed to spirits that would lead them astray and to doctrines of demons (1 Timothy 4:1), quite unlike the glorious, loving Gospel of God's Love, and His Mercy that endureth forever!

Our Golden Text assures us that the Church, now being called to sit with Christ in His Throne in due time, must be girded with humility, as servants one of another; for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Therefore only the humble will receive the great gift of the Kingdom honors and opportunities.

JUNE 15

And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David—
Isa. 55:3.

All who hungered and thirsted after righteousness, whose souls thirsted after God as the hart for the water-brook, and who, having found Him, consecrated themselves to Him and received the anointing of the holy Spirit, witnessing with their spirits as sons of God, and who as anointed sons could discover in themselves the worthy traits of true sons—loyalty, faithfulness, zeal, energy, courage, discretion, *etc.*—these constitute the class with whom the Lord has made an everlasting covenant and to whom belong "the sure mercies of David"—Z '96, 29 (R 1936).

Covenants are of two kinds, a promise binding unconditionally one party to another, or a contract binding two parties conditionally to one another. The covenant here referred to (the sure mercies of David) is of the former class. David, the Beloved, is the Christ class; the sure mercies of David are the promises belonging to this class. They are sure because secured by God's Oath, and are everlasting because their benefits will be enjoyed eternally. They are a wonderful heritage. How goodly a portion such have from the Lord!—P '33, 79.

Parallel passages: Gen. 22:16-18; 2 Sam. 23:5; Psa. 89:34-37; Acts 13:34; Rom. 9:7-13; Gal. 3:8, 9, 14-19, 26-29; 4:21-31; Heb. 6:13-20; 11:17-19; 2 Cor. 1:20.

Hymns: 27, 41, 330, 333, 72, 58, 204.

Poems of Dawn, 9: *The Oath-Bound Promise.*

Tower Reading: Z '09, 27 (R 4318).

Questions: What have the promises meant to me this week? How have I used them? What results followed?

THE OATH-BOUND PROMISE—THE GOSPEL

GEN. 22:16-18. GAL. 3:8, 16, 29.

FROM the Scriptures of truth this conclusion we draw:

—2 Tim. 3:16; John 17:17.

Neither wisdom of men nor works of the Law

—1 Cor. 1:19; Isa. 5:21; Rom. 3:20.

Have the power to cleanse, to forgive, or to save,

—Acts 13:39; Rom. 10:4; Heb. 7:19.

To restore from the curse, or redeem from the grave.

—Gal. 3:21; 2:16, 21.

Men are saved by their faith in the Crucified One,

—Rom. 10:9; Acts 16:31; Heb 11:6.

When His love and His goodness to them are made
known.

—Rom. 10:13-15; 1 Cor. 1:21; John 3:16-18; 1 Tim. 2:3-6.

Saving faith comes by hearing the life-giving Word,
—Rom. 10:17; Phil. 2:16.

And the mercy of God through the Savior conferred.
—2 Cor. 5:19; 1 Tim. 2:3-6

All who will may be saved by obedient faith,
—John 20:31; Heb. 5:9.

And may gain life unending through Christ, by His
death.

—Mark 10:30; Rom. 5:10.

For the Gospel salvation to all is made free:
—Titus 2:11

As they heed its instruction their judgment will be.
—Rom 2:16; John 3:18.

Endless life is for those who the Gospel accept,
—John 3:16; Mark 10:30; Rom 6:23.

But death is the portion of those who reject.
—Acts 3:23; Heb. 10:26, 27; Rom. 6:23.

For there's no other way that's revealed by the Lord,
—Acts 4:12; John 10:1, 7, 9; 14:6.
To redeem fallen man but through Christ and His Word.
—Titus 2:13, 14; Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19.

The heavens are the Lord's, but the earth He hath given
—Psa. 115:16; Isa. 45:18.

To the children of men, as their home and their heaven.
—Psa. 37:29; Matt. 6:10.

Wicked rulers and nations thus far have borne sway
—Dan. 2; 2 Tim. 3:13; Isa. 60:2.
And their reign has led down from the gold to the clay.
—Dan. 2:31-34.

But the time for the world's promised blessing is near,
—Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Psa. 72:17; Rev. 15:4.

When the true Light that lighteth all men shall appear.
—John 1:4, 7, 9; 8:12.

God has been taking out from the world for His name
—Acts 15:14; Psa. 45:10, 11.

A faithful, tried people with Jesus to reign.
—2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:21; 5:9, 10; 14:1-5.

Those sleeping in Christ are the first to arise,
—1 Cor. 15:23, 52; 1 Thes. 4:16.

And with "those who remain" meet the Lord in the skies,
—1 Thes. 4:17; Mark 13:27; John 14:3.

For He comes to the earth, with His chosen, again,
—Zech. 14:4, 5; 1 Thes. 3:13; Jude 14.

And over the people in justice He'll reign.

—Matt. 25:31, 32; Luke 1:32, 33; Isa. 2:2, 3; 9:6, 7.

As a Body perfected the "seed" will then bless

—1 Cor. 12:27; Col. 1:18; Gen. 22:18.

All the peoples of earth with the blessings of peace.

—Gal. 3:8, 16, 29; Luke 2:10, 14.

These elect ones with Christ shall forever abide,

—1 Thes. 4:17.

As His loved and honored and glorified Bride.

—John 3:29; Psa. 45:13, 14; Rom. 8:17, 18; Rev. 21:9.

All the powers of earth to an end shall be brought,

—Psa. 10; Rev. 2:26, 27; Jer. 25:2 9, 33.

And their rule and authority soon come to naught.

—1 Cor. 15:24; Phil. 2:10.

All their glory and pride like the chaff pass away,

—Dan. 2:35, 44.

And Christ and His chosen in mercy bear sway.

—Dan. 7:27; Psa. 22:27, 28; Luke 22:29, 30; 19:17, 19.

When He speaks to the earth she uncovers her slain,

—Isa. 26:19, 21; Hosea 13:14; Rev. 20:14.

And they all hear His voice and to life rise again.

—John 5:28; 1 Cor. 15:22.

He must reign till all things unto Him are subdued,

—1 Cor. 15:25, 28; Psa. 110:1; Eph. 1:10.

And the face of the earth from the curse is renewed.

—Rev. 22:3; 21:4, 5.

These times of refreshing and blessing are near,

—Acts 3:19, 21; Matt. 24:33.

Christ's life-giving power will shortly appear.

—Matt 28:18; John 11:25; Col. 3:3, 4; Rev. 22:17.

He will banish the curse and perfection restore,

—Psa. 104:30; Isa. 25:6-9; Rev. 22:3.

And the earth fill with gladness and beauty once more.

—Isa. 35; 51:11; 55:10-13; Ezek. 36:35.

Then sorrow and death and corruption will cease,

—Psa. 30:5; 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:4.

And the world shall be clothed in the garments of peace.

—Zech. 9:10; Isa. 2:4.

When He rules in the earth the glad tidings are heard,

—Psa. 22:28; Isa. 11:9; 45:23; Acts 15:16, 17.

And the world shall remember and turn to the Lord.

—Psa. 22:27

All nations shall worship the Lord then with fear,

—Psa. 67:4-7; 86:9; Rev. 15:4.

And all men join in praise when His words they shall
hear.

—Rev. 5:13; Psa. 102:15; Isa. 29:18-24.

When the Spirit of grace rests on Israel again,

—Rom. 11:26; Jer. 32:40.
And they look upon Him whom in wrath they had slain.
—Zech. 12:10; Acts 2:23, 36.

They will bitterly mourn and acknowledge their sin,
—Ezek. 36:31; 16:61, 63.
And gladly accept Him, their long-looked-for King.
—Isa. 25:9; Matt 23:39; Luke 3:15.
Then the promised possession the Lord will restore,
—Ezek. 36:24; 37:21; Jer. 32:37.
And their numerous sins He'll remember no more.
—Jer. 31:33, 34; Ezek. 36:33; Rom. 11:27.

Jerusalem will, with the Lord as its Light,
—Acts 15:15, 16; Zech. 6:12, 13; Isa. 40:1-11; 33:20-24.
Be the glory of earth and its joy and delight.
—Isa. 52:9, 10; 65:18, 19; Psa. 48:2.
From this City most glorious life's waters shall flow,
—Zech. 14:8; Joel 3:18; Rev. 22:1.
And the life-giving trees on its borders shall grow.
—Ezek. 47:1, 12; Rev. 22:1, 2.

As the curse is removed this blest City of love
—Rev. 22:3.
Is enlarged and made one with the City above.
—Rev 21:10-27; Dan. 2:35, 44.
All honor and glory to God shall be given,
—Num. 14:21; Rev. 5:12.
And His will on the earth will be done as in heaven.
—Matt 6:10

R4318: THE THREE GREAT COVENANTS

CHRISTENDOM in general recognizes only two Covenants, the Old or Law Covenant, with Moses as its mediator, and the New Covenant, with Christ as its Mediator. Christendom may be said to know nothing whatever about the Abrahamic Covenant. When rarely they recognize the Abrahamic Covenant at all, or enter it into their calculations, they identify it with the New Covenant. We all inherited this general line of thought through Sunday-School sermons, commentaries, etc. It is not strange, therefore, that we all had this confused conception of this subject. Gradually, as a part of the light due to the Church in the end of this age, we got to see that there are three Covenants, instead of two, as we first supposed. We got to see that the Abrahamic Covenant, the original one, is the grandest and best of the three, and that from it the other two proceeded. This light upon the Divine purpose we began to set forth in the WATCH TOWER in 1880, and later elaborated the same thought in the *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices*. In the latter we set forth that these Covenants are represented in the garments of the High Priest, in the ephod of two parts, with its shoulder-clasps and jeweled breast plate. However, we did not discern so sharply as we now do the clear-cut distinctions between those three Covenants. And is not this in full accord with the Lord's

general dealing with us and with all people throughout the age? Is it not his proposition that the "Path of the just shall shine more and more unto the perfect day"? We believe that it is.

GROWING IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE

What we now see still more distinctly it is our duty and privilege to lay before the Household of Faith. We remind you, however, that as it took some of us quite a while to get a proper focus upon the Abrahamic Covenant, it may now take some of us a considerable time to still further differentiate between the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant. Remember also that a clear understanding of every detail of God's Plan, while desirable, is not necessarily essential to our blessing thereunder. For instance, we believed in the precious blood of Christ and were justified thereby freely from all things, when we did not at all understand the philosophy of the Atonement—even as the majority of Christian people do not understand it now. The increasing knowledge did not bring increasing justification, but it did bring increased appreciation and love and devotion and opportunity for greater harmony with the Divine purposes better understood.

I.—GRACE. II.—LAW. III.—WORKS

St. Paul pointed out to us most distinctly that the original Covenant made with an oath to Abraham was in every way the superior one and that it, being a one-sided Covenant, an unconditional promise, has no mediator. St. Paul tells us that the Law Covenant was "added" to the Abrahamic Covenant in God's dealing with the nation of Israel. It is called a Law Covenant because the benefits of that Covenant were offered only to those who would keep the Law in all its requirements—inviolable. He calls it the Hagar Covenant, because it was a bondage and because its offspring, the Jewish nation, could not inherit the promised blessings and privileges. He tells us that it made nothing perfect, brought nothing to perfection. Although faith had a place and the grace of God had some manifestation towards Israel, yet neither faith nor grace affected their Covenant, which was hard and fast and demanded obedience to the works of the Law—"He that doeth these things shall live by them." Since none could do perfectly, that Covenant of works brought only condemnation of their imperfect works. It had a mediator, Moses, but he was unable to accomplish anything for the people, because of their imperfection through heredity. We properly call this the Law Covenant.

The Apostle points that as Hagar's child was born before Isaac, who represented The Christ, Head and Body, "The New Creation," so the nation of Israel, Moses and all the people baptized into him in the sea and in the cloud, "The house of servants," would be developed before Spiritual Israel, the New Creation—Christ and all the members of the house of sons of spirit-begetting.

As the Covenant of Grace (Sarah) existed before the Law Covenant was added to it, so it continued to exist after the Law Covenant was set aside as a Covenant, its prize of life eternal having been won by "the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a Ransom for all." So, then, the Covenant of Grace (Sarah), which preceded the Law Covenant (Hagar) four

hundred and thirty years, continued alive during the whole period of the Law Covenant, but without children, and then brought forth the Head of the Seed, Jesus. The Law Covenant was then cast aside—"Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman"—The Christ, the Heir of the original promise, now being developed. From the Scriptural standpoint the Resurrection is the birth; as, for instance, our Lord is the "First-Born from the dead, the First-Born amongst many brethren," and "his brethren," "his members," "his Bride" (three different names for the "elect" Church), must all be brought forth from the dead, all be "changed" to spirit condition before the Seed of Abraham will be complete.

**"IF YE BE CHRIST'S, THEN ARE YE ABRAHAM'S SEED
AND HEIRS."—GAL. 3:29**

This is the Mystery—the selection of the Church as the Bride of Christ during this Gospel Age, to be sharers with their Redeemer in the sufferings of this present time, and also in the glory that shall follow. Hence the Apostle was very solicitous that he might have share in "His Resurrection," The Christ Resurrection, "The First Resurrection." Not until that "First Resurrection" is finished will the Seed of the Sarah Covenant be fully born. This is quite in accord with the prophetic statement, "Shall I bring to the birth (deliver the Head), and not cause to come forth (the Body)." (Isa. 66:9.) The intimation is that so surely as Jesus, the Head of the Body, was brought forth in the Resurrection, born from the dead, so surely will all the members of his Body share with him his glorious "change" from mortality to immortality, from earthly to heavenly nature.

What about the Jews under the Law (Hagar) Covenant? Were they on that account cut off from the very privileges and blessings which they so desired—of being Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the promise? We answer, Yes. The Apostle shows that the children of the bond-woman could not be heirs with the children of the free-woman. How, then, did the apostles and others, who were of Israel according to the flesh, come into relationship with Christ and the Sarah Covenant (of grace)? The Apostle tells us that as a human marriage is dissolved by the death of one of the parties, so those of the Jews who could recognize by faith that Christ's death had fulfilled the terms of the Law Covenant could realize that that Covenant was dead, and hence, that they were freed from it and could become married to another—united to Christ. On the contrary any Jew who does not recognize that Christ, by his death, has "made an end of the Law, nailing it to his cross," and who still continues to believe in that Covenant, is as firmly bound thereby as though the Covenant were still alive; just as a woman whose husband was really dead, but she *thought him alive*, could not conscientiously marry another.

"WHEN I SHALL TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS"

The Apostle explains that all of that nation who lacked proper faith in Christ were cast off, "blinded," not forever, but until the completion of the House of Sons, the New Creation, the spirit members of the spiritual Body of spiritual Israel—The Christ. Ah! but, says one, if they be cast off, "blinded," until the elect Church is complete, then they can have no part in it; and, being under the conditions of the Hagar (Law) Covenant, will

they not be in an unsatisfactory state, under a New Covenant? And according to this evidence, did not God rather deceive the nation of Israel, when he entered into the Law Covenant with them at Sinai, knowing that they could not keep it, and could not get life under it, and yet permitting them, so supposing, to put themselves under that bondage? Are not the Lord's ways just and equal?

Yes, we answer, and the full scope of the Divine purpose when seen is glorious in its harmony. The difficulty in the past has been that we have seen as through an obscured glass, and not face to face. Now we perceive that God intends to recognize two seeds of Abraham, the one heavenly, like unto the stars of heaven; the other earthly, like unto the sands of the seashore. The attempt of the Law Covenant to bring forth the natural seed first was abortive—a failure. First must come the spiritual Christ, Head and Body, partaker of the divine nature, heir of all things. Then God's favor will return to natural Israel. But since the Law Covenant completed its purpose and was demonstrated to be unavailable for them, because of the weaknesses of the flesh, God purposes to make with that nation, and with that nation alone, a New Covenant. Not a single statement of Scripture identifies the New Covenant with the Gentiles. On the contrary, it is Israel's New Covenant given to displace the Old or Law Covenant. Let us note well that the great mass of the early Church were Hebrews and that the Apostle's references to the New Covenant are almost exclusively in his epistle to the Hebrews. One exception is in Rom. 11:27, where the Apostle, although addressing Christians of Gentile birth, tells them that natural Israel was cast off for their sakes, but is still beloved for the fathers' sake, and is again to have Divine favor, under a special Covenant. The other (2 Cor. 3:6) refers to the royal priesthood as able (qualified) servants of the New Covenant—dying with Christ for its sealing.—Mal. 3:1.

The more closely we investigate the New Covenant, the more we must be convinced of this fact—that it belongs to Israel alone, including the two nations into which they divided at the death of Solomon—Israel and Judah. Note the statement of the Prophet, "Behold the days will come, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the Covenant [the Law Covenant] which I made with them when I took them by the hand and led them out of the land of Egypt." The Apostle, endeavoring to prove to the Jews that they could gain nothing under the Law Covenant, points out this prophecy, and tells them that the fact that God speaks of this as a New Covenant implies that a preceding [Law] Covenant had become old, valueless, and was preparing to pass away—"In that he saith, a New Covenant, he hath made the first old; now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."—Heb. 8:13.

THE OATH-BOUND COVENANT SURE—HEB. 6:17-20

The New Covenant is to take the place of the old and unsatisfactory one. There were two old Covenants, the Grace, or Sarah Covenant, and the Law, or Hagar Covenant. Which did the Apostle mean had grown old, valueless, and would pass away and give place to the New Covenant? Surely there can be no doubt or misunderstanding on this point. He meant the Law Covenant, for he says so. He did not mean the original Grace or

Sarah Covenant, for he points out that our claim to relationship to God is under that original Covenant, as members of the Body of Christ, members of the Bride of Christ, Joint-Heirs with him. Our Lord Jesus, by his obedience, became heir of all, heir of the original Covenant and heir also of the Law Covenant. Of the people there was none with him, neither Jews nor Gentiles. But by the grace of God there was provision made, as we have seen, that any Jew, seeing that the Law Covenant was dead, nailed to the cross, might become betrothed to Christ. They did not need to wait for the New Covenant, the provisions of which apply only to those on the earthly plane. Instead, by a faith justification and a consecration unto death, they were counted worthy of begetting to the new nature—betrothal to Christ. And similarly Gentiles, favored of God by the hearing ear and seeing eye of faith, were subsequently privileged to go through the same process, except that they did not need to reckon themselves dead to the Law Covenant, because they never were under it. Otherwise, recognizing Christ's death as the blood of the original Covenant, typified by Abraham's offering up his son, these also were reckoned justified and, presenting their justified bodies to the Lord as sacrifices, they were begotten of the same holy Spirit as the Jews, to be fellow-members of the same Body—the Body of Christ.

We come now to the other part of the question: What provision has God made for those Jews who bound themselves under the Law Covenant, from Moses' day down to the first advent; and for those who since then have not discerned the death of the Law Covenant and who will not be made aware of it until after the spiritual Seed shall have been completed and glorified? If they have not lost all share and privileges in connection with God's special mercies, where do they come in? We answer that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others before the Law Covenant were not bound by it, yet were not in the fullest sense justified to life until the Abrahamic Covenant had been established at Calvary. Their faith, then, entitled them to a share in the merits of that sacrifice. Likewise throughout the period of the Law Covenant, before it was annulled at the cross, there were Ancient Worthies who lived above the masses of their time, and who, although bound by the Law, had above it a living faith in the original Oath-Bound (Sarah) Covenant of Grace. These in the Divine records were entitled to their share of that grace, as soon as the merit of Calvary's sacrifice had been presented on behalf of believers, when Jesus "ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God on our behalf." Although they lived while the Law Covenant was alive, they foresaw its death and trusted not in it, but in the superior Covenant of Grace. Hence these in due time will come forth to a life resurrection, not because of their relationship to the Law Covenant, under which they lived, nor because of their relationship to the New Covenant, of which some of them knew nothing, but because of their relationship to and faith in the original (Sarah) Covenant of Grace.

Thus the Scriptures account for the faithful ones of the past under the Covenant of Grace. But what now shall we say respecting those earthly Israelites, who lived not on that higher plane of faith, but of whom the Apostle says, "Our twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night hope to come" unto this promise. (Acts 26:7.) Were they all deceived? Will they get those special blessings?

GOD'S GIFTS AND CALLINGS SURE.—ROM. 11:29-32

Nay, we answer, the gifts and calling of God are things not to be repented of. He who knew the end from the beginning knew exactly what Israel would be and do, and was not disappointed, and all of the plans and promises to that nation were made from the standpoint of this knowledge. Although the chief feature of the Sarah Covenant was secured by our Lord Jesus as a trophy of his victory over sin and death, and although he laid down his human nature completely to this end, nevertheless the Divine arrangement is such that the blood of Christ, the merit of his sacrifice of earthly things, must accrue to the benefit of the natural seed of Abraham, because it all goes to seal the New Covenant, which belongs exclusively to fleshly Israel. The opportunity granted to both the Jews and Gentiles to become Joint-Heirs with the Redeemer was based upon their offering themselves to him in sacrifice, and his acceptance of their offerings as his own—his sacrificing them throughout this age as his own flesh—and God's acceptance of them as New Creatures, begotten of the Spirit, as brethren of Christ, or the betrothed of Christ, or members of his Body. Only by thus sharing with our Lord, drinking his cup, being baptized into his baptism of death, surrendering all into his hand, can we have fellowship with him in his sufferings; and his death (including ours) seals the New Covenant in his blood, of which he said, "Drink ye *all of it*." In his cup we are partakers, joint-sacrificers.—1 Cor. 10:16.

Thus while natural Israel had been counted enemies for our sakes, for the Gospel's sake, our only opportunity for gaining the great prize is in connection with the sealing of a New Covenant between God and Israel. How beautifully the features of the Divine program balance! Their loss was our gain, and our gain through sacrifice becomes their gain; and, altogether, the Lord will be glorified!

As already shown, the New Covenant will not be sealed, ratified, until the sacrifices of The Christ shall have been finished. And the finishing of these sacrifices closes the work of this great Day of Sacrifice and Atonement. With the second presentation of the blood of Atonement in the Most Holy, at the end of this age, the New Covenant with Israel will be sealed, and the blessing of the Lord will begin to Israel, "For this is my Covenant with *them*, when I shall take away their sins."—Rom. 11:27.

ABRAHAM'S TWO SEEDS

Not only did the original promise indicate two seeds of Abraham—one as the stars of heaven, and the other as the sands of the sea—but St. Paul elaborates this thought, saying of the promise, "It is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to *all* the seed; not to that only which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (including you who are Romans); as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations." We have seen how Abraham, as a type of God, is the father of the spiritual Seed and how through Christ, by the provision of the New Covenant, the Jewish nation, dead under the Law Covenant, is to be regenerated by The Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant; and that this regeneration will commence at the close of this Gospel Age and the opening of the Millennial Age.

But these are only two—"the (Church) holy nation," and the (Jewish) chosen nation. How do all nations come in? It will not do to say the Body of Christ, the Bride class, fulfils this prophecy, because, although they were taken out of the nations, they are not all nations, and do not even represent all nations. Each first died to his earthly estate and nationality, before he was begotten of the holy Spirit to be a member of the holy nation, the New Creation.

The Scriptures distinctly show that Christ and his Church, spirit beings, must constitute the Kingdom class, but they also show that the Ancient Worthies, and through them the nation of Israel under the New Covenant, will become the representatives of the heavenly Kingdom amongst men. It will be with these that the blessing of the Lord in the Millennial morning will begin. Thus we read of Jacob's trouble, that he shall be saved out of it and that the Lord will restore their judges as at the first, and their law-givers as at the beginning—the Ancient Worthies resurrected on the earthly plane. (Jer. 30:7; Zech. 12:7.) The New Covenant will be the Law Covenant over again, only that it will have the better Mediator—The Christ, Head and Body, who will be able to make allowances for the imperfections of Israel's heredity. The sins of the past will all be forgiven, their physical blemishes waiting for restitution. They will be dealt with according to what they are, allowances being made in each individual case, and each will be required to heed the voice of the antitypical Moses. "And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not heed that Prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people."—Acts 3:23.

HOPE FOR THE MANY NATIONS

Since God's favors are thus marked out for the heavenly and the earthly Seeds of Abraham—the earthly through the heavenly—it follows that the blessing of the other nations will come about through their affiliation with these. In other words, we may understand that the Divine Government established in Israel in the hands of the Ancient Worthies will be the center of Divine favor, and the people of other nationalities must come to this center for their supplies of truth and grace. Thus the Prophet represents the matter, saying, "Many nations shall go and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain (Kingdom) of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the Law shall go forth from Mount Zion (the spiritual Kingdom) and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem (the center of the earthly Kingdom)."—Micah 4:2.

As thus all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues shall be brought gradually to an appreciation of the Divine Plan; they shall all be blessed with Restitution privileges and opportunities and with an enlightenment from the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, which then through the appointed channels will be flooding all the earth. Thus will the original Covenant have its amplified fulfilment; first, in The Christ, the spiritual Israel; secondly, under the New Covenant with Israel after the flesh; and through these bless all the families of the earth, so that all the willing and obedient may gradually attain to the standards of the children of God and be possessed of the "liberties of the sons of God"—freedom from sin, sorrow, pain and death. As the old Law Covenant was with Israel only, so the New (Law) Covenant will be with Israel only. Other nations will share it by

becoming Israelites, "Proselytes of the gate," not under the old but under the New Covenant. (Ezek. 16:60, 61.) "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

"Know your calling." Let us who have accepted the Divine call in Christ bear in mind that, according to the Apostle's declaration, we are the children of the Sarah Covenant. We are the Bride of Isaac, and his Joint-Heirs, of whom it is written, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the promise." Our only relationship to the New Covenant is that the Father drew us to Jesus and Jesus covered us with his robe of righteousness and thus made it possible for us to be called to joint-fellowship with himself in the "better sacrifices," *participation* in the "cup" of suffering and death—"the blood of the New Covenant"—for the sealing of the New Covenant for Israel, under which all the families of the earth will get a blessing. Thus in the divine purpose our Lord's death or blood justified the Church and (with the Church's) will seal the New Covenant for Israel and through Israel will become effective to all of Adam's race. "As *all in Adam* die, even so *all in Christ* shall be made alive—every man in his own order."

The Church comes into Christ as his Members or Body or Bride. Israel will come into The Christ family as children. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children." And this same privilege shall extend to *all*—to become *regenerated* "in the regeneration" when we shall sit with him on his throne.

THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

Both the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant are Scripturally styled "The Everlasting Covenant," in contrast with the Law Covenant, which passed away, a failure because of its "unprofitableness." (Heb. 7:18.) The one is perpetuated in the other, even as the spiritual Seed (spiritual Israel) will rule and bless through the earthly Seed (fleshly Israel). Note the Scripture testimony that the original Grace (or Sarah) Covenant is everlasting. (Gen. 17:7, 13, 19; 2 Sam. 23:5; Psa. 105:8-10.) Note other Scriptures which apply the same term prophetically to the New Covenant. (Jer. 32:40; 31:31, 32; Ezk. 16:60.) Note carefully the context in each instance, that the reference is to the Millennium.

THE BLOOD OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

The blood of the Everlasting Covenant is the "blood of Jesus," his sacrifice, through the merit of which *believers* are now "*justified by faith*" under the Grace or Sarah Covenant (not by the New Covenant which does not yet exist and which is to be made only with Israel). And the blood or sacrifice of Jesus is "the blood of the New Covenant," yet to be established with Fleshly Israel, just the same *only* that by the Father's good pleasure Jesus is now accepting the "little flock" as his members and counting their sacrifice or blood as a part of his own.

Note how this is set forth in Isaiah 55:1-3. Here believers of this Gospel Age are described as those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Under the Father's drawing they come to Jesus *now*. They are not of those who, blind and deaf under Satan's power,

love darkness rather than light and will need the Kingdom regulations and corrections to make them bow and confess, under the New Covenant arrangement with Israel and indirectly with all nations.

To these hungry, thirsty, seeing, hearing, believers the Lord offers the "fatness" or cream of the Everlasting Covenant, saying, Obey and your soul shall live and I will give unto you the sure or promised mercies of David. David means beloved and is another name for the Redeemer, the antitypical King of Israel by Divine appointment.

This prophecy evidently, therefore, is the prophecy of the call of this Gospel Age to share with Jesus the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom. Note the context, "A nation that thou knowest not shalt thou call, and a nation that knew thee not shall run unto thee." (V. 5.) Unquestionably this is the Church—Spiritual Israel, "a holy nation," a peculiar people, chosen out of all nations to the heavenly Kingdom of the Millennium.

Note the description of Christ Jesus and his "Body" in Isaiah 42:1-7. Note that Messiah is "*given*" for [sacrificed in the interest of] a Covenant to *the* people (Israel) and for a light to the nations or heathen, to enable them all to come in that light under the blessings of Israel's New Covenant.

Come now to Hebrews 13:20, "Now the God of peace who brought again from the dead the Great Shepherd of the sheep (Jesus), *through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant make you perfect.*" Does this refer to our justification from Adamic guilt and reconciliation to God? Not at all. The Father will have nothing to do with us (except to "draw" us to Jesus for justification and consecration) until *after* our justification. Then his mighty power which brought our Great Shepherd from the tomb to glory and immortality begins to mightily "work in us to will and to do his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13.) If we abide in his love he will perfect us as *New Creatures* by the privileges granted us of sharing in the sufferings of Christ—*participating in the shedding of the blood of the Everlasting Covenant*, which as the New Covenant will bring blessings to Israel and then to the world. The Greek word here rendered "perfect you" signifies "knit you together," that is, make you completely one with the Shepherd as his "members" both in sufferings and in glory to follow.

Note also that in Hebrews 10:29 it is the blood of the Covenant that *sanctified* and not the blood that *justified* that, sinned against, merits the Second Death. We were justified by faith in the blood of Jesus. We were sanctified by our consecration to drink of his cup—the blood of the New Covenant. Only those who have *gone on* to this second degree and presented themselves as sacrificers (Romans 12:1) and have been accepted or sanctified by the begetting of the holy Spirit, as members of the "Body" of Christ and sons of the Highest, *can* commit the sin unto death. "If any man [thus presented and sanctified] draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back unto perdition"—Second Death.—Heb. 10:39.

Let us now briefly refer to all the Scriptures which mention the New Covenant, that we may note their full harmony with the foregoing. We have already examined the one

statement connected with our text and see that it applies to the closing of this age—a shaking of the nations and everything out of harmony with God, preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom, as the foundation of the New Covenant blessings to the world during the Millennium. There are just eight other texts in the New Testament which refer to the New Covenant:

(1) "For this cause he is made Mediator of a better Covenant [not better than the Grace or Sarah Covenant, but better than the Law Covenant], which was established upon better promises." (Heb. 8:6.) Our Lord Jesus had already begun the work necessary to his fulfilling this office of Mediator of the New Covenant. He had laid the foundation, but he had not yet accepted to himself all the members the Father intended and foreknew and predestinated. We notice from the context that the contrast still is between the Law Covenant and its Mediator Moses, and the New Covenant, superior because of its better Mediator, the Messiah. Moses could offer only imperfect sacrifices, but Christ, by antitypical sacrifices of the bullock and goat (himself and his Body), makes satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and prepares to mediate the New Covenant, which God has promised shall be his channel for blessing Israel and the world.

(2) In the succeeding verse (8) the Apostle supports his argument by a quotation from the Old Testament promise to Israel of a New Covenant, saying, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." Clearly this does not refer to Spiritual Israel.

(3) Neither does the next reference to the New Covenant, which is a part of the same quotation from Jer. 31:31, refer to Spiritual Israel—"Not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers ... For this is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."—Heb. 8:8-10.

The days referred to in the above are "after" the days of this Gospel Age. The Apostle goes on to say, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest, and I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." This is a description of what will take place during the Millennium, and not a description of what we see about us today. God has not yet put his laws into the hearts of the house of Israel, and they are not his people, as he states they will be at the proper time in the end of this age when the New Covenant becomes operative. Compare Acts 15:15.

(4) "In that he saith, a New Covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Notice that the Apostle is not saying one word about the New Covenant being for the Church of Christ. His readers understood very well that they came in under the Sarah Covenant. But certain Judaizing teachers insisted that they must be under the Hagar Covenant, as well as under the Sarah Covenant. And this is what the Apostle is disputing. He is making clear that the (Hagar)

Law Covenant would not continue, but perish, and that, in God's due time, he would provide a New Covenant to take its place with Israel.

(5) It was necessary that Jews be redeemed from the "dead works" of the *old* Law Covenant and that a New one be made for them by Christ—Head and members. The old one was sealed by the blood of *bulls and goats*, but the New one by "better sacrifices." Antitypically the blood of the bullock has been offered, and soon that of the goat will be presented.—Heb. 9:14-23.

(6) "This is the Covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now, where remission of sins is, there is no more offering for sin." (Heb. 10:16-18.) The Apostle is arguing along general lines. He would have his hearers understand that when an acceptable sacrifice has been offered to God for sins, the transaction is a closed one, and the sacrifice needs no repetition. He shows that this will be so in the future for the world. When the "better sacrifices," sealing the New Covenant, shall have been offered to God by our Redeemer, and accepted by him, it will mean the cancellation of all condemnation. On the strength of this work for the future the Apostle urges that we, the Body of Christ, whose sins have been atoned for by our Lord, the first sacrifice of the Day of Atonement (in the type the bullock), may count that our sins are completely cancelled, and will be remembered against us no more. "For by one offering he (Christ) hath perfected forever them that are sanctified": all justified by faith, who proceed to full consecration and sanctification. If numbered amongst the sanctified, we may know that our sins are completely obliterated from the Divine record, so far as justice is concerned, and that we have entered upon a new record as New Creatures and will be held accountable only for trespasses against our covenant to the Lord, our vow—by which we became members of the Christ, the Seed of Abraham, and heirs of the great (Sarah) Covenant of Grace.

(7) "For this is my Covenant to *them*, when I shall take away *their* sins. As concerning the Gospel *they* are enemies for *your* sakes; but as touching the elect, *they* are beloved for the fathers' sake." (Rom. 11:27, 28.) There is no room to doubt that the Apostle here is referring to Israel's Covenant, the New Covenant, which God will make with them after this Gospel Day. The Apostle says the Covenant will be made when, or at the time that the Lord will "take away their sins." That time has not yet come. Israel is still under Divine condemnation, though we are now privileged to speak comfortably unto them and to assure them that the time for their deliverance is nigh, the time when the Mediator of the New Covenant will have taken on the last members of the spirit Body, the Gospel Church, "changed" by the power of the First Resurrection; the time when he will mediate that New Covenant, satisfy the demands of Divine justice on behalf of the world, as he already has satisfied it on behalf of the Church. Then he will become, as previously intended and declared, the great Mediator of the New Covenant between God and mankind in general—the Church being the exception, under the Covenant of Grace. Then will he begin his Millennial Kingdom: "For he must reign until he shall have put all enemies under his feet, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Then all who

drank of his "cup," the blood [sacrifice] of the New Covenant, as members of the Spiritual Seed, will reign with him.—Gal. 3:29.

(8) "But ye are approached unto Mt. Zion, ... to the New Jerusalem, ... to the general assembly and Church of the Firstborns, ... and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant and to the blood of sprinkling." (Heb. 12:24.) Here spiritual Israel is pictured as an army marching and the things at the farther end are seen and to be reached. Jesus reached the end of the way long ago, but the Church of Firstborns is not there yet. Jesus is the Mediator, but he has accepted the Church as his Bride, his Body, and waits for her arrival. The picture shows that the New Law Covenant will be established as the old Law Covenant was, only on a higher plane and through a greater Mediator and by better sacrifices.—Acts 3:23.

Not one of these references to the New Covenant makes the slightest suggestion that it is applicable to the Church. A reference to the original prophecy from which the Apostle quotes shows that it could not apply to the Church, for we there read that the Lord "will take away their stony hearts out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh." This is exactly the Restitution Work which will begin with Israel and extend to all the families of the earth, but it is not at all the work of this Gospel Age, which is far higher. The Lord does not give the "little flock" hearts of flesh, but, justified by faith, allows them to *sacrifice* the flesh, and begets them to a new nature, the glorious Seed of Abraham, through which all the families of the earth shall be blessed, by the inauguration of the New Covenant, sealed, made operative by the merit of the blood of Christ.

JUNE 16

No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby—Heb. 12:11.

It is under such discipline that the soul is mellowed to a loving submission that calmly says, I can do all things, bear all things, through Christ who strengtheneth me. As gradually the dross of the old nature is consumed, and the gold becomes more and more manifest, these precious souls become ever dearer to their loving Lord. So dear are they to Him that in every affliction He is near with His grace to sustain and His presence to cheer; and the deepest shades of sorrow become memory's most hallowed resting places, where the Day Star shines the brightest—Z '96, 44 (R 1943).

By chastisement God's disciplinary measures are meant, and no recipient of them is at the time happy, but rather sad. However, those who permit themselves to be properly disposed by these chastisements are made fruitful by them in the peaceful development of Christlikeness—P '32, 62.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 10:32-34; Job 5:17; Prov. 3:11, 12; Psa. 94:12; 119:75; Jas. 1:12; Rev. 3:19; Acts 14:22; 1 Pet. 5:9; Jas. 3:18.

Hymns: 307, 216, 220, 228, 328, 197, 126.

Poems of Dawn, 187: *Life's Storms are Passing*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 388 (R 5147).

Questions: What disciplinary experiences were mine this week? How were they met? What were their results?

LIFE'S STORMS ARE PASSING

THE storm hath broken and the heavy blast
That stifled morn's free breath, and shook its dew,
Is dying into sunshine; and the last
Dull cloud hath vanished from yon arch of blue.

I know it is but for a day; the war
Must soon be waged again 'twixt earth and heaven;
Another tempest will arise to mar
The tranquil beauty of the fragrant even.

And yet I joy as storm on storm awakes;—
Not that I love the uproar or the gloom;
But in each tempest over earth that breaks,
I count one fewer outburst yet to come.

No groan creation heaves is heaved in vain,
Nor e'er shall be repeated; it is done.
Once heaved it never shall be heaved again.
Earth's pangs and throes are lessening one by one.

So falls the stroke of sorrow, and so springs
Strange joy and comfort from the very grief,
Even to the weariest sufferer; so brings
Each heavy burden its own sweet relief.

One cross the less remains for me to bear;
Already borne is that of yesterday;
That of today shall no tomorrow share;
Tomorrow's with itself shall pass away.

That which is added to the troubled past
Is taken from the future, whose sad store
Grows less and less each day, till soon the last
Dull wave of woe shall break upon our shore.

The storm that yesterday ploughed up the sea
Is buried now beneath its level blue;
One, storm the fewer now remains for me,
Ere sky and earth are made forever new.

R5147: THE PHILOSOPHY OF OUR DAILY EXPERIENCES

"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"—Heb. 12:7.

ALL CHASTENINGS are *testings*, but all chastenings are not necessarily *punishments*. We should judge of the purpose of our experiences by self-examination, that we may ascertain whether in our conduct there has been something out of harmony with the Father's will. In every case our experience is a test of our loyalty of heart—as to our willingness to learn the lessons which the Lord is seeking to teach us and our recognition of the source from which they come.

The trials and difficulties of the consecrated child of God are not to be esteemed as the results of Divine carelessness or indifference in regard to his interests, but rather as the outworkings of Divine providence in his behalf. Those who can see the matter from this viewpoint are thus enabled to learn some of life's most helpful lessons, and are thereby prepared for the glorious future which God has arranged for those who faithfully carry out their Covenant of sacrifice.

Ordinarily the word chastisement is used to signify correction for wrongdoing. But in the Bible, it is especially used to convey the thought of discipline or instruction in righteousness. Sometimes we use it in this way in the ordinary affairs of life. If we *sin*, we receive punishment indeed. But those who are trying to do right are continually receiving discipline of the Lord. There is a purpose in this training, or chastisement. The Church is learning how to build character pleasing in the Father's sight, to be well qualified for particular service; and discipline is the means employed for that instruction.

If a man were about to train a dog for the circus, he would first choose the right kind of animal for that special service. He would not think of selecting any chance poodle that might come to hand, but would find a dog that was capable of being taught. In carrying out his course of instruction, he might find it necessary to chastise the dog in order to teach him some trick. This would not mean that the animal was bad, surly or vicious, but that there was no other way by which he could learn. An animal that was being fitted to guard the house would not need the same training that was necessary for the dog that was to perform in public. The watch-dog must know how to guard property; but the animal that is to jump through hoops, etc., must be trained carefully by those who have in mind his future career.

So with the Church. They need practical lessons in character-development of a very high order, and consequently they are receiving experimental knowledge such as no other creatures in the universe receive. Because they are trying to live righteously, trying to please the Heavenly Father, they are being chastened for instruction, that they may be fully conformed to the Divine will, that they may lay aside their own preferences, that they may not do their own will, but that of the Lord.

Such experiences are not for mankind in general. Such experiences were not given to Adam. He was required to live merely in harmony with his environment and to be obedient to the Heavenly Father. Such experiences are not for the angels. They are required merely to live righteously, to avoid sin and to use their bodies in harmony with the Divine purposes of their creation. They occupy such positions as are natural to them. Therefore the angels have never required chastisements.

SUFFERING DEVELOPS CHARACTER OF A HIGH ORDER

With those, however, who are to be associated with the Redeemer and ultimately to be exalted to the Divine nature and glory, it is necessary that they make special manifestations of loyalty, of self-abasement and of self-sacrifice. What was true of Christ is also true of the Church, which is His Body, and which He purchased with His own precious blood. (Col. 1:24; Acts 20:28.) We are called to follow in His footsteps; hence every son whom the Father receives is chastised.—Heb. 12:6, 7.

Every child of God will need chastening. If we wander from the paths of righteousness, we are chastened to bring us back; but even if we did not wander, we should still need chastisement, that we might learn obedience. Our Lord Himself learned obedience by the things which He suffered. (Heb. 5:8.) Of St. Paul the Lord said, "I will

show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." (Acts 9:16.) The Apostle was put through disciplinary experiences because he was a favored child of God.

We revert to our illustration of the dog under training for a special purpose. The dog must yield himself submissively to his teacher. Another dog that was watching the process by which the one was being trained might think that he was suffering unnecessary hardship, and might feel that if it were himself, he would assert his rights and not suffer so much. But in the end the trained animal would prove to be the more valuable, for the one that had escaped the suffering would remain only a commonplace dog.

So it is with the Church. There are people who say of us, "Those who endeavor to do God's will suffer more than do those who do not try; we do not care to undertake any such experience." These people may succeed in having fewer trials in the present life, but they will have blessings of a lower order in the world to come, when the faithful Church will be glorified with her Lord and Head.

These experiences with trouble are the very tests of character necessary for our development. The reason why some of the consecrated will get into the Great Company is that they have not had enough determination—enough strength of character. In the time of trouble, such will either develop that strength by faithfulness under severe trial or they will go into the Second Death.

The Great Company class are loyal in heart or they would not be in that class. But they are willing to *compromise*; and because of this willingness to do so, they weaken their character. In order to be *overcomers* they must develop this element of character at any cost.

Let us be thankful that we are of those who appreciate the privilege of being trained in the School of Christ—of suffering with Him now and of reigning with Him by and by. In this school we are learning valuable lessons of experience. Here we receive chastisements, many of which are not punishments for sins, but preparation for the work of the next Age. Let us remember that unless we are willing to learn these lessons and to endure hardness, we shall not be prepared to enter into the eternal glory.—2 Tim. 2:3; I Pet. 5:10.

All things are ours; for we are Christ's and Christ is God's, and God called Christ to these glorious experiences. (I Cor. 3:21-23.) Whoever does not appreciate the spiritual joys can hardly be expected to endure the present training with patience and thankfulness. We must see something of "the glory that shall follow" (I Pet. 1:11) in order to realize the necessity of the vicissitudes of the present trial time.

JUNE 17

Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire ... and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver—Mal. 3:2, 3.

The Great Refiner is watching to see how the precious metal of your character reflects His image. Or, in plain language, in every trial He watches to see what influences control our actions, whether they be influences of present advantage, or worldly policy, or personal friendship, or earthly loves—of husband, or wife, or children, or love of ease, or love of peace at any cost; or whether, on the other hand, we are controlled by the naked principles of truth and righteousness; and whether we will defend these principles with zeal and energy at any cost of labor or suffering, or both, and so fight the good fight of faith to the bitter end—even unto death—Z '96, 45 (R 1943).

The two appearances of our Lord, His first and second advents, have been periods of great trial upon the people of God. These periods of presence have tested crucially the heart attitude of every fleshly and every spiritual Israelite. The severest ordeals have come upon them during these periods, in order that their heart condition might be manifested, and all of these tests have been under the superintendence of our Lord. In the Parousia it was more a question as to whether one would be manifested as a new creature or not; in the Epiphany it has been more a question whether one was manifested as of the Little Flock or of the Great Company. In both times the characters as well as the teachings have been tested—P '26, 76.

Parallel passages: Gen. 22:1; Deut. 8:2, 5; Job 1:8—2:10; Dan. 12:10; Jas. 1:2, 3, 12; 1 Pet. 1:6, 7; Heb. 12:1-14; Joel 2:11; Rev. 6:17.

Hymns: 67, 63, 130, 57, 120, 328, 197.
Poems of Dawn, 254: *The Wrath of God*.
Tower Reading: Z '16, 195 (R 5916).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in reference to this text? How were they met? What results did they yield?

THE WRATH OF GOD

THE wrath of God is love's severity
In curing sin—the zeal of righteousness
In overcoming wrong—the remedy
Of justice for the world's redress.

The wrath of God is punishment for sin,
In measure unto all transgression due,
Discriminating well and just between

Presumptuous sins and sins of lighter hue.

The wrath of God inflicts no needless pain,
Merely vindictive, or Himself to please;
But aims the ends of mercy to attain,
Uproot the evil, and the good increase.

The wrath of God is a consuming fire,
That burns while there is evil to destroy
Or good to purify; nor can expire
Till all things are relieved from sin's alloy.

The wrath of God is love's parental rod,
The disobedient to chastise, subdue,
And bend submissive to the will of God,
That love may reign when all things are made new.

The wrath of God shall never strike in vain,
Nor cease to strike till sin shall be no more;
Till God His gracious purpose shall attain,
And earth to righteousness and peace restore.

R5916: SIGNS OF THE PRESENCE OF THE KING

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

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

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

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

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

"SAVED AS THROUGH FIRE"

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

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

The Apostle Paul in his writings lays special emphasis upon the fundamental importance of correct doctrinal teaching. It made no difference whether Paul or Apollos or even an angel from Heaven taught anything, it must be in harmony with the foundation

doctrines which had been given them by the Lord. (Galatians 1:6-12.) He assured the Church that what he had taught them was from God; and that even if an angel should bring them another Gospel, it would be a proof that such angel had deflected from loyalty to the Lord. That Jesus Christ died to secure the Redemption-price for Adam and his race is the foundation doctrine of the Church, which was received from Jesus Himself and from His faithful mouthpieces and which was shown in the Divinely given types of the Law. Whoever taught this fundamental truth faithfully was a real help to the people of God. Yet even such a teacher might help them to build, even on this *proper foundation*, a faith and character structure which would not stand the tests of the great Day of the Lord; for the fire of that Day would surely prove the nature of this structure. Consequently, both teacher and pupil would suffer loss and be saved only "as through fire."

INVULNERABILITY OF THE TRUTH

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

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

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE KING

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

Nevertheless, both the King and the Kingdom are not only *coming, but are here*; and the present troubles and shakings in church and state, and the general awakening of the people are the results of influences emanating from that King and Kingdom. Though men know it not, it is the smiting of the Kingdom of God that is even now preparing for the wreck of all the kingdoms of the earth, that the way may be opened for the establishment

of righteousness in the world, that men's hearts may be humbled and prepared for the righteous Government which is to take control of earth. Worldly men cannot realize this; for this Kingdom cometh not with outward observation—with outward show and display. Therefore they cannot say, "Lo, here," or "Lo, there."

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

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

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

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

While many would rejoice to see society relieved of many of its selfish, life-sapping ulcers, they seem to realize that so just and impartial a Judge as the Lord Himself might cut off certain long-cherished sins to which they desire to cling; they fear to have their

personal selfishness touched. And their fears are well-founded. He will bring to light all the hidden things of darkness, and correct and suppress private as well as public sin and selfishness. He will expose depths of corruption never before realized. He will make "Justice the line and righteousness the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." (R.V.) He will "bring down them that dwell on High, the lofty city [Babylon] He layeth low, ... even to the dust." He will bring down them who have "made lies their refuge."—Isaiah 28:15, 17, 18; 26:5, 6.

LIFT UP TRUTH'S GLORIOUS BANNER!

It is written that the Day of the Lord would come as a thief and a snare upon the whole world, and that only God's fully consecrated Church would be in the light and not be taken unawares. Many of the consecrated have been deceived by looking for the Heavenly King to come again in the flesh. They forgot that the only reason for His coming in the flesh at His First Advent was "for the suffering of death" as man's corresponding-price; and that now He is highly exalted, a glorious spirit Being. "He was put to death in flesh, but made alive in spirit." (1 Peter 3:18.) They forgot that the Apostle Paul also said, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we Him [so] no more." (2 Corinthians 5:16.) The true children of God are coming more and more to see *how* the Master comes at His Second Advent, and are not expecting to see Him in the flesh and with their natural eyes.

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

JUNE 18

In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore—Psa. 16:11.

In the Lord's presence, no matter where we are, is fullness of joy. Let us cultivate the Lord's acquaintance more, drawing near to Him in prayer, in the study of His precious Word, in meditation upon all His goodness, His providential care, the marked manifestations of His grace in our own individual experiences, and His precious promises which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Thus "draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (Jas. 4:8); He will manifest Himself to you and take up His abode with you. It is indeed the will of God that all His children should be happy in Him, that they should be always rejoicing; and if anyone lack this blessing, he is living below his privileges—Z '96, 54 (R 1948).

By the presence of God, we may understand is meant the condition of God's favor in our present sacrificing state, and in our future glorified position. Fullness of joy, that is joy to one's fullest capacity, is the privilege of either condition; and the Christ class, who enjoy His fullest favor, is blessed with eternal pleasures—P '36, 78.

Parallel passages: Acts 2:28; Prov. 4:18; 1 John 3:2; Matt. 5:8; Psa. 17:15; 36:8; Heb. 12:2; Luke 14:14; John 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 14:2, 3, 19; Acts 2:26-28; 26:6, 7; 1 Cor. 15:40-57; 2 Cor. 5:1-5; Phil. 3:10, 11, 21; Rev. 20:4, 6.

Hymns: 179, 32, 109, 273, 201, 176, 58.
Poems of Dawn, 184: *His Will, Not Mine, Be Done*.
Tower Reading: Z '96, 53 (R 1948).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? How did I use it in my daily life? What were the results?

HIS WILL, NOT MINE, BE DONE

O THOU of little faith! why dost thou fear?
Didst thou forget that Jesus is so near?
And hast thou thought that thou must walk alone?
Behold now at thy side the loved One!

Aye, more than this, thou'rt held within His hand,
And 'twas Himself that hath thy trial planned!
There was a *need be* seen by Eye Divine,
Although, perchance, not visible to thine.

And, wherefore wouldst thou see? Thou canst not tell
If what thy heart contends for would be well;
Perhaps thy hope's fruition would be vain,

Or prove a life-long discipline of pain!

Hast thou not seen, in retrospective life,
That will of God which caused thee bitterest strife
Hath turned to sweetness—while the thing He gave
To suit *thy* will grew darker than the grave?

There's rest supreme for souls that choose His will;
A blest security from every ill.
The things God chooses for us never fail!
They have their anchorage within the veil.

R1948: THE CHRISTIAN'S JOY.

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."—Psa. 16:11.

WHEN we consider how much is said in the Scriptures about joy and rejoicing among God's people, we are deeply impressed with the thought that our heavenly Father is very solicitous for the happiness of his children, even in the present life. The worldly minded cannot see this, they look upon the lot of God's children as a hard and joyless one, and upon God as a hard Master, without concern for the happiness of his children. This, however, is only because the natural man cannot receive the things of the spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. But the spiritual-minded have meat to eat that the world knows not of; and their hearts rejoice, and their joy no man taketh from them.

How strange it seems! says the world. Why, there was Paul, a man of great talent and opportunity who might have been somebody in the world: he wasted his talents, was a poor man all his days, homeless, friendless, knocked about and persecuted, a sort of religious fanatic. But Paul, viewing the matter from the standpoint of his spiritual discernment, said, "I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation" (2 Cor. 7:4); for he was one of that anointed body who, like his Lord and Head, could say, "I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad."—Acts 2:25, 26.

So the Psalmist bids all the anointed body rejoice, saying, "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright." (Psa. 33:1.) And Isaiah, speaking for the same class, says, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels."—Isa. 61:10.

This blessed joy, which so wonderfully lifts the soul above all the vicissitudes of the present life, is, as the prophet expresses it, joy in the Lord, not a joy in earthly possessions, or earthly hopes or ambitions. These earthly things are all so transitory and

so changeable that a single blast of adversity may sweep them all from us; but not so is it with those whose hearts are centered in God and to whom he has shown the path of life. These have learned to estimate the things of this present life according to their true values; they see that all of its joys are both transient and unsatisfactory and that the only real value in it is in the opportunities it affords for experience and discipline and education in the things of God and for hearing the call of God and making our calling and election sure. In thus making the proper use of the present life—walking in the path of life which God shows us through his Word—we have the present joys of hope and faith in the things unseen, but sure and eternal; knowing also that by and by in the immediate presence of God we shall have fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore at his right hand—the chief place of favor.

But while the fulness of joy in its widest sense is reserved for that blessed time when we shall be like the Lord and see him as he is (1 John 3:1, 2) and be in his presence and at his right hand (in his chief favor), there is a fulness of joy in the presence and favor of God which is the privilege of every Christian now. Our capacity for joy now is not what it will be by and by, but it is possible now to have our little earthen vessels as full as they can hold of the joy of the Lord. And day by day it is our privilege to realize the presence and favor of God, if, by walking in the path of life, the path of obedience and loving service, we draw near to God. "If a man love me," said our Lord Jesus, "he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."—John 14:23.

In such company as this, can any Christian fail utterly to realize some measure of joy in the Lord? No, if his faith grasps the promise and holds it, the realization of joy in the Lord is sure to follow, and the more firmly his faith lays hold upon the promise the more will he realize its fulfilment, and the more fully will his joys abound; for in the presence of the Lord is fulness of joy, no matter what may be the conditions and circumstances.

In the blessed realization of this experience and the assurance of faith which it gave, in the midst of all his labors, Paul exclaimed, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? ... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 8:33-39.

It was this strong persuasion, this confident faith, of the Apostle that gave him such joy in the midst of all his tribulations. His faith laid hold upon the promises of God with a strong and steady grasp, and love and gratitude impelled him to prompt obedience to the will of God and ardent zeal in his service; and evidently the Lord's promise was fulfilled to him in the abiding presence of Father and Son with him at all times and under all circumstances.

This blessed privilege is ours also, if by faith we enter fully into the Lord's will and favor. And with a blessed realization of the abiding presence of our heavenly Father, and our Lord Jesus at all times, and of their love and favor, and a faith that lays hold of all the exceeding great and precious promises of God, what soul may not rejoice and be glad, even in the midst of deep sorrow or great tribulation? In the Lord's presence, no matter where we are, is fulness of joy. Let us cultivate the Lord's acquaintance more, drawing near to him in prayer, in the study of his precious Word, in meditation upon all his goodness, his providential care, the marked manifestations of his grace in our own individual experiences, and his precious promises which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Thus "draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8), he will manifest himself to you and take up his abode with you.

It is indeed the will of God that all his children should be happy in him, that they should be always rejoicing; and if any one lacks this blessing, he is living below his privileges. Beloved, let us not be contented to live beneath our privileges. Let us appreciate the favor of God to the extent of seeking for it more and more diligently, remembering the exhortation, "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." All the riches of divine favor are ours if in faith and humility we claim them and place ourselves in position to receive them as directed through the Word of God. "Ask and receive, that your joy may be full." And your joy can no man take from you, so long as you abide in Him who is our life, our joy, our rest, our hope.

"Why should the children of the King
Go mourning all the day?"

"Children of the Heavenly King,
As we journey let us sing!"

JUNE 19

Light [Truth] is sown for the righteous, and gladness [the joys of the Truth] for the upright in heart—Psa. 97:11.

The true children of God love the Truth because they have an affinity for it. ... When they have found the Truth they recognize its value; they prize it, and meditate upon it. ... They say, It is just like God: it is the manifestation of His glorious goodness, the reflection of His loving, benevolent, wise and just character. And therefore they love the Truth and the God who gave it; they treasure it up in their hearts and con it over again and again; and as they look into it, and admire all its symmetry and beauty, they strive more and more to conform their own characters to the same lines of beauty and seek to commend it by word and conduct to others, that they also may be blessed by it—Z '96, 55 (R 1949).

As the natural light makes the way clear to the natural eye, so Truth makes plain the way to our eyes of understanding. It is God's provision to open the eyes of understanding of those only whose hearts are in sympathy with righteous principles. To others the Truth would be an injury. The Truth is a blessing to the righteous, and they are a blessing through it, hence its blessings fill their hearts with joy—P '30, 78.

Parallel passages: Dan. 2:28; Amos 3:7; Rom. 16:25, 26; John 15:15; Psa. 29:9, 11; Prov. 3:32; Matt. 11:25; 24:45-47; Luke 8:10; 12:42-44; Rev. 19:9, 10; 22:8, 9, 16.

Hymns: 22, 296, 260, 238, 46, 97, 300.

Poems of Dawn, 61: *Trust Him More*.

Tower Reading: Z '09, 231 (R 4444).

Questions: What conditions did I fulfill to receive the Truth? What has helped or hindered therein?

TRUST HIM MORE

SINCE the Father's arm sustains thee,
Peaceful be;
When a chastening hand restrains thee,
It is He.
Know His love in full completeness
Fills the measure of thy weakness;
If He wounds thy spirit sore,
Trust Him more.

Without measure, uncomplaining,
In His hand
Lay whatever things thou canst not
Understand.

Though the world thy folly spurneth,
From thy faith in pity turneth,
Peace thine inmost soul shall fill,
Lying still.

Like an infant, if thou thinkest
Thou canst stand,
Child-like, proudly pushing back
The proffered hand,
Courage soon is changed to fear,
Strength doth feebleness appear;
In His love if thou abide,
He will guide.

Therefore, whatso'er betideth,
Night or day,
Know His love for thee provideth
Good alway.
Crown of sorrow gladly take,
Grateful wear it for His sake,
Sweetly bending to His will,
Lying still.

To His own the Savior giveth
Daily strength;
To each troubled soul that striveth,
Peace at length.
Weakest lambs have largest share
Of this tender Shepherd's care.
Ask Him not, then, When? or How?
Only bow!

R4444: WANDERING INTO "OUTER DARKNESS"

IN the Scriptures the "outer darkness," the darkness of the world, is frequently mentioned in contrast with the inner light, the light of truth, as Divinely revealed. Thus our Lord said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." And the Apostle reminds us that we were translated out of darkness into God's marvelous light. The world in general is represented as lying in darkness, as being unable to see the light of Truth. Thus again we are told that the light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not. Some of the world are asleep, and hence see not the light, while others are very much awake to worldly aims and worldly ambitions and schemes, but thoroughly blind to the Divine purposes.

To a certain class who have certain characteristics of mind, God is pleased to reveal the light, and to guide them by that light in the right pathway. Such as see and improve the opportunity and walk in the way are called "the children of the light," while others who go contrary are called the "children of darkness." Addressing some of these children of the light, our Lord said, To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to outsiders all of these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.—Luke 8:10.

While it is true that this power to understand is "given," yet it is not given indiscriminately; it is given only to those of certain character. To these alone the light is profitable; to others it would be more or less injurious at the present time. We may well thank God, as Jesus did, that for the time being the Divine purposes are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed only to the "babes." For others to have the light would mean injury to themselves, if not a disordering of the Divine purposes and arrangements. As, for instance, St. Peter tells us that those who crucified the Lord did so in ignorance, in blindness, in darkness, "for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;" even though their hearts might have been no better, they could have regulated their conduct by the greater knowledge and thus the Divine purpose, that Christ should be crucified by them, the just for the unjust, would have been defeated.

In Matthew 6:22, 23, our Lord gives us a suggestion respecting the condition of heart and what it has to do with our ability to see or not to see Divine truths. He says, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." And then he adds, "If the light that is in thee be (become) darkness, how great is that darkness!" Evidently our Lord is using the natural eye and the natural body as an illustration to draw our attention to the higher eyes of understanding and their power to bless and to guide and to control the interests of the body.

A single eye would seem to signify singleness of purpose, or of heart intention toward God, because in the succeeding verse our Lord calls attention to the fact that there are but the two masters—good and evil, righteousness and sin, God and Satan. Those who are under the power of Satan completely are blinded; as St. Paul tells us, The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all those who believe not, lest the glorious light of Divine goodness should shine into their hearts. (2 Cor. 4:4.) The only ones who are not blinded are those who are the servants of God, and the degree of their clearness of vision depends upon the singleness of their eye, their singleness of heart, their singleness of purpose, their loyalty to the one Master, to the principles of his government, etc.

All who have seen the light of "present truth" have therefore reason to be specially congratulated on having passed from darkness to light, on having been delivered from the Kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of God's dear Son, from the dominion of Satan as his servants to be disciples of Christ and servants of God. St. Peter speaks of our translation out of darkness into his marvelous light. St. Paul says, We are not of the night, nor of the darkness. St. John says, In him is no darkness at all. Again, Darkness is past, and the true light now shineth, but he that hateth his brother is in darkness.

THE SINGLE EYE OF LOVE

The point we are establishing is, that as our natural bodies are edified by good eyesight, so as New Creatures we have clearness of spiritual vision in proportion as we have loyalty to the Lord and the enlightening influence of his spirit of holiness, the spirit of love.

The question arises, Is it possible for any of us, after passing from darkness into the Lord's marvelous light, to again get into the dark—to go out of the light? The Scriptures answer that it is possible. They tell us that in certain instances God will force people out of the light into the "outer darkness" common to the world in general; that disloyalty to the Lord and to the principles of his teaching tends in this direction.

We might suppose that those who should thus be cast into "outer darkness," either suddenly or gradually, would be greatly distressed, but, on the contrary, we have every reason to believe that the world in "outer darkness" is not greatly distressed by its darkness, but rather, as our Lord suggests, "loves darkness rather than light"; because it is in an evil condition; because it has not the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love. The inference, therefore, is plain that those who go out of the light into darkness will feel as contented as those who have never come into the light of "present truth"—who even are boastful in respect to the darkness and very unkind in their criticisms of the light—hating the light.

In the Scripture quoted above, under the figure of a single eye, the Lord pictures the singleness of purpose and of heart which must characterize all who become his disciples indeed, or children of light. He even intimates that those who lose this singleness of heart, singleness of eye, singleness of purpose, and then go into darkness, are in some respects in a grosser darkness than are others who have never seen the light. He says, "If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness!" Our experience fully corroborates this. Those who have once been in the light of the Lord's countenance, and in the light of the Divine Word, and who lose this, seem to be in a condition much more to be regretted than that of the world in general who have never had their eyes of understanding opened. None others in the world seem capable of such violations of the spirit of love, the spirit of truth, the spirit of righteousness, the spirit of justice. They seem to be capable of saying and doing and thinking more mean, uncharitable, wicked things, than before they were enlightened.

We have tried for years to see the philosophy of this fact which has been painfully manifest to us on various occasions, and we believe we have found the correct explanation of it as follows:—

THE WORLD-STANDARD VS. NO STANDARD

The natural man guides his conduct, words and thoughts considerably by the conduct and words of his fellowmen. The strongest appeal to the natural man is, What would Mr. Brown, or Mr. and Mrs. Jones, or Mr. and Mrs. Smith think of such words, or such

conduct? This measuring of themselves with others of the same character and standing, and the gauging of conduct by that of others whom they respect, seem to be the only standard by which the world walks. It sees not clearly the principles of righteousness, justice, truth and love.

But when true conversion to the Lord takes place, when the eyes of understanding become opened, new standards appear before the opened eyes of understanding. The Master's word is heard, saying, "Be ye like unto your Father which is in heaven," and "Be ye followers of me," and "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." Some see cross-eyed, endeavoring to serve two masters, and to walk according to two standards—to be pleasing to the Lord, and also to walk according to the earthly standards as formerly. But this is found to be a very unsatisfactory course; it has neither Divine approval nor the approval of worldly friends. Those of single eye, of single purpose, say within themselves to the contrary,

"To my Lord I must be true
Who bought me with his blood."

These soon learn that the world is in darkness, and that to walk with the world, and according to worldly standards, would mean to fail to progress from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, and from glory to glory, under the leadings of the Master, who instructed us to walk in his steps. Hence these of the single eye cut loose entirely from the worldly standards which formerly were their guides, and they look to the Lord, and, so looking, have the very best of guidance, the very highest standard imaginable. Looking unto him, copying Jesus, they come more and more to appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of Divine love and justice, and seek more and more to be transformed in all their words and thoughts and doings into harmony with the glorious pattern which their single eye entitles and enables them to clearly see. How blessed is their condition! Instructed by the example of the Lord and by his word of grace and truth they are rising daily to newness of life in the character-likeness of their Redeemer, and becoming fit for the heavenly Kingdom and for the glorious resurrection change.

THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE

The Divine purpose is not only to call out the single-hearted, the single-eyed, and to instruct and guide them, but also to test and to prove them. Thus we read, The Lord your God doth prove you to know whether ye do love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. (Deut. 13:3.) The test of obedience is the divine law—supreme love for God and absolute justice to your neighbor—to love him as ourself. Additionally, the consecrated have the New Commandment to love one another as the Redeemer loved them—to the extent of sacrificing, laying down anything and everything on behalf of each other, for each other's welfare and assistance. If this test be faithfully endured, it means that the individual has not only reached the mark of perfect love, but has stood tests thereat and has demonstrated his worthiness of eternal life under Divine terms and conditions. But if these tests be not endured, it means the rejection of the individual from

the light, and that he will go from the light, so that the things which were once light to him will appear dark, and the things of darkness will appear right, just, proper.

It is not for us to complain, therefore, of these trials and testings which the Lord declares to be necessary; it is not for us to insist that those whom we love must be maintained in the light and ultimately be accepted to the Kingdom. It is rather for us to show our obedience to the Lord, to demonstrate our love for him with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength by acquiescing in the Divine arrangements and judgments. The Lord is selecting the members of the Bride class. He has given us the privilege of being co-laborers with him in this work, but merely along the lines of his instruction. With him is the decision. If they do not maintain the single eye, the singleness of heart, the singleness of purpose, loyalty to God, to the principles of righteousness, justice and love they cannot continue to be his disciples; they cannot continue in the light; they must go into "outer darkness."

If any fail to go on in the development of the spirit of love, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of God, they will surely retrograde, and the light that is in them will become darkness—great darkness. Instead of the spirit of love exemplified by our Lord, who laid down his life for us, a spirit of hatred, envy and malice will come in; a spirit of murder which, although hesitating to do outward violence and come under the ban of the law, will not hesitate to assassinate character and to say all manner of evil against those toward whom they become embittered. By such fruits ye shall know them. Such thorns do not grow on the grapevine, nor on the fig tree.

The philosophy of their course is this: When they lose the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of justice and of love, of kindness, and mercy, and truth, they lose the Lord's supervision, direction and control. And having previously discarded the rules and influences which control the world in general, they are without *any* guidance or restraint in respect to their course of life. Hence they not only act contrary to the Divine standards, but violate the principles of justice and decency, in word and conduct, that assist and guide the world in general. It is for this reason that those who once go out of the light of Present Truth can think, and say, and do, more mean and contemptible things than can the worldly who still retain helps to order and decency by having in mind what their fellows in life would think of their course, their words and conduct.

WALK AS CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT

In conclusion, then, we urge that all who have been once enlightened, and made partakers of the holy Spirit, who have tasted of the good Word of God, and the powers of the age to come—we urge these to be zealous, to maintain the standing to which they have already attained. We urge that they be conformed to the character-likeness of God's dear Son; that they be perfected in love, that they put off all of these: anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife; for if any of these be retained, they will tend to blindness and "outer darkness." More than this, we urge that they put on all of these graces of the Lord's Spirit: meekness, gentleness, patience, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love. These will strengthen and develop the character-likeness of the Redeemer which God has

predestinated must be attained by every one who will be accepted as a member of the Bride of Christ. And then the Apostle suggests, If we do these things we shall never fail, but an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

JUNE 20

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him—1 John 2:15.

To fellowship the world is to walk in harmony with its ideas and to conform to its ways. In this sense we may not love it, but must be apart from it and in opposition to it. The way thus pointed out to us is, in some respects at least, a difficult way, and a lonely way, but it is the only way of peace and happiness. This world with the lust thereof is rapidly passing away; it is hollow and unsatisfying and eventually leads to disaster and ruin; but those who delight in the Lord's way have blessed communion and fellowship with Him. Their joys come from a source which the world cannot comprehend. They live on a higher plane, breathe a purer atmosphere and enjoy a holier, sweeter friendship than the world could ever offer—Z '96, 67 (R 1955).

The world is the present order of affairs. The things of this world are its various parts and sentiments. To love these would imply sympathy with evil. No child of God could be in sympathy with the present order of affairs, its parts and sentiments, and yet be filled and controlled by the Lord's Spirit, which mainly is the love of God. The Divine love, controlling our conduct, makes us long for the order of affairs that will prevail during the next dispensation; and it will certainly restrain us from loving this world and the things of this world—P '35, 102.

Parallel passages: Matt. 6:24; Luke 14:26; Rom. 12:2; 8:5; Gal. 1:4; 6:14; Jas. 4:4, 14; 1 John 2:16, 17; 3:1, 11-18; 4:7-21; Psa. 119:37; 39:6; 1 Cor. 7:31; 1 Pet. 1:24; 1 Cor. 13.

Hymns: 150, 48, 97, 176, 180, 213, 312.

Poems of Dawn, 38: *Whom Will Ye Serve?*

Tower Reading: Z '12, 370 (R 5138).

Questions: How did the love of God this week cast out from my heart love for the world? What helped or hindered therein? What was the result?

WHOM WILL YE SERVE?

JOHN 19:12, 13.

CASESAR'S friends? or friends of Jesus?

Solemn question for to-day!

Friends of Caesar! Friends of Jesus!

Take your sides without delay.

If ye pause for man's forbidding,

Caesar's friendship ye secure;

If ye do the Father's bidding,

Scorn, reproach, ye shall endure.

Friends of Caesar! Friends of Jesus!

Stand revealed! your choice declare!
Who in truth two masters pleases?
Who may rival banners bear?
Jesus' friends account Him precious,
Lose for Him all other gain:
Dearer far the smile of Jesus
Than the praise of worldly men.

Free from Caesar, friends of Jesus!
Stand in phalanx! never fear!
Love, severely tried, increases;
Courage yet! The Lord is near!
Onward still, His name confessing,
Weaving crowns to grace His brow;
Lo! His hands are full of blessing,
Lifted for your succor now.

Caesar's friends were we, but Jesus
Owns us for His friends to-day!
What! Shall rival friendship please us,
While the Bridegroom is away?
No! through grace would we surrender
Caesar's things to Caesar's care,
whilst to God, our God, we render
Filial homage, praise, and prayer.

R5138: LOVE NOT THE WORLD

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."—1 John 2:15.

IN THE TEXT, "Love not the world," we do not understand the term "world" to mean either the human race or the planet on which we live. The thought of the text seems to be more particularly the present order of things, for the Greek word here translated world is *kosmos*, signifying arrangement. We are to appreciate the beauties of nature. We are to love the human family, whom God also loves, though not in the sense in which He loves the Church of Christ. We read, "God so loved *the world* that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

St. John cannot therefore be understood to refer to the world of mankind, when he says, "Love not the world." For them we should have sympathy similar to that which the Heavenly Father has for the fallen race. The Scriptures inform us that the present order, or arrangement, of things on earth is entirely out of harmony with God's will, or purpose; for the world is ruled by selfishness. The Divine arrangement is that love shall be the rule

among God's creatures. "God is Love ... He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God."—I John 4:8, 16.

The world operates along lines different from those of love. Each one strives selfishly to heap together treasure for himself, even if meantime his neighbor goes destitute. Many live in luxury, while realizing that there are others who lack the necessities of life. Many seek for power to control men, not with the thought of their uplift, but with a view to using them for selfish ends and motives. This spirit of selfishness belongs to the present order of things. We see it in operation everywhere.

The spirit of the world lays hold of all the forces of nature and seeks to control these, to adapt them to its own selfish interests. It is true that much good has resulted indirectly from this spirit of selfishness. For instance, a man with a great amount of the vain-glorious spirit may for his own selfish purposes benefit others. A general might have so much pride in his service that in order to win praise for himself he would care for his soldiers and have them well dressed. Some of our great captains of industry have done the world good service, and incidentally have blessed many, while carrying out their own designs.

SELFISHNESS THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD

If all of the great worldly enterprises were undertaken with a view to the betterment of mankind, the spirit of these would not be selfish. We know, indeed, that much is done to help those who are needy, and that where there is a motive of this kind, it is often misinterpreted and misjudged to be selfish. But "the Lord looketh on the heart." (I Sam. 16:7.) Those who have the selfish heart, the selfish intentions, will continue to love the things of the world. In proportion as such may be shown that there is a new order of affairs coming, in that proportion the selfish-minded will not be in sympathy with the change of dispensation.

If a man conducts a large enterprise for the benefit of those who would have opportunity to share such blessings, that man would rejoice that there is a better time coming. A man who would truly rejoice to have a better arrangement of affairs, would not have the spirit that dominates in the present order of things. He would have the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Love, the spirit that will dominate the New Order of things, that will control during the thousand years of Christ's reign.

Many are in the attitude of mind which would say, "My employer is rich. Whenever I get the opportunity to help myself to some of his money, I will do so and get as much as possible." Such people love the present order of things, whether they be rich or poor. A great many poor love the things of this world, and hope some day to get their share.

There are people who say, "Oh, I do not love the world and its selfish spirit! From the crown of my head to the soles of my feet I am opposed to it. Sometimes I say to my husband, 'This is a very selfish world, John.' Then he replies, 'Yes, Mary, it is. Everywhere people are seeking for everything that will gratify self and selfish desires.

But while you condemn the ways of the world, yet you delight in the good things of life provided by my industry—the automobile, the pleasant home, etc.' And I must acknowledge that he is right. I fear that I could not be happy without them." Such a person certainly loves the things of the world, even while making good use of them.

It seems to be a serious charge to say that any one who is in that attitude of mind which loves the world and the things belonging to it, has not the love of the Father in him. We do not understand, however, that such a one has *no* love for the Father or that the Father has no love for him. The Apostle seems to be addressing this message to the Church. Those who have been adopted into God's family must continue to love Him or they would not be counted as members of that class.

What, then, is the full import of this expression—"The Love of the Father is not in him"? To us it would mean that the Love of the Father had not gotten full control of his heart, and this would mean that ultimately—unless he should gain a victory over his selfish disposition—he would not be accepted as a son.

Everywhere about us is this spirit of selfishness. Every child of God should be on guard against it and against willingness to participate in the things of this world. We should strive to be in that condition which is pleasing to the Father. We are to try to rid ourselves of the spirit of the world and to be filled with the Spirit of the Father. This would not mean that we are not to appreciate beautiful things, or that we are not to like to see others striving to benefit the world; but that we should not be satisfied with any of these things, so far as we are concerned.

TWO KINDS OF MOTIVES

Whatever talents we possess we should use for the good of humanity in any kind of work that would be for the glory of God. Even a good work could be engaged in from the spirit of the world rather than from the Spirit of God; that is, it might be done for what we could get from others in the way of money, honor or influence; or, on the other hand, it might be for the good we desired to do for others.

The highest of all services is that of the ministry of the Word of God. Even this noble service might be pursued from either of two motives—the Love of the Father or the love of self. Apparently there are some engaged in the ministry purely for the sake of the loaves and fishes, for the honorable position it gives them in the world, or because they do not know of anything that would serve them better.

Again, there are those, no doubt, who have entered the ministry, not for selfish reasons, but because they desire to serve God, to serve the Truth, to serve His people. The Lord alone knows what has induced any one to enter the ministry. But since we are living in the day that will try every man's work, God will prove what sort it is—will show what motive is behind the deed.

Those who are serving merely from the worldly spirit will be vexed with everything that is making for Truth; and in proportion as their earthly interests suffer, they will be angry. Those who are of the right spirit, however, will rejoice in everything that will be helpful to humanity, in everything that is to the glory of God, in everything that will make the Bible more easily understood.

In fact, we may suppose that the real testing, so far as the Church is concerned, is the making manifest whether we love the world—the things of the present time—or whether we love God supremely. As time goes on, it will be even more impossible to harmonize the spirit of love and the spirit of selfishness. Those who love God will be fully out of harmony with the spirit of the present evil world.

"Love not the world!
He in whose heart the love
Of vanity has found a place, shuts out
The enduring world above.

"Love not the world!
However fair it seem;
Who loveth this vain world—the love of God
Abideth not in him."

JUNE 21

Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart—Matt. 11:29.

Truly, in a meek and quiet spirit is the secret of rest. To be meek is to cultivate the graces of patience, of loving submission to the will of God, of abiding confidence in His love and care and in the wisdom of His guiding counsel and overruling providences, and persistently to pursue this course through evil and through good report, or through favorable or unfavorable circumstances. Let the beloved children of God seek more and more to copy Christ's meek and quiet spirit, accepting the providences of God and obeying His precepts and leading, as He did, armed with the strength which He alone can supply, and will, to those who take His yoke upon them, and learn of Him—Z '96, 79 (R 1961).

When our Lord said that He was meek, He meant that He was submissive in heart and mind and therefore teachable and tractable. When He said that He was lowly in heart, He meant that He had a proper self-estimate. These two qualities He commends to us for our imitation. If they adorned His character, how much more are they fitting for us who are by nature weak and out of the Way! From Him we can learn these graces—P '34, 95.

Parallel passages: Matt. 7:29; 22:16; 23:8; John 3:2; 13:15; Zech. 9:9; Isa. 50:5, 6; 53:7; Matt. 26:49-53; 2 Cor. 10:1; Matt. 9:10; Luke 22:27; Acts 8:32, 33; Phil. 2:5-8.

Hymns: 172, 1, 95, 125, 197, 198, 209.

Poems of Dawn, 31: *A Present Help*.

Tower Reading: Z '96, 78 (R 1961).

Questions: Have I this week learned of Christ in meekness and humility? How? Why? Under what circumstances? With what results?

A PRESENT HELP

THERE is never a day so dreary,
But God can make it bright;
And unto the soul that trusts Him,
He giveth songs in the night.

There is never a path so hidden,
But God will show us the way,
If we seek for the Spirit's guidance,
And patiently wait and pray.

There is never a cross so heavy,
But the loving hands are there,
Outstretched in tender compassion,
The burden to help us bear.

There is never a heart that is broken,
But the loving Christ can heal;
For the heart that was pierced on Calvary,
Doth still for His people feel.

There is never a life so darkened,
So hopeless and so unblest,
But may be filled with the light of God,
And enter His promised rest.

There is never a sin nor a sorrow,
There is never a care nor a loss,
But that we may carry to Jesus,
And leave at the foot of the cross.

What more can we ask than He's promised?
(And we know that His Word cannot fail,)
Our refuge when storms are impending,
Our help when temptations assail.

Our Savior, our Friend and Redeemer,
Our portion on earth and in Heaven;
For He who withheld not His own Son,
Hath with Him all things freely given.

R1961: THE EASY YOKE.

**"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye
shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."**

—Matt. 11:28-30.

THE yoke is a symbol of servitude and subjection, and all in the world are under yokes of some kind—political yokes, social yokes, financial or business yokes, yokes of sin, of selfishness, of pride, etc., etc. The man who is under the political yoke finds it a very hard one. He is busy days and nights planning and scheming and working for office, studying all the arts of worldly policy to gain the friendship of voters, spending time, money and thought and concentrating every energy upon the risky business of seeking office, which, if he gain it, brings only a multitude of cares, and exposes him to a host of enemies of the opposing party who are often ready to blacken his character at the slightest provocation.

Those under the financial or business yokes are similarly oppressed. They labor long and hard; they scheme and plan and contrive and fret and worry to be rich, and in so

doing they fall into a snare which robs them of the true happiness which riches cannot bring.

Those under the social yokes labor hard and sacrifice much in meeting the demands of society upon them. Few in the humbler walks of life know how galling is this yoke upon the rich, and particularly to those who are vieing with others in better circumstances. Women often wear themselves out in this unsatisfying service, while husbands and fathers are driven to despair and ruin trying to keep up with the financial drain. The yokes of pride, selfishness and sin of every kind are indeed hard yokes, and their burdens are heavy. To shake off all yokes and free ourselves from all burdens is impossible in this evil day. The prince of this world, Satan, has already imposed upon all the yoke of sin. And there is none able to deliver us from this yoke and its binding fetters but Christ, who, in his own good time and way, will do it for all who come unto him by faith and repentance.

While it is the purpose of Christ ultimately to set all such free from every yoke and to release them from every burden, he sees that they are not able yet to exercise and enjoy the glorious liberty of sons of God; and so by way of discipline and training, he purposes to bring them to that condition. It is therefore necessary that those who would be delivered from the galling yokes of sin and of the present general order of things should submit themselves fully to Christ—that they take his yoke upon them. And he invites all who have come to feel and realize the discomfort of other yokes and the weight of other burdens, to come unto him for rest and release.

In tender sympathy for all the oppressed and sorrowing he says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you," etc. Thousands have responded to the kind invitation, and they testify in no uncertain terms to the ease of Christ's yoke and the blessedness of his promised rest. And yet the rest is not of general temporal prosperity and freedom from care and toil and from all restraint.

Few would say in viewing the Apostle Paul's experience that the yoke of Christ on his shoulders was an easy yoke, or that the burden of Christ's work which he bore was a light one. But evidently he thought so, for he counted it an inestimable privilege to endure hardness as a good soldier for Christ's sake. He joyfully suffered the loss of all things and counted them but dross, that he might win Christ and be found in him. He rejoiced to be made a partaker of his sufferings that he might also be made a partaker with him of his glory, and share with him in the blessed work of his Kingdom.

Blessed work! Paul gloried in the prospect of such a future mission, and was in haste to manifest his readiness of mind for it, by zealously and most energetically devoting his life here to the Lord's service along the lines indicated in the divine plan. He took Christ's yoke upon him: he did not attempt to guide himself, but humbly placed himself under subjection to Christ, and obediently followed his guidance whithersoever it led him—whether to prison and the stocks, to an ignominious public beating or stoning that left him almost dead, to shipwreck, to perils on land and sea, among heathen enemies or false brethren, to wearing labor, and painful toil, or what not? And yet Paul counted this

burden of Christ a light one, and his yoke an easy yoke. He spoke of his trials as light afflictions, and said he rejoiced in tribulations; and with lacerated backs and feet fast in the stocks in the depths of a miserable dungeon Paul and Silas rejoiced and sang praises to God.

Stephen had the same rest and joy even while his enemies were stoning him to death; and thousands more of God's saints can testify to the same thing—in the midst of poverty, sickness, affliction, temptation, and enemies on every hand, and even in the flames of violent persecution. Whence comes it? or how are rest and even joy compatible with such conditions? The answer is: it is a rest of mind—"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." None can know the blessedness of this rest until they have experienced it. And none can realize its great value until they have been put to the tests of affliction.

The Lord gives the key to this rest in the words—"and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart." Truly, in a meek and quiet spirit is the secret of rest. To be meek is to cultivate the graces of patience; of loving submission to the will of God; of abiding confidence in his love and care and in the wisdom of his guiding counsel and overruling providences; and to perseveringly pursue this course through evil and through good report, or through favorable or unfavorable circumstances.

Let the beloved children of God seek more and more to copy Christ's meek and quiet spirit, accepting the providences of God and obeying his precepts and leading as he did, armed with the strength which he alone can supply, and will, to all those who take his yoke upon them, and learn of him.

JUNE 22

It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. ... Every man according to his several ability—1 Cor. 4:2; Matt. 25:15.

The "pound," being the same to all, fitly represents that blessing of Divine grace which is common to all God's people—Justification. Other endowments differ in quantity, according to our natural opportunities, and are generally of the Father—for instance, the Word and the Spirit. Our justification, while planned by the Father, is a gift from Jesus, because He paid for it with His own precious blood. The one "pound" each places all on a common footing as acceptable servants and permits each to show his zeal by his sacrificings. But the "talents," being distributed according to every man's ability, represent opportunities for the service of God along the lines of such abilities as we possess. They may be talents of education, or money, or influence, or good health, or time, or tact, or genius, with opportunities for their use in God's service—Z '07, 63 (R 1972).

A steward is one entrusted with the administration of another's goods, and the one who so entrusts him has the right to expect fidelity on his part. Jehovah makes us the stewards of as much of His goods as we have consecrated to Him, expecting us to be faithful in the exercise of this our stewardship. On His part He furnishes us with every opportunity necessary to the exercise of our stewardship in the interests of His cause. His kindness in this respect deserves our most loyal service—P '33, 79.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 2; 3; 4; 2 Cor. 3; 4; 5; 6:1-10; Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 12:37, 38, 42-48; 16:10-12; 19:13-27; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 29; Eph. 4:11; Titus 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:10.

Hymns: 309, 332, 200, 8, 208, 225, 272.

Poems of Dawn, 160: *Cumbered With Much Serving*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 23 (R 5385).

Questions: Have I this week been a faithful steward according to ability? What helped or hindered therein? What were the results?

CUMBERED WITH MUCH SERVING

CHRIST never asks of us such arduous labor
As leaves no time for resting at His feet;
This waiting attitude of expectation
He oftentimes counts a service most complete.

He sometimes wants our ear, our rapt attention,
That He some sweetest secret may impart;
'Tis always in the time of deepest silence
that heart finds fullest fellowship with heart.

We sometimes wonder why the Lord has placed us
Within a sphere so narrow, so obscure,
That nothing we call work can find an entrance;
There's only room to suffer—to endure.

Well, God loves patience; souls that dwell in stillness,
Doing the little things, or resting quite,
May just as perfectly fulfill their mission,
Be just as useful in the Father's sight,

As they who grapple with some giant evil,
Clearing a path that every eye may see;
Our Savior cares for cheerful acquiescence
Rather than for a busy ministry.

And yet He does love service, where 'tis given
By grateful love that clothes itself in deed;
But work that's done beneath the scourge of duty,
Be sure to such He gives but little heed.

Then seek to please Him, whatso'er He bids thee,
Whether to do, to suffer, to lie still;
"Twill matter little by what path He leads us,
If in it all we sought to do His will.

R5385: FAITHFULNESS IN OUR STEWARDSHIP

"It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."—1 Cor. 4:2.

EVERY great business enterprise employs various classes of workers. This does not imply that the firm approves of all the moral qualities of their employees. They may employ some laboring men who are of good moral character and some who are of poor character; for they do not hold the working men responsible in that sense. But the most responsible positions are given to those of recognized good character.

So God makes use of different agencies to do His service. These are sometimes animate, sometimes inanimate. (Isaiah 45:1-4; Jer. 10:13.) But those whom He recognizes as specially His servants are the Church of this Gospel Age—a special class of servants on special terms and agreements. These special servants are also called sons; that is to say, they are adopted, and promised that they will be fully inducted into the Divine family if they are faithful in God's service in the present time.

These servants represent a stewardship—a term common in olden time. The servant did with his master's goods as though they were his own. At the same time, while given

this privilege, he was required to give an account to his employer. The master did not give him these goods and say, Use them as you like, and I will call for them when I want them. On the contrary, his stewardship was to be a faithful one, and would be examined later with this end in view—to see if he had been faithful. A faithful steward would be on the lookout for everything that represented the master's interests—would be as careful of these as he would be of his own. He would use his every power for increasing the talent—represented by the money in his care.

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

In the parable of the Talents the Lord represented a man as going into a far country and leaving the talents in the care of his stewards. They were entrusted with these goods in a very special way. Thus it is with us. Each of us is entrusted with certain talents. At the time of consecration we gave our all to God. Having given all that we have and are to the Lord, He accepts our offering and appoints us His stewards over these goods—these things that we had. This would include our *all*—time, influence, various talents—for business, music, or what not. All these are the Master's after we have made consecration. We belong to Christ. He is the Head, He is Lord. But He commits to us as His faithful servants all these talents, to use for Him. And He says, "Occupy till I come."

This parable applies to all the Church all the way down this Age. Each servant is to be diligent in occupying the position of steward until he is released from it. The steward who would use his position merely to glorify himself would not be a faithful steward. The faithful steward would be the one who would desire to so use the talents as to increase the Master's wealth, the Master's glory.

The Lord gave an illustration of the faithful and unfaithful stewards at His Second Coming—before He will deal at all with the subjects of the Kingdom—mankind in general. He showed how He will call these servants to whom He has given the talents; for He has promised them that He will make them rulers with Him in His Kingdom, if they are faithful in the use of their talents. In the parable, the one who received five talents doubled them, and made them ten. The one who had received two talents made them four. But the one who had received one talent gave the excuse that he had buried it in the earth, because afraid. And he was declared to be an unfaithful servant.

This servant was not sent to eternal torment, but the talent was taken from him. It was of his own volition that he became a steward. Seeing that he had become a steward, he deserved to be punished because he did not use that which his lord had entrusted to him. That talent belonged to his lord.

An unfaithful steward will be punished for his unfaithfulness. Better that we should not enter into the Lord's service at all than that we should enter and then hold back, neglect our opportunities. If the one who had the five talents had held back, his simply doing nothing would have made him responsible. In showing how he dealt with the one who had the one talent, the Lord is emphasizing the matter the more. These talents

represent our opportunities for service according to our several abilities. The one who had less ability was given less opportunity than the one who had more ability.

So with us. Some may have handicaps of various kinds. Some have more talents, or abilities; some have less. We cannot use talents we do not possess. It is required of a man that he be found faithful with what he has. This matter of using all the talents calls up the thought of full, complete loyalty of heart devotion. We should not say, I am doing better than somebody else, as the man with five talents might have thought had he used but three or four of them. But the one who is using his talents to the full capacity is specially pleasing to the Lord. Those who have two talents and use them faithfully receive the same commendation as the one who has five talents and uses the five.

THE PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD

The parable of the unjust steward (Luke 16:1-9), which impresses this same lesson, was primarily addressed to Jesus' disciples, in the presence of the Pharisees and those who sat in Moses' seat, who were the representatives of the Divine order of things in the Jewish Age. In this parable the Lord emphasizes the fact that a wise steward would be alert to his own future welfare. If a debtor could not pay one hundred per cent., but could pay fifty, it would be wise for the steward, in consideration of his own interests, to keep the future good will of the man, and let him pay half. This steward was commended by his lord for his shrewdness in taking this course, even though he had previously been unfaithful to him.

The Scribes and Pharisees are scored in the parable. Our Lord's words intimated, You know that you are not yourselves able to pay the Divine requirements of the Law—you are not able to pay fifty cents on the dollar, and you ought to feel sympathetic with some of these poor Jews who cannot keep the Law. You should say to them, Cut it down somewhat—keep half the Law, if you cannot keep it all. Can you keep *half*? Yes? Well, go ahead and keep half.

But, said the Lord, you despise all these—you do not want to "brush garments" with them as you pass them in the streets. You know that you cannot keep the Law yourselves. You are in the position of the steward of My parable. You should take the same course as that steward took with his master's debtors. He was about to be dispossessed. So you are near the end of your term. When you get out of office the people will not think much of you. You would better help your case out. You sit in Moses' seat. You should tell your brethren that while they are not keeping the Law in full, they are pretty nice people; and you should encourage them to do the best they can. You should help them along.

After giving this parable respecting the Pharisees, Jesus turned to his disciples, saying, "I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness." That is to say, Applying this to yourselves now, consider that your earthly possessions are an earthly stewardship. Live in harmony with the people as far as justice will permit. Do not in any way exact the last thing possible from them. Be generous in all your affairs—not only in financial matters. Instead of condemning everybody and threatening them with

eternal torment, tell them that God is very merciful. Tell them that God has provided a Redeemer for all mankind. Tell them to be of good courage and to do the best they can—that they may be sure that God through Christ will be very merciful, and that they will have better dealings at His hands when the time of their testing shall come.

By teaching the people thus, we may get the ill-will of the scribe and Pharisee class; but we are getting the good will of the people and of those who are in harmony with God and righteousness. And although we may be excluded from the high functions of the nominal systems, many of the common people are hearing gladly and sympathetically, and are wishing to share their homes with us. And so we have homes all over the world, wherever God's people are; for they have the ear and eye to appreciate the Lord's arrangement. Furthermore the Lord Himself will ultimately receive us into everlasting habitations. We are wise stewards in this respect. We are living so as to use our time and strength to the best of our ability to do good and to instruct others to do good.

TWO PARABLES COMPARED

The parables of the Talents and of the Pounds are much alike, both representing a great householder, or lord, dealing with his servants. In the parable of the Pounds, a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. This parable is based upon the fact that when an under-king, like King Herod, would hear that a new Emperor had come to the throne of Rome, he would be anxious for a re-appointment to his own kingdom. Knowing that the Emperor had power to reinstate him, he would be desirous to know whether he would receive his kingdom again, or whether someone else would receive the place. So when such under-king went to Rome, it was with the view of returning with his kingdom, or a commission from the new Emperor.

Our Lord in this picture represents Himself as a Nobleman who had been called to a Throne, and who was going to a far country, to Heaven itself, to receive the investiture of His Kingdom. In due time He was to be the great Messiah; and He must first be invested with the authority, and then return and establish His Kingdom.

In the parable of the Talents, the lord, before leaving, called in his servants and committed unto them his goods, his property. He said, I will make these servants stewards. He gave one talent to one, two talents to another, and five to still another, according to their several ability. They were all remembered. When he returned he called his servants and reckoned with them. The one with two talents came and said, Lord, thou gavest me two talents. Here I make my report. I have gained two other talents. The one with the five talents said, Lord, thou gavest me five talents; lo, I have gained other five! I have doubled the amount and gotten ten! The Lord said to each, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

Then came the servant with only one talent. Although he returned it, he had failed to use it. He said, I have not lost a penny; here is thine own. His Lord said unto him, Thou art a slothful and wicked servant! The servant was punished because he was unfaithful.

OPPORTUNITY MEASURES RESPONSIBILITY

The Lord gave this parable as an illustration of our experiences now. These talents consist of *opportunities*. To illustrate: We recently had the talent, or opportunity, of speaking the Truth to 5,000 people. Therefore we had a responsibility. But if we do not have such an *opportunity*, we do not have the *responsibility* of it. This is what the Lord meant, we understand. One may have more opportunities granted him than another. One person might be a good writer; another a good speaker; another a good exhorter; and another may be good at all three of these things. The one good at all three would have thereby three times as much responsibility as the one with only the one ability.

The *talent* in Bible times represented a certain amount of money. According to the most recent figures available (Am. Bib. Soc'y, 1895), the talent mentioned in the Scriptures was either gold or silver. The value in U.S. money of the gold talent is \$32,689, while the silver talent was but \$1,563.37. Our Lord, however, used the talent, not to represent gold or silver, but as well representing the opportunities His people have to do God's will and to serve the brethren; for He says that whoever does good to one of the least of *His* will receive a blessing.

The lesson taught in the parable of the Pounds seems somewhat different. In this the lord gave each of his servants *one pound*, to do what he could with what was given him. One gained *five* pounds, and one gained *ten*. The third gained *nothing*. The Pound (Mina, or Maneh), is equivalent, if *gold*, to \$6,537.80; if silver, \$312.67-1/2.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ONE POUND TO EACH

In the application of the parable, to our understanding, the Pound represents the blessing of justification given to each of God's children. When did He give us the Pound? When He accepted us as His servants. When did He accept us as servants? We were not servants when we first turned from sin. To turn from sin is not to become a servant. The first step toward God is to turn away from sin toward righteousness, and to attempt to draw nigh unto God; for God says, "Draw nigh unto Me and I will draw nigh unto you."

This one is walking in the way to justification, but has not gotten it. He is getting nearer and nearer to the right place in his ideas, etc. Finally he comes to the place where he says, Lord, if Thou wilt accept me, I will give Thee all I have. He offers himself to be God's servant.

One is not yet a servant of the Lord when he turns from sin. We never had a right to do wrong; and in getting away from sin and wrong, we were not serving God. God has no servants in this Age except those begotten of the Holy Spirit. Others may in some sense be used as servants; for God can use even the wrath of man to serve Him. In a certain sense the Devil may be His servant; for sometimes he does what the Lord wishes to be done. We think the Devil was serving God when he got the Jews stirred up to crucify Jesus. Demons often serve the Lord in bringing tribulation upon His people, for these

tribulations are like the turning of the grindstone, that polishes the jewel. God wishes to use some means at the present time to *polish His jewel class*.

But the servants referred to in the parables are the Lord's consecrated people; for it is only those who have reached the point of full consecration to God that He calls His servants. Those who gave up the service of sin and unrighteousness, became their own servants, the servants of self, until they gave up their lives to the Lord. They then said, I have no will but Thine. I will serve Thee faithfully, even unto death. As the Lord accepts these as His servants, He gives each one a *pound*.

What is this pound? It is justification to life—a valuable thing. Now, being justified by faith, and being thus accepted as a servant of God, and begotten of the Holy Spirit, each one has the opportunity to do what he is able as a servant of the Lord. He uses whatever talents the Lord gives him. He must do his best with all that is entrusted to his care, as a faithful steward of the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

JUNE 23

He that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty—Matt. 13:23.

The different measures of fruitage—the thirty, sixty and hundred-fold, or the ten pounds and the five, mark differences in obstacles to be overcome, *etc.*, rather than unfaithfulness in the use of the means of grace. Some may work long and diligently for small results, while the same effort in others of more resolute will and of greater continuity may accomplish great things. Some by slips and occasional backslidings, from which they subsequently recover, lose time and opportunities which can never be regained, although they are forgiven and generously reinstated in the Divine favor, and thenceforth run with diligence and patience to the end—Z '96, 99 (R 1972).

The various kinds of soil represent the different classes of hearers. Good ground represents the faithful. The faithful are they who, understanding and meditating on the Word, diligently apply it to the sanctification of heart and mind; and in proportion to their zeal therein they bring forth fruit. Their final standing will depend on their zeal in this respect—P '32, 62.

Parallel passages: Gen. 26:12; Isa. 55:10, 11; Matt. 13:3-8, 18-23; 25:20-23; John 12:24; 15:5, 8, 16; 1 Pet. 1:23; Rom. 6:22; Gal. 5:22, 23; Phil. 1:11; 4:17; Col. 1:6; Heb. 12:11; Jas. 3:18.

Hymns: 196, 315, 311, 95, 198, 74, 114.

Poems of Dawn, 8: *How Readest Thou?*

Tower Reading: Z '10, 202 (R 4634).

Questions: How did I use the Word this week? With what results did I meet?

HOW READEST THOU?

LUKE 10:16

'TIS one thing now to read the Bible through,
Another thing to read, to learn and do;
'Tis one thing now to read it with delight,
And quite another thing to read it right.

Some read it with design to learn to read,
But to the subject pay but little heed;
Some read it as their duty once a week,
But no instruction from the Bible seek;

Whilst others read it without common care,

With no regard to *how* they read or *where*.
Some read it as a history, to know
How people lived three thousand years ago.

Some read to bring unto themselves repute,
By showing others how they can dispute;
Whilst others read because their neighbors do,
To see how long 'twill take to read it through.

Some read it for the wonders that are there,
How David killed a lion and a bear;
Whilst others read—or rather in it look—
Because, perhaps, they have no other book.

Some read the blessed Book—they don't know why,
It somehow happens in the way to lie;
Whilst others read it with uncommon care,
But all to find some contradictions there.

One reads with father's specs upon his head,
And sees the thing just as his father did;
Another reads through Campbell or through Scott,
And thinks it means exactly what *they* thought.

Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,
Thus understand but little what they read;
And every passage in the Book they bend
To make it suit that all-important end.

Some read the Book to find that God is love,
Whilst others read—the opposite to prove.
Some people read, as I have often thought,
To teach the Book, instead of being taught.

R4634: GOOD SEED FOR GOOD GROUND

Golden Text:—“Wherefore, putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls.”—James 1:21—R.V.

FROM a boat our Lord taught a most wonderful lesson respecting the method used by the Almighty in the selection of the "little flock," whom he invites to be members with Christ Jesus in the administration of his Millennial Kingdom. The Kingdom message or invitation is the "seed" which is under consideration in the above parable, which, under favorable conditions, germinates and brings forth the required fruitage of character-

development. Our Lord was the great Sower of this good seed of the Kingdom, and after him came the Apostles. Since then he has used all of his faithful people more or less in this seed-sowing.

The fact that most of the "seed" of the Divine message seems wasted is no proof that the message is not good and desirable. This parable shows that the real fault lies in the soil—in the heart. If all hearts were right the message or seed would bring forth much fruit everywhere.

WAYSIDE HEARERS.

The parable states that not all of the soil is good or suitable, nevertheless, the intimation is that it is within the power of many to correct and offset the unfavorable conditions in themselves. We are not left to conjecture, for this is one of the few parables which our Lord himself interpreted—a fact which many seem not to have noticed.

The "seed" is the message of the Kingdom. Many do not understand it. On such ears the message is lost, for the Adversary is on the alert to take it away, symbolized by the birds devouring the exposed "seed by the wayside." Such "wayside" hearers constitute the most numerous class in every congregation of the nominal church. They are merely formalists.

STONY GROUND HEARERS.

"Stony" ground represents another class of hearers of the Kingdom message. To them it sounds good; they are interested, but they lack depth of character. They make professions and for a time flourish extraordinarily, but they lack the depth necessary to a character development suitable for the Lord's use in the work of the Kingdom, and when the trials and testings come they stumble. They thought they might be carried to the Kingdom on "flowery beds of ease," while "others fight to win the prize and sail through bloody seas." There is no *easy road* to the Kingdom. The Master declares to all who would be of the elect "Bride," "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the Kingdom."

GOOD SEED BUT THORNY GROUND.

The ground which will produce thorns is rich and very suitable for the production of proper Christian character, but it is infested with thorn seed and the soil cannot successfully produce both wheat and thorns; hence, as the parable shows, the thorns choke out the wheat so that a sufficient crop is not produced. These thorns are not, as some have suggested, sensual vices and criminal appetites. Hearts in which sensuality dominates have no ear whatever for the Kingdom message, and are not mentioned in the parable, which refers only to those who are no longer willing sinners, but who are walking outwardly in the way of righteousness. The Master's word is, "He that receiveth the seed among thorns is he that heareth the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and he becometh unfruitful." There are many noble people represented also by this portion of the parable. There are many who, if freed

from the spirit of the world, from its ambitions and wealth and influence, its love of the good things of this life, would be very fruitful in righteousness. When we look about us and see the thrift and energy of many people of civilized lands, we say to ourselves, properly, if these lives were really turned into the way of the Lord and were rid of these earthly encumbrances, what grand, noble characters they would make. However, their strength, their energy, is absorbed by worldly affairs and cares, and they do not bring forth the fruitage demanded as the necessary qualification for the higher honors of a place with Christ in his Kingdom. The Master's message to such is, You cannot give your time and strength and influence to worldly matters and at the same time make your "calling and election sure" to a place with me in my Kingdom. Whoever would be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me. Where I am there shall my disciple be.

"THAT YE BEAR MUCH FRUIT"

"Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit," said our Master. In this parable the *good* ground varies in its productiveness—thirty, sixty and an hundred fold. The larger the returns, the greater will be the Father's pleasure and the Savior's glory. Nor is the statement an extreme one, as some might suppose. The new "miracle wheat" sometimes produces more than two hundred grains from one. This parable seems to imply that the responsibility for the fruitfulness of the heart and life and character depends very greatly upon the individual and how he receives the message of the Kingdom. Those in whom the fruits will be the most abundant will be such as grasp the invitation most intelligently and earnestly. "He that heareth the word and *understandeth it*" and whose heart is in a condition of loyalty to God and who frees himself from hindrances and worldly ambitions and aspirations and, like the Apostle Paul, can say, "This one thing I do," will surely gain the Kingdom.

It is not sufficient that we *hear the message* of the Kingdom; it is not sufficient that we have *good hearts* or *good intentions* in respect to it; it is additionally necessary, as the Master says, that we should *understand* the Kingdom message; hence the need of Bible study. Intelligent people consider it very wise and proper that several years of study be devoted to preparation for the few years of earthly life. How much study, then, should be considered proper for our preparation for the eternal life and Kingdom blessings? The time and effort thus consumed in character development for the Kingdom are wisely spent, and the harvest of thirty, sixty or a hundred-fold illustrates the degree and intensity of our earnestness. The *rewards* in the Kingdom will also be proportionate. "As star differeth from star in glory, so shall it be in *the* resurrection of the dead." Varying degrees of glory in the Kingdom will be manifested, yet none will be acceptable to the Father who shall not have brought forth fruitage in good measure; the "well done" will never be pronounced if not merited.

JUNE 24

If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also gloried together—Rom. 8:17.

Reading the Father's plans for ourselves, in the light of His will exemplified in His dealings with our Master, we may settle it at once that it is not His will to keep us from all pain and trial and sufferings, and to carry us triumphantly to glory on flowery beds of ease. Quite the reverse, indeed, must be our course, if we would follow in the footsteps of Him whom God set forth to be, not only a satisfaction for the sins of the whole world but also a pattern to all of Christ's disciples. And this much learned of God's Plan and will promptly teaches us that we must not expect and should not ask freedom from pain and trouble, which His wisdom has ordained to be the path to glory—Z 96, 151 (R 1997).

We are God's children, who have His Spirit, and we may therefore anticipate an exceedingly great inheritance. Our inheritance under Christ, the Chief Heir, will be undivided throughout all eternity. Who then will be accounted fit to enter into this inheritance? Only those whose devotion to the Father, the Son and the Truth (for the brethren and the world of mankind) prompts them in the Spirit of God to suffer with Christ, will be accounted worthy of this great inheritance—P '26, 76.

Parallel passages: Heb. 2:10; 2 Tim. 2:10-13; Col. 3:4; 1 Pet. 5:10; 2 Thes. 2:14; Rom. 8:18; 9:23; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; Isa. 60:14-22; 1 Cor. 15:41-57; Phil. 3:21.

Hymns: 326, 58, 92, 201, 72, 310, 281.

Poems of Dawn, 205: *Some Glad, Sweet Day*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 61 (R 4973).

Questions: Have I this week amid suffering with Christ hoped for the Kingdom? How did it affect my spirit?

SOME GLAD, SWEET DAY

SOME day, some glad, sweet day
We shall be like our blessed Lord
And see Him as He is.
Soon we shall strain our
Weary eyes no more
To catch, beyond this earthly
House of fettering clay,
A gleam of heavenly glory
From His radiant face.

Some day, some fair, sweet day
His loving hand will wipe

Away our tears. His tender
Voice will thrill our souls
With rapture, when we
Hear Him say, "Well done,
Dear heart, well done,
My joy is thine; for thee
The victor's crown is won.

"Thou hast been faithful,
Thou hast borne the cross,
The thorns have pierced thy feet;
But now the Night is past—
The Day hath come—bright,
Glorious Day of endless joy and love,
The trial time hath proved thee true,
And thou art safe, beloved,
In thy Father's home."

O, glorious Day, for thee we long!
We will be faithful, will the
Burdens bear, sustained by grace Divine.
In meek submission to Thy holy will,
Dear Lord, by faith we clasp Thy hand
As side by side we tread the Narrow Way
And wait—for it will surely come—
Some day, some dear, sweet day,
O, tarry not too long!

R4973: THE FUTURE INHERITANCE OF THE NEW CREATION

"If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."—Romans 8:17.

THE DIVINE PROMISE is that the Kingdom of God will be amongst men—"under the whole heavens." The Scriptures state that both our Lord and the New Jerusalem, or glorious Kingdom of Messiah, are to come down from heaven to earth; and they call our Lord, therefore, Immanuel (God with us). During that thousand years God will in this sense dwell with men, walk with men. We already have this to some extent in our experience as Christians. God is with men, and Christ and the Church are with men, more or less contradicting and putting to shame the things of darkness of the present time.

But with all these suggestions it is not necessary for us to suppose that the Kingdom will be earthly. On the contrary, the assurance of the Scriptures is that the Church must become spirit beings before they can inherit the Kingdom: "We shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," while those of this class who have been previously

dead will have an instantaneous resurrection; and thus we shall be "forever with the Lord"—not forever with the Lord on the earth, but always in the spirit condition. The angels are always in the heavenly condition, whether they are in heaven with the Father or on earth, and we shall always be in the heavenly condition—the spirit condition.

Nothing in the Scriptures indicates that there will be a restriction upon the Church, that she should remain in one place more than another. The intimation seems to be that, after she shall have experienced her change, the Church will be for a short time absent from the earth and in the presence of the Heavenly Father. We read in the forty-fifth Psalm that the Bride is to be brought into the presence of the Great King, arrayed in glorious clothing of wrought gold—"in raiment of needlework." The members of the Body of Christ will all be on the spirit plane, whether they are afar off or near the earth. This is what our Lord meant when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you"—in the Divine family. This particular place is one that has never been filled by any others.

The various orders of spirit beings created by the Father occupy each its own sphere. But there is no Church of Christ amongst these. The Church of Christ is invited to occupy a place next to the Lord, next to the Father, higher than all the other planes of spirit beings. At the first advent this place had not been prepared for the Church, although the Lord had it in mind. Our Lord ascended up on high to prepare this place. He did so by making an application of His merit to the Church class, by imputing His merit to them and permitting them to become participators with Him in His sufferings in the present time, that they might also become sharers with Him in the divine nature. Thus He prepared the way to enter into that highest of all spirit planes, the divine.

We are not sufficiently informed respecting the spirit condition to know just how it would be possible for the Lord and the Church to *remain* in the Father's presence and maintain the government of the earth. Perhaps this course is possible. Yet again, such would perhaps not be a wise arrangement. Perhaps it would be necessary for them to be absent from the immediate presence of the heavenly Father and to approximate the earth, just as with Satan and his angels, who are in *tartarus*—cast down, separate because of sin. But Satan is to be bound for a thousand years; and the position which he has occupied is to be vacated. The entire Church is to be "caught up in the air" to be with the Lord forever—not necessarily in *tartarus*, but "forever with the Lord," that where He may be there they may be also, in harmony with the Divine will, to execute the Divine purposes.

Our thought, then, is that The Christ will be very closely associated with our earth, just as Satan's kingdom has been; and that they will be equally invisible to men, who will not see them during the thousand years, just as men have not seen Satan and his fallen angels. But as Satan and his angels have been doing an evil work, so Christ and His Church will be doing a powerful work, a good work, a work on the spirit plane; and associated with them will be various agencies, one of which undoubtedly will be the "great company." The members of Christ are the ones that are mentioned as "kings and priests unto God," who shall reign on the earth.

THE EARTHLY PHASE—INTELLIGENT, WILLING MEN

Then there will be earthly agents of this Kingdom, just as Satan has his agents, who are sometimes under his control through ignorance and superstition, sometimes from mesmeric power, all of which will be removed at that time. But the agents of Christ will be intelligent and willing. At that time the Ancient Worthies will be "Princes in all the earth." All mankind will gradually come into fellowship with the Kingdom and, proportionately, indirectly, become associated with the Kingdom itself. Just as any good man helps a government, so all mankind will be blessed in proportion as they approve and uphold the Divine arrangements.

Thus the Kingdom will be spreading for the thousand years, not only from one individual to another, but gradually bringing them back to full perfection. We read that "of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." It will conquer everything before it. Nothing shall stop it. Every evil thing having been destroyed, every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth will be heard praising God. Every knee will bow and every tongue confess; and His Kingdom will be without an opponent "from the river unto the ends of the earth"—having accomplished its purpose.

The Kingdom will then cease, in the sense that Christ will deliver the authority over to the Father. (I Cor. 15:24-28.) This does not mean that the Law of God will be disregarded, as it has been during the reign of sin and death. To meet the exigencies of the fallen condition of mankind, and to bring back as many as possible into harmony with the Divine arrangements, a special Kingdom will be established—the Messianic Kingdom—which will come in between the Divine government and mankind, because mankind in its weak condition will be unable to meet the requirements of the Divine Law. But when this Kingdom has restored mankind to perfection, it is the Divine purpose for Messiah to relinquish this subordinate Kingdom, which will merge into and become a part of the great Kingdom of Jehovah. *Justice* will then operate. There will be no place for mercy, and the Heavenly Father is not then represented as being a merciful King to His creatures. The Heavenly Father will then have made them perfect, so as to need no mercy, and they will be glad to meet all the requirements of the Divine Government, and will be blessed in so doing.

THE CHRIST TO BE ASSOCIATE RULER OF THE UNIVERSE

Having terminated this work our Lord will not be without an occupation; but, according to the Scriptures, He will continue to be at the right hand of the Majesty on High—next to the Father. He will relinquish the oversight of the affairs of earth, and will assume again the general position as Associate-Administrator of the affairs of the Universe in connection with the Heavenly Father. We are not to suppose, however, that the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus will be kept busy hearing and deciding cases and administering Justice, for the equilibrium will be such that there will be no necessity for such a course. The whole Universe will go on practically without any head; and yet there will be the Head. The Son will be next to the Father in authority; and next to the Son will

be the Bride. The work that will thenceforth progress is not revealed to us except in a very indefinite manner.

We understand by the power of telescopes that the suns have each a planetary system. If God made this earth a planet to be inhabited, it is only reasonable for us to infer that all the planets of the Universe will be inhabited, and that The Christ will behold the Heavenly Father and His wonderful Universe. The Power of the Heavenly Father is boundless, so far as we can understand. If after we have considered the hundred millions and more of suns and planetary systems beyond the power of human mind to contemplate—if then we realize that the Heavenly Father has made the position of Christ illimitable, and He has exalted the Bride of Christ with her Lord, then it is reasonable to assume that the work of Christ and the Church will be limitless, and that some blessed work for creatures not yet born is the work of all eternity. We simply wonder in amazement! We wonder at the greatness of His goodness to us, which is to lift us—the faithful few who make their calling and election sure—from our low condition to future glories interminable!

JUNE 25

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving—Col. 4:2.

Every trial of faith and patience is an occasion for prayer for the promised succor. Every failure to gain victory is an occasion for a prayer for forgiveness, and as well for Divine blessing, that the lesson of our own weakness may be deeply impressed, so that in the next similar trial we may promptly apply for and lay hold upon the "grace to help" promised. Every victory over self is an occasion for prayer that we be not high-minded and puffed up but kept humble and watchful for the next attack from the great Adversary. Every service for the Truth becomes an occasion for a prayer of thanks for the privilege of serving the Great King, and perhaps to have suffered something for His *cause*; and a reason for supplication for further opportunities for service and grace to use them wisely—Z '96, 163 (R 2004).

Prayer is the uttered or unuttered heart's sincere desire, going out to God for good things. If we wish to receive an answer to our petitions, we must persevere therein, continually watching as to the things asked for, the motive which prompts the asking, and the manner in which they are presented, that they may be acceptable to the Lord. Thankfulness for past favors should occupy a large part of our prayers—P '36, 79.

Parallel passages: Gen. 32:24-28; 1 Chron. 16:11, 35; Psa. 145:18; Luke 11:1-13; 18:1-7; Eph. 5:4, 19, 20; 6:18, 19; Phil. 4:6; 1 Thes. 5:17, 18; 1 Tim. 2:1, 8; Heb. 4:16; Jas. 5:16; Jude 20; Rev. 5:8; 8:3, 4; Matt. 26:41; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Pet. 1:13, 17; 4:7; Col. 3:15-17.

Hymns: 35, 9, 37, 176, 199, 239, 323.

Poems of Dawn, 115: *Pray Without Ceasing*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 154 (R 5692).

Questions: Has this week been a week of watchful, thankful prayer? How was it so? In what did it result?

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

UNANSWERED yet, the prayer your lips have
pleaded
In agony of heart these many years?
Doth faith begin to fail, is hope declining,
And think you all in vain those falling tears?
Say not the Father hath not heard your prayer,
You shall have your desire, sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Tho' when you first presented
This one petition at the Father's throne,
It seemed you could not wait the time of asking,

So anxious was your heart to have it done.
If years have passed since then, do not despair,
For God will answer you sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? But you are not unheeded;
The promises of God *forever* stand;
To Him our days and years alike are equal.
Have faith in God! It is your Lord's command.
Hold on to Jacob's angel, and your prayer
Shall bring a blessing down, sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Nay, do not say unanswered;
Perhaps your part is not yet wholly done.
The work began when first your prayer was uttered;
And God will finish what He hath begun.
Keep incense burning at the shrine of prayer,
And *glory* shall descend, sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Faith cannot be unanswered;
Her feet are firmly planted on the Rock.
Amid the wildest storms she stands undaunted,
Nor quails before the loudest thunder shock.
She knows *Omnipotence* hath heard her prayer,
And cries, "It shall be done, sometime, somewhere!"

R5692: PRAYERS THAT ARE HEARD

—Psalm 141.—

MANY MAY WORSHIP, FEW MAY PRAY—ONLY THE SANCTIFIED IN CHRIST
JESUS—THEIR FREQUENT NEEDS—"GOD'S EAR OPEN"—THEIR PRAYERS
ARISE AS INCENSE TO HIM—LEARNING TO PRAY—WHAT TO PRAY FOR—
WATCHING FOR ANSWERS—THE BREATH OF LIFE SPIRITUAL.

"Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me."—V. 9.

WHEN we think of the greatness of the Creator, Maker of Heaven and earth and all therein, and when we think of our own littleness, our weaknesses and imperfections, we are amazed that our God has made any provision whereby even the best of His creatures might hold communion with Him in prayer. We should not fail to note the difference between worship and praise, which anybody may render to the Lord, and prayers and supplications, which are acceptable only from the Lord's consecrated people and their children while still minors.

To illustrate: It is one thing that the populace may cheer a governor or a king, may remove their hats or bow their heads, but it is quite another thing for that same conglomeration of people to be received by the king or the governor into association as his friends or to have communion with him, to tell him about their matters, to have his counsel and guidance. So, while God has an interest in the whole world of mankind, a deep interest, it is not the same interest that He has in His Church. And by His Church we mean, not any sect or party or denomination, but those individuals who, regardless of sectarian lines, have entered into a heart covenant with the Lord, renouncing their own wills and accepting, instead, the will of God in Christ. These are the Bible Church, whose names are written in Heaven. (Hebrews 12:23.) These are the ones addressed in the Bible as the saints of God, and respecting whom it is declared, "All things are yours; ... and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—1 Corinthians 3:21-23.

This Church of God, in all the world, is not numerically strong. As the Bible says, it contains not many rich, not many wise, not many learned, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom. (1 Corinthians 1:26; James 2:5.) Their reigning, their power and their control in the world's affairs will not come until they shall have experienced the resurrection change, and Messiah's Kingdom shall be fully inaugurated. Then these shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years.—Revelation 20:4.

WHO MAY PRAY

Strangely enough, many seem to have gotten the thought that anybody, at any time, may rush into the presence of the Almighty God with his requests. The intimation even seems to be that God is unhappy because people do not come to Him thus. Such views of prayer indicate a lack of Bible study, Bible information. The Bible teaches that prayer is a great privilege.

Jesus declared, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." Furthermore, He indicated the restrictions upon those who would approach the Father through Him—they must be His disciples; and to become His disciples, they must take upon themselves certain obligations or vows. They must renounce their own wills, and accept the will of Jesus. They must lay all upon the altar; otherwise they cannot be accepted, cannot be presented to the Father, cannot be begotten of the Holy Spirit, cannot be styled or treated as sons of God, cannot be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ in His coming Kingdom—cannot have the privilege of sons of God in the present life either—the privilege of prayer and of Divine fellowship, communion, instruction.

All these special blessings the Bible reserves for those who become especially, peculiarly, the sons of God. Even in respect to these who have become sons of God, Jesus intimates a danger of their losing the privilege of prayer. He says, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye may ask what ye will"—not otherwise.—John 15:7.

We believe that misinformation on this subject of prayer has worked disadvantageously to many. The majority, holding intercourse with evil, only

occasionally flee to the Lord in some trouble, and that without entering into any covenant with Him or receiving any recognition as sons, and without desiring this. If they were rightly informed, the effect upon their minds at first would be to stun them. They would awake suddenly to the realization that they are without God in the world; that their affairs are not subject to His supervision; but that as part of the world, they are under the general curse, or sentence of death.

The highest qualities of the human mind, which lie at the very top of our craniums, are the organs of worship, reverence, veneration, spirituality. Even the wicked, at times, feel that they will please God by praying to Him and asking Him for some favors. They have not learned that God has addressed them, saying, "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, to take My Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castest My words behind thee?"—Psalm 50:16, 17.

It is high time that the difference between the Church and the world shall be more distinctly discerned, and that the privileges of the Church shall be appreciated. The effect would be to awaken in others a sense of their need for God. Then, in their hours of distress, realizing that they have no God, would they not be the more likely to seek Him earnestly in His appointed way, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through a full consecration—the only terms upon which Jesus would accept them and be their Advocate with the Father, and secure for them the title and privilege of sons of God, valuable both for the present life and for that which is to come?

INCENSE, PRAYER, BEFORE GOD

The Prophet David, in this lesson, pictures the Christian in his distress coming to God in His appointed way: "O Lord, I cry unto Thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto Thee. Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense." This is the same thought elsewhere expressed in the Bible—that the prayers of God's people rise up before Him as a sweet perfume. (Revelation 5:8.) And, by the way, we remember that the incense of old, which typified the prayers of the saints, was composed of a rare mixture of spices, giving forth a peculiarly sweet odor; and that nobody was allowed to make that incense except the priests who were to offer it. (Exo. 30:34-38; 37:29.) Thus again the Lord shows us that the privilege of prayer, of approaching Him in an acceptable manner, is confined to the antitypical priests, called by St. Peter the Royal Priesthood.—1 Peter 2:9.

Only those of the Lord's people who have consecrated their lives to Him, even unto death, are thus represented as members of the sacrificing Priesthood, to whom the Apostle wrote, saying, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, and your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1.) The Lord has pledged to this particular class that He will hear them, yea, that He will answer them—not necessarily according to their natural preferences, but He will heed the spirit of their cry and give to them, according to His Wisdom, the experiences and blessings most helpful.

WHAT WE SHOULD PRAY FOR

Our prayers should be in harmony with our endeavors. Thus in our lesson the Church of Christ are represented as praying the Lord to set a guard over their lips. The thought is that they are striving to keep their lips, their mouths, from utterances that would be injurious to others; and that, on the contrary, they may be helpful to humanity and honoring to God. Also, because they are striving for heart purity and to avoid practising wicked works with evil doers, therefore they pray in harmony, "Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity; and let me not eat of their dainties"—assist me in my determination of opposition to all these things.

How appropriate that the Lord's consecrated people should scrutinize their lives when they come to their Father in prayer! How appropriate for them to note to what extent their blessings, luxuries and dainties have come to them contrary to the principles of justice and love—contrary to the Golden Rule! Whoever intelligently thus prays will surely be examining his life to rectify his business relations, so that he may not eat of the dainties which would come from injustice or oppression, but, on the contrary, rejoice in the commonest things of life if they be the best procurable in harmony with the principles of righteousness, the principles of love.

"LET THE RIGHTEOUS SMITE"

The class that are thus in fellowship with God, through prayer and through seeking to be obedient to His arrangements and laws, are so fully engaged that they are able to say, as in this Psalm, that they will take no offense if reproved by the righteous—rather the reproofs of such will be to them like an excellent oil, such as a guest received from his host in ancient times. The true Christians, the class who have the fellowship with God through prayer, have the qualities of heart which the Apostle describes as the fruits of the Holy Spirit; namely, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. (Galatians 5:22, 23; 2 Peter 1:5-8.) And because possessing these, they are not easily offended, but indeed are glad to have such experiences and lessons as the Lord's providences may direct to them—especially if these come through the brethren, and particularly if the brethren who use these administer their rebukes in a Christian manner—in meekness, remembering themselves, lest they also be tempted.—Galatians 6:1.

In such cases, the reproof will be a blessing from the Lord—if given in that spirit and received in that spirit. Neither their heads nor their hearts are broken by such Scriptural reproofs; and they themselves learn to administer admonitions to others in similar manner, so as not to injure, but to help. Their prayers are for each other in what seem to be calamities; and in harmony with the Lord's promise, these seeming calamities and all the affairs of life shall operate together for good to those who love Him, to the called ones according to His purpose.

The American Revision gives the wording here differently: "As oil upon the head; let not my head refuse it: for even in their wickedness shall my prayer continue."

In hyperbole the Prophet declares the distress of the Church as affecting them even to death. "Our bones are scattered at the mouth of Sheol (the grave), as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth"—like the fragments made by the wood-cutter, who considers the chips not worthy to be gathered. But while this may be the estimation of God's saints from the worldly viewpoint, not so is it with God, as the following verse implies: "But mine eyes are unto Thee, O God the Lord: for in Thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute."

But whatever affliction God's consecrated people may have in the present life, whatever rejection may be their experience at the hands of the great or the wise of this world, they have God's promise of glory, honor, immortality, in the future. In Him they trust, and He will not leave them desolate. He has declared, "The gates of Hell (Sheol, Hades) shall not prevail against them"; that is to say, the power of the grave shall not prevail against the Lord's Anointed, Christ and the Church—they shall come forth from the power of the tomb glorious in the First Resurrection majesty to reign a thousand years.—Revelation 20:6.

"KEEP ME FROM THE SNARES"

Satan is represented as a fowler, a hunter, who is seeking after the Lord's people even as earthly hunters are prone to hunt after speckled birds. Before the invention of powder, the hunters more particularly entrapped their prey with snares and pitfalls. While Satan is represented as being the great Arch-enemy, he also is accredited with using agents. Chief amongst his agents, according to the Bible, are those fallen angels of whom he is the prince—"the prince of devils." But he has amongst men many workers of iniquity. These are his servants whether they realize it or not.

As Jesus declared, "His servants ye are to whom ye render service." In consequence of this rule, we understand that many are professedly servants of God who are deceiving themselves, who are really the servants of the Wicked One; for his works they do, as Jesus said. They colabor for the upbuilding of unrighteousness, iniquity, injustice, and in holding down the Truth and in misleading the people.

The Lord will help His people, He will deliver them from the various snares of the Adversary; and eventually Satan and all his cohorts will fall into their own snares. Thus, in ancient times, when the Egyptians thought to capture the Israelites at the Red Sea, the Lord opened the way for the Israelites and they escaped; while their enemies pursued after them, and were themselves entrapped and overwhelmed.

Similarly, in the great Time of Trouble that is approaching, apparently Satan and his servants will be overwhelmed in that trouble in a manner not expected by them. The Church will escape those things coming upon the world and will stand before the Son of Man, changed in the power of the First Resurrection and called to be with Him as His Kingdom class. But the world will be ensnared in that great Time of Trouble. Yet, thank

God, it will be for their advantage as they learn the ways of the Lord more fully, and great will be the blessings of the Almighty coming to them!

JUNE 26

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus—Heb. 3:1.

It is God's will that every member of the "body of Christ" would be touched with a feeling of the world's infirmities, in order that, when exalted to the Kingdom, they would be very tender, sympathetic and generous, when, as the Royal Priesthood, they shall judge the world. Our Lord and Master, who had none of the imperfections of the fallen race, but was holy, harmless and separate from sinners, needed to take from men their sicknesses and infirmities in order that He might be touched with a feeling of our infirmities and be a faithful High Priest. It would be thoroughly illogical to suppose that the lessons necessary to the preparation of the High Priest for His office and service were not necessary to the Underpriests, called to suffer with Him and to reign with Him—Z '96, 208 (R 2028).

The brethren are holy because consecrated to the Lord. They are partakers of God's calling, because, having been invited by the Father, they have accepted the call and received the holy Spirit. One of their most profitable activities is a contemplation of Christ as the One sent by the Father and the High Priest of the Priestly order. This enables them to follow in His footsteps—P '30, 78.

Parallel passages: Isa. 53; John 19:5; Phil. 2:5-11; 3:14; 2 Tim. 1:9; 2 Pet. 1:10; Heb. 2:9, 17, 18; 4:14; 5:5; 6:20; 8:1; 9:11; 10:21; 12:2, 3; 1 Pet. 2:21.

Hymns: 96, 139, 168, 167, 259, 212, 349.

Poems of Dawn, 28: *Christ Our Teacher*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 122 (R 4802).

Questions: What has considering Jesus done for me? How can I improve therein?

CHRIST, OUR TEACHER

LET Him teach thee, weary soul; (Psa. 27:11.)
Let His hands now make thee whole; (Job 5:18.)
Let His peace thy heart control,—(Col. 3:15.)
Let Him teach thee.

Into paths of righteousness (Psa. 23:3.)
Let Him lead and let Him bless; (Psa. 67:7.)
Let Him save thee from distress,—(Psa. 107:13.)
Let Him teach thee.

Let Him guide thee with His eye; (Psa. 32:8.)
Let His hand thy need supply; (Phil. 4:19.)
Let His goodness satisfy,—(Psa. 65:4.)

Let Him teach thee.

Let His good Word sanctify; (Jno. 17:17.)
Let the furnace purify; (1 Peter 1:7.)
Let Him say, "Fear not; 'tis I,"—(Mark 6:50.)
Let Him teach thee.

Let Him probe thy heart within; (Psa. 66:10.)
Let Him search out every sin; (Psa. 139:23.)
Let the glorious light shine in,—(2 Cor. 4:6.)
Let Him teach thee.

Let the Shepherd kindly feed;
Let Him firmly, truly lead; (Isa. 40:11.)
(He'll not break the bruised reed,) (Isa. 42:3.)
Let Him teach thee.

Let Him give thee songs at night; (Job 35:10.)
Let Him make the darkness light; (Isa. 42:16.)
Let Him set thy spirit right,—(Psa. 51:10.)
Let Him teach thee.

In the tumult let Him hide, (Psa. 27:5; 31:20.)
Let Him keep thee at His side; (Ex. 33:21.)
Let His name be glorified—(Isa. 61.3.)
Let Him teach thee.

R4802: "CONSIDER HIM LEST YE BE WEARIED"

"Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

TO "CONSIDER HIM" seems to be to take note of, to have in mind, to reflect upon and not to easily forget how our Lord endured various trials and oppositions of sinners against himself. In our own experiences we have, as the Lord's followers, endured some opposition of sin and sinners against ourselves; but we have not yet resisted unto *blood*. We have not yet passed through the trying experiences through which he passed. When we remember that while we are poor, imperfect creatures like our neighbors, he was "holy, harmless, undefiled," then it is good to reflect that he endured patiently the opposition of sinners. When trying experiences came to him, he did not consider them as being merely from the individual with whom they originated, but as being, on the other hand, under the supervision of the Father. If, therefore, the Father permitted such experiences to come to him, he was bound to prove his loyalty by patient endurance. As he said, "*The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*"—John 18:11.

So it is with us, Spiritual Israel, "*The Lord your God proveth you.*" (Deut. 13:3.) In proportion as we are able to take our Lord's viewpoint in our experiences in life, we may be calm. If the Father permits trying experiences for our testing, or for the testing or proving of others, in ways we may not understand, it is for us to rejoice to have his will done. The poet has beautifully expressed this thought when he says:—

"My times are in thy hands,
My God, I wish them there."

If we faithfully endure to the end, the reward will be ours. If we prove our loyalty and *keep our faith that God is supervising our affairs*, and that no good thing will be withhold from those who are walking uprightly, we shall some day hear his "Well done, good and faithful servant."

We know that our Lord endured *physical* opposition. But our English word "*contradiction*" properly translates the original, implying *verbal contradiction* of his words. As we consider our Lord's case, we see that the people opposed him, not physically, but *in his words*, his *teachings*. It was left for the high priest and Sanhedrin and soldiers to do him *physical* violence and put him to death; and he could have resisted them if he had so chosen.

"WHEN HE WAS REVILED, HE REVILED NOT AGAIN"

The Apostle, therefore, seems to refer to the contradiction of his words. This is implied by St. Peter, who says, "When he was reviled, he reviled not again." (I Pet. 2:23.) So when we consider the three and a half years of Christ's ministry, we find that his doctrines were disputed, and that he was slandered. The Jews said that he had a demon; that he performed his miracles by the Prince of demons; that he was a blasphemer. These contradictions and oppositions on their part might have called out from him some very just, truthful statements, respecting them. He might have given them as good as he got, and better. He might have told them that the *Devil* was working with *them*, etc. His perfect power of language would have given him ability to more than cope with them. When they thought to entrap him in his *words*, he entrapped them in *their words*. But he reviled not. He did not render evil for evil, nor railing for railing. This, the Apostle shows, is the proper course.

But in the daily affairs of life, when people say all manner of evil against us, when they revile us, it is natural to the fallen flesh to think of something evil to say in return. Thus these things become tests upon us. If we yield to such a spirit, we are following the course of the enemy and not that of the Lord. "*Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds*" when attacked by the Adversary—whoever may be his agents and whatever may be their missiles. He cannot harm but will only increase our reputation in the Lords' sight, if we *endure faithfully*; and he can do no outward harm that God cannot overrule for the *good* of his cause—though that *good* may mean "siftings" of "chaff" and "tares" from the "wheat."

Evil speaking, backbiting and slandering are *strictly forbidden* to God's people as *wholly contrary* to his spirit of love, *even if the evil thing be true*. As a preventive of anything in the nature of slander, the Scriptures very carefully mark out *only one way of redress of grievances*.—Matt. 18:15-17.

PROFESSED CHRISTIANS OFTEN WORST SCANDALMONGERS

Many, among even advanced Christians, seem to be *utterly in ignorance of this Divine ruling*, and hence professed Christians are often the most pronounced scandalmongers. Yet this is one of the few *special, specific commandments* given by our Lord; and considered in connection with the statement, "Ye are my *friends*, if ye do whatsoever I command you," the constant violation of this, our Lord's command, proves that many are not far advanced in friendship—discipleship.

Let us look carefully at this rule, which if followed would prevent gossip, "evil speaking," "backbiting." See, as above cited, Matt. 18:15-17. Its first provision, for a conference between the principals *alone*, implies candor on the part of the accuser, who thinks that he has suffered. It also implies his thinking no evil of the accused. They meet as "brethren," each thinking *his own course* the *right* one, to discuss the matter; to see whether they can come to the same view. If they agree, all is well; the matter is settled; peace prevails; the threatened break has been averted, and no one is the wiser. In the great majority of cases, a frank, open discussion between the principals will bring about harmony. But both must be equally candid and governed by the Spirit of the Lord.

Thus did our Lord guard his true disciples from the insidious sin of slander, which leads onward to other and grosser works of the flesh and the Devil, and stops growth in the Truth and its spirit of love. Let us also note that those who *hear* slanders and thus encourage slanderers in their course of wrongdoing, are *partakers of their evil deeds*; guilty partners in the violation of the Master's commands. God's true people should refuse to listen to slanders and should point the offender to the Lord's Word and the *only* method therein authorized. Are we wiser than God? Experience teaches that we cannot trust to our own judgments and are on safe ground only when following the voice of the Shepherd implicitly.

WE SHOULD REFUSE TO HEAR GOSSIP AND SLANDER

If any Brother or Sister brings to you an evil report of others, stop him at once, kindly but *firmly*. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:11.) Refuse to have any share in this violation of the Master's commands, which does great mischief in the Church. If the Brother or Sister be only a "babe" in spiritual matters, call attention to the Lord's ruling on the subject. (Matt. 18:15; I Tim. 5:19.) If the conversation is not addressed to you but merely in your hearing, promptly show your disapproval by withdrawing.

If, after having had his attention called to the Lord's command on this subject, the slanderer still persists in "evil speaking," "backbiting" and telling you his "evil-surmisings," reprove him more sharply, saying as you go, "I cannot, must not, hear you; for if I did, I would be as criminal in the matter as you are, violating the Lord's command. And even if I were to hear your story I could not believe it; for the Christian who does not respect the Lord's Word and follow his Plan for the redress of grievances, shows so little of the Lord's spirit that his word cannot be trusted. He who twists and dodges the Lord's words would not hesitate to twist and misrepresent the words and deeds of fellow-disciples." Then withdraw fellowship from such until his error has been confessed with promises of reform. If to any extent you listen to such conversation, or express "*sympathy*" with it or with the gossip or slanderer, *you are a partner in the sin and in all its consequences*; and if a "root of bitterness" is thus developed, you are more than likely to be one of those "defiled" by it.—Heb. 12:15.

Be pure: maintain a conscience void of offense toward God and men. Begin with the heart; harbor no thoughts that in any sense of the word would be evil. To make sure of this, have Christ Jesus as your pattern, well and much before your mind. When evil is obtruded upon you, either from without or from within, lift up your heart in prayer to him for the grace promised in every time of need. Keep constantly before you the prayer, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer."—Psa. 19:14.

LET US CULTIVATE APPRECIATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF DIVINE LAW

While seeking to follow the various specific commands of Scripture, let us seek more and more to understand and come in sympathy with the *principles which underlie* the Divine Law. These will enable us to judge of the right and the wrong of such of our words, thoughts and acts as may not be particularly specified in the Lord's Word. Indeed, as we come to understand and sympathize with the principles of Divine Law, to that extent we are getting the spirit of the Divine Word. Note the testimony of the Psalmist on this point, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou, *through thy commandments*, hast made me wiser than mine enemies, *for they are ever with me*. I have more understanding than all my teachers, *for thy testimonies are my meditation*. I understand more than the ancients, *because I keep thy precepts*. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, *that I might keep thy Word*. I have not departed from thy judgments, *for thou hast taught me*. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! *Through thy precepts* I get understanding; *therefore, I hate every false way*. *Thy Word* is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."—Psa. 119:97-105.

Shun a contentious and fault-finding disposition as contrary to the spirit, or disposition of Christ—contrary to *love*. A certain amount of combative courage is demanded in overcoming the world, the flesh and the Devil and their various snares. This fighting disposition may become a valuable aid to ourselves and to the Master's cause if rightly and wisely directed against sin, *first in ourselves* and *secondly* in others; if used for the Lord and his people and against Satan and all his powers of darkness and superstition.

This, in the Scriptures, is called fighting the *good fight*, and we all should be gallant soldiers in this battle for Right and Truth, lovingly defending our Captain's honor and his people's liberties.

THE POWERS OF EVIL WOULD MAKE COMBATIVENESS A CHIEF VIRTUE

But such a good use of combativeness is not pleasing to the Prince of this world, who will seek to *pervert* what he cannot directly *use*. Consequently, he attempts with some to make combativeness a chief virtue. He encourages them to fight everything and everybody; the brethren, more than the powers of darkness; nominal churchmen, more than the errors and ignorance which blind them and make them such. Indeed, his desire is to get us to "fight against God."

Let us be on our guard on this point. Let us, first of all, *judge ourselves*, lest we cast a stumbling-block before others; let us fight down in *our own hearts* the wrong spirit which seeks to make mountains out of trifles and disposes us to be captious and contentious over non-essentials. Greater is "He that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16:32.) Let us guard ourselves that our defense of the Truth be, not from motives of self-glorification, but from love for the Truth, love for the Lord, for his people, the brethren. If *love* be the impelling spirit, or motive, it will show itself accordingly in a loving, gentle, patient, humble course toward all the fellow-servants. Let us be "gentle toward all." Let "the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God," which is quick and powerful, do all the *cutting*.

Beware of all thoughts, feelings and conditions of heart directly or remotely connected with malice, envy, hatred, strife. Give these no place in your heart even for a moment; for they will surely do *you* great injury, aside from leading to the injury of others. Keep your heart, your will, your intentions and desires full of love toward God and all his creatures—the most fervent toward God, and proportionately toward all who have his spirit and walk in the way of his direction.

DO NOT TRUST TO CONSCIENCE ALONE

If conscience were a *sufficient* guide you would have no need of the Scriptures. The majority of people have as good as no conscience; for they are blind to the principles and laws of God given to *guide* conscience; and still worse off than these are those mentioned in I Tim. 4:2. Hence the imperative necessity for carefully heeding the Lord's Word, and *walking circumspectly* according to its light.

We are not to faint in our minds nor become discouraged, feeling that so much has been said against us that we must give up the race. On the contrary, we are to feel assured like our Lord, that nothing can befall us except with the knowledge of the Father, who is working all things for our good. It was thus our Lord was prepared for his exaltation. So we, if we are rightly exercised by our various experiences and follow as closely as

possible the commands laid down for our guidance, will find that even revilings, slanders, oppositions to righteousness, will work out blessings for us, as they did for our Lord.

But how many become weary and are in danger of losing the prize because they fail to consider what *the Lord* faithfully endured of opposition! If such would consider that the Lord, who was *perfect*, suffered in every sense *unjustly* for righteousness' sake, and that their own conduct is *imperfect*, they would not be weary in well doing, but would learn to fight and to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ"; they would continue to "fight the good fight of faith." "*We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we [the Church] are, yet without sin.*"—Heb. 4:15.

JUNE 27

Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us—2 Cor. 1:21, 22.

The seal or mark of the true disciple is the possession of the Spirit of Christ. The manifestations of this holy Spirit are threefold: (1) love supreme to God and joyful loyalty to His cause even at the cost of suffering; (2) love for the brethren—unselfish, noble, pure—a desire for their welfare, which is always alert to do them good; (3) love, sympathetic, for the world, prompting to good works, as opportunity may afford, and to a desire and effort always to live peaceably with all men—Z '96, 212 (R 2032).

God's people are continually being adjusted to one another by God as disciples of Jesus. He, also, by the anointing continually developed the members of Christ's Body, strengthening them in their places in that Body. He, likewise, worked in them the seal of the Spirit by bringing their hearts into a sympathetic oneness and co-operation with Him in all His arrangements—P '35, 102.

Parallel passages: Rom. 16:25; Col. 2:7; 1 Pet. 5:10; Acts 10:38; Matt. 3:16, 17; 1 John 2:20, 27; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13; Gal. 2:20; 3:16, 29; Eph. 4:13; 2 Cor. 5:5; Eph. 1:13, 14; 4:30; Rom. 8:9, 14-16; 5:5; 2 Tim. 2:19.

Hymns: 201, 4, 74, 114, 105, 198, 249.

Poems of Dawn, 290: *My Life Is But a Weaving*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 213 (R 5498).

Questions: Have I experienced this week God's establishing, anointing and sealing work? How? In what circumstances? What did it accomplish?

MY LIFE IS BUT A WEAVING

MY life is but a weaving
Between my Lord and me;
He chooses all the colors
And works on steadily.

Oftimes He weaveth sorrow,
And I, in blinded pride,
Forget He sees the upper,
And I the underside.

The dark threads are as needful
In the Weaver's skilful hand,
As the treads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.

Not till the loom is silent,
And the shuttles cease to fly,
Will God unroll the fabric,
And show the reason why.

R5498: ANOINTED—ESTABLISHED—SEALED

"Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us."—2 Cor. 1:21, 22.

THE APOSTLE is here addressing the Church at Corinth, recognizing that this congregation are co-laborers with him—accepted of God as members of Christ, the Anointed. Christ is the great One foretold prophetically as the antitypical Prophet, the antitypical Priest, the antitypical King, who is to bless the world by His work of healing, instructing, helping, uplifting. The Apostle says that the One who has brought us into the Body of the Anointed, and has set, or established us, is God. This implies that God does the calling of those who come to Him. It implies that there was a previous invitation—the Apostle says that no man taketh this honor to himself. Even Jesus could not have taken to Himself the honor of being a Priest and King; He could not say, I will be a Priest—I will be a King!

As God called Jesus to be the great Head over this Ecclesia, or Body, so through Jesus He has invited us to become its members. And as we conform to the terms and are made acceptable through our great Advocate, we are then set in the Body—anointed. It is not a *happen-so*, but we are *set*. And we shall continue in this position unless, because of some unfaithfulness, we shall be blotted out and the crown appropriated to us be taken away.

He who *sets* us, *establishes* us, and has anointed us of the Holy Spirit, and thus made us members of this holy company, is *God*, the Heavenly Father. It is not the province of even our Redeemer to set us and anoint us. As the Apostle says, "God hath set every member in the Body as it hath pleased Him." All things are *of* the Father, and all things are *by* the Son; hence this anointing that we receive comes from the Father. Nevertheless, the Channel is the Lord Jesus. This Holy Spirit which the Father has given to Jesus, He has shed forth upon us. The Father *authorizes* it, the Son *sheds it forth*.

SEALED IN THE MASTER'S LIKENESS

And God "hath also sealed us." It is not only important that we be begotten of the Holy Spirit, and set in the Body, but it is another precious thought that we are to be *sealed*, or *impressed*; we are to receive a stamp. As we would set a seal into wax to mould the wax into its likeness, so with us who are desirous of knowing and doing God's will; we are impressed by His Holy Spirit into the image of our dear Master; and the channel through which we are sealed is the Truth.

So those who are sealed by the Holy Spirit have a considerable measure of appreciation of the Truth. All the promises come through God's Word; it is a power that is now at work, so that all of God's people in all parts of the world are being impressed through the promises of God. God works in us to will and to do His good pleasure. This sealing is of the Father, because it is through His promises; it is under the direction and care of the Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus, that He may in due time present us blameless and unreprouable before the Father.

"If I in Thy likeness, O Lord, may awake,
And shine a pure image of Thee,
Then I shall be satisfied when I can break
The fetters of flesh and be free."

JUNE 28

Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil—Prov. 3:7.

Nothing is more dangerous to the child of God than self-conceit; it blocks the way to true progress and reformation of heart, and hinders true usefulness to others, and especially usefulness in God's service; for His Word declares, "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Instead of self-confidence, Wisdom dictates a distrustfulness of self, remembering its weaknesses and imperfections, and correspondingly the greater reverence for God and reliance upon Him, which more than anything else will strengthen and enable us to depart from the evil of our fallen estate—Z '96, 263 (R 2060).

To be wise in one's own eyes means self-satisfaction and self-sufficiency with respect to one's own knowledge. Such are unteachable and will surely fall from the Truth, unless they mend their ways. If they wish to be recovered from this fault, let them learn to give God the first place in their hearts, and they will thus be enabled to depart from iniquity, and that by practicing good—P '34, 95.

Parallel passages: Deut. 9:7; 15:5; Psa. 131:1, 2; Prov. 10:8; 22:4; 30:32; Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 3:18; Deut. 10:12; Josh. 24:14; 1 Sam. 12:24; Job 28:28; 37:24; Psa. 25:12-14; 103:11, 13, 17.

Hymns: 44, 130, 13, 95, 125, 136, 145.

Poems of Dawn, 82: *Just To Let Thy Father Do What He Will.*

Tower Reading: Z '13, 57 (R 5186).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

JUST TO LET THY FATHER DO WHAT HE WILL

JUST to let Thy Father do what He will;
Just to know that He is true, and be still.
Just to follow, hour by hour, as He leadeth;
Just to draw the moment's power, as it needeth.
Just to trust Him, this is all. Then the day will
surely be
Peaceful, whatso'er befall, bright and blessed, calm
and free.

Just to let Him speak to thee, through His Word,
Watching, that His voice may be clearly heard.
Just to tell Him everything, as it rises,
And at once to bring to Him all surprises.
Just to listen, and to stay where you cannot miss His

voice,
This is all! and thus today, you, communing, shall
rejoice.

Just to trust, and yet to ask guidance still;
Take the training or the task, as He will.
Just to take the loss or gain, as He sends it;
Just to take the joy or pain as He lends it.
He who formed thee for His praise will not miss the
gracious aim;
So today, and all thy days, shall be moulded for
the same.

Just to leave in His dear hand little things;
All we cannot understand, all the stings.
Just to let Him take the care sorely pressing;
Finding all we let Him bear changed to blessing.
This is all! and yet the way marked by Him who
loves thee best:
Secret of a happy day, secret of His promised rest.

R5186: HUMILITY AN ELEMENT OF TRUE COURAGE

"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord and depart from evil."—Prov. 3:7.

NOTHING is more dangerous to the child of God than self-conceit; it hinders reformation of heart, as well as true usefulness to others, and especially usefulness in God's service; for the Word declares, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." (James 4:6.) The Scriptures everywhere make prominent the fact that those who would be in harmony with God must be humble. The Lord bestows blessings upon the humble, the meek, the teachable. Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek." (Matt. 5:5.) The Apostle exhorts, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—I Pet. 5:6.

The Word of God points to the fact that Jesus was meek and lowly. (Matt. 11:29, 30.) This humility of mind and heart was, in many respects, the secret of His success. If He had not been humble, He would not have attained to the glorious station to which He was exalted.

There is a marked contrast between Jesus and Satan. The one thought to exalt himself, and the Other to *humble* Himself. (Isa. 14:13, 14; Phil. 2:8.) Satan said, "I will elevate myself above the other angels; I will be like the Most High, and exert such a power as He does. I could show the angels very great wisdom if I were in control of affairs." Inspired by this wrong spirit, Satan became ambitious to make an exhibition of what he could do.

The Scriptures give us to understand that Satan's inordinate desire to gain distinction was the secret of his fall. Ambition is good, but only when it is based upon humility. Any spirit that does not respect God's Wisdom is indeed foolish.

Satan's spirit was one of *ambition* and *pride*. Already highly favored of God as one of the highest rank of angels, he was not content with his great honors and blessings, but was desirous of attaining still greater influence and power than God had been pleased to grant him. This unlawful aspiration to obtain control led him not only to rebel against the Divine Government, but also to become the "murderer" (John 8:44) of our first parents, that he might gain control over them—the object of his ambition.

How short-sighted was the Adversary, that he should think to out-general Jehovah, and to exalt himself and erect a rival Kingdom! Soon Satan's folly will be manifested. When the Lord's due time shall come, the One who *humbled Himself* in obedience to the Father's will shall be exalted to kingly power and authority, to the position at the Father's right hand in the Kingdom of the Universe; but the one who attempted the usurpation shall be bound and utterly destroyed.

HUMILITY PRECEDES EXALTATION

Our Lord Jesus took a different course from that of Satan. Instead of trying to exercise power He had supreme reverence for Jehovah. He said, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God." (Psa. 40:8.) Following this course of humility in the presence of the great Eternal One, Jesus was led of the Father as He would not have been if He had had a self-sufficient spirit. Under the Father's guidance He was humiliated. He "learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Heb. 5:8.); and after His death and resurrection He received the reward of the Divine nature. He became Heir of all the gracious promises of God's Word, "Heir of all things."—Hebrews 1:2.

These two great examples afford us an impressive lesson. They show us that if we copy the ambitious and self-wise attitude of Satan, it will estrange us from God. We should realize the Wisdom of God and submit ourselves fully to His will. If we walk obediently in the footsteps of the Master, we shall attain glory and honor with our Lord.

The Wisdom of God is foolishness with men. The people of this world are leaning to their own understanding. People sometimes boast along this very line, saying, "I have some ideas of my own." We all find that what we know is but very little and generally very incorrect. Experience is an excellent teacher.

The lessons that we have learned in the School of Christ are to a great extent those of humility, a great deal of which is required of pupils in that School. The path of life is so narrow that those who love the broad garish way would not think of walking in the narrow one. The Lord is allowing those who are self-conceited to turn aside. Even though they started out to walk in *His* way, they are permitted to go after *their own* foolish *misunderstandings*. If they continue in this course it will lead to their destruction.

WISDOM OF THIS WORLD FOOLISHNESS WITH GOD

As for the world, whether they live in Christian or in heathen lands, all shall come to a knowledge of the Truth. (I Tim. 2:3, 4.) This knowledge will not be theoretical, for mankind will be brought to it through practical experience. In fact the whole world is getting a great lesson now. When the New Dispensation is ushered in and the Truth is made plain, mankind will perceive how very foolish they have been. They will see the un wisdom of the greater part of their course. "For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish."—Isa. 29:14.

It will be a hard experience for mankind to realize what clumsy efforts they have made along different lines. If scientists and philosophers, when asked as to God, had said, "We do not know," they could have been respected for their honesty. But they have boasted about geology, evolution, etc., and have pretended to know all the secrets of the Universe. What shame will be theirs when confronted with the facts! It will be a severe chastisement for them to perceive how foolish they have been and to know that others are aware of their folly.

The truly noble soul feels humbled upon the borders of the vast unknown, thankfully accepts the Divine Revelation as to his nature, origin, destiny, etc., and patiently awaits the Lord's good time for a fuller understanding of all the mysteries of His wondrous grace.

We may well fancy that some of the great theologians who have taught with such positiveness what they do not know and what is contrary to the Bible, will feel very strange when they learn the Truth. Already this is true to some extent. They are ashamed of the teachings of Calvin and of many of the theories of the past. Yet they still hold on to the creeds of nominal Christianity, but cover these up; accordingly, with such an attitude of heart, they make very little progress.

JUNE 29

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God—Matt. 5:8.

The thought of "pure in heart" is not perfection of conduct, nor of word, nor of thought, but perfection of *intention* as respects all of these. Our desire and effort must be for perfection—in thought, word and deed. The standard before us, to which our hearts, wills, must give assent, is the Divine standard, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). God has set no lower standard than this absolute perfection, but He has provided for us grace, mercy and peace through Christ, if we walk in His footsteps, this purity of heart being one of the essential steps in the narrow way—Z '00, 71 (R 2585).

Purity of heart means being well-intentioned. This signifies a singleness of purpose to glorify God. It will reduce our conduct to terms of loyalty to God. Such hearts indeed make their possessors joyful, and the possessors of such hearts now see God with the eyes of their understanding, and all the elect will eventually see Him as He really is—P '33, 79, 80.

Parallel passages: Psa. 15:2; 19:8; 24:3-5; 51:7; Prov. 21:8; Mal. 3:2, 3; John 15:12; 1 Tim. 1:5; Phil. 4:8; 2 Tim. 2:21, 22; Titus 1:15; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 John 3:3; 1 Cor. 13:12; 1 John 3:2.

Hymns: 194, 20, 1, 145, 136, 78, 125.

Poems of Dawn, 114: *Show Me Thy Face*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 389 (R 5148).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they borne? In what did they result?

SHOW ME THY FACE

SHOW me Thy face—one transient gleam
Of loveliness Divine,
And I shall never think or dream
Of other love than Thine;
All other lights will darken quite,
All lower glories wane,
The beautiful of earth will scarce
Seem beautiful again.

Show me Thy face—the heaviest cross
Will then seem light to bear,
There will be gain in every loss,
And peace with every care.
With such light feet the years will fleet,

Life seem as brief as blest,
Till I have laid my burden down,
And entered into *rest*.

R5148: WHAT CONSTITUTES PURITY OF HEART

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."—Matt. 5:8.

THE WORD *pure* is a comprehensive term, meaning without adulteration, sincere, unsullied. Purity of *heart* is purity of *motive*, of *intention*, of *effort*, of *will*—purity in the sense of transparency, of truthfulness. In other words, Blessed are the honest-hearted—those who have absolutely right *intentions*. The word heart in this text does not refer to the organ which pumps the blood throughout the system, but to the intention, the will of the man.

In his creation, man was made in the image of God, and so was originally pure in heart—honest, sincere, truthful, perfect in intention; but by reason of the fall from his natural condition, sin and selfishness have developed in his heart, and the Godlike qualities given him in his creation have been to a considerable degree obliterated. While there are many worldly people who to some extent might claim honesty of heart, yet only those who have given themselves to God in full consecration can belong to the class which shall see Him.

When one has made a full consecration of himself and has been begotten by the Holy Spirit, he is said to have a new heart, a new will, new ambitions, new desires. Where the conversion from sin to righteousness is thorough, it may be truthfully said, "Old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17.) To accomplish so radical a change requires the operation of a powerful influence—that of the Holy Spirit.

Purity of thought, however, does not mean absolute perfection of thought, word and deed. To this condition no member of the fallen race can attain until the beneficent influences of the Kingdom shall have restored the race to its original perfection. But to *will* right, to *will* perfectly, to be pure in *heart*, is quite possible; indeed, it is very necessary to all who desire Divine approval. The standard set before us, to which our hearts, our wills, *must* give assent, is the Divine Standard, "Be ye *perfect*, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—Matt. 5:48.

As long as we are in the flesh, we are obliged to think, to speak and to act *through* the *imperfect medium* of the *fallen body*, whose affections are continually in opposition to the new will and *must be resisted*. Therefore to perform all that the new will would prompt is sometimes beyond the ability of the Lord's most earnest followers: and all have need that the merit of Christ cover their blemishes, so that the new will, the new heart, may be judged of the Lord and tested as to its worthiness or unworthiness of eternal life and the attendant blessings which God has promised to the overcomer.

Only the pure in heart have the promise of *seeing God*. These continue faithful to the end of their pilgrimage; and not only do they attain the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus in their purity of heart *intention* toward all, but eventually they shall be made like Him and "see Him as He is," in the glorious change of the First Resurrection.—I John 3:2.

HONORABLE MOTIVES INDICATIVE OF HEART PURITY

When one finds imperfection in himself, when he discovers that he is not up to the glorious standard of righteousness set forth in the Scriptures, when he realizes that he comes short of the glory of God, then it becomes his privilege to seek to amend his conduct. The very act of deciding to do right is the beginning of the process by which one gets a new mind, a new will. This renewing of the mind corresponds to the perfecting of certain organs of the brain.

The will is able to control the whole body. Occasionally there will be opposition from one or another of the lower organs, which will resent the control of the superior ones; but in a general way, the will has the mastery. The qualities which constitute the mind were originally a part of the image of God; but all of the powers of the human mind have been injured by the fall of man. All have been more or less weakened.

The organs of veneration, conscientiousness and firmness form a very powerful combination. If these qualities rule the life, the growth of the new mind will be rapid. Whoever has sufficient brain capacity to determine to do right and to serve God to the best of his ability, may, notwithstanding the weakness of his flesh, *will* to live in accordance with the Divine standard. So long as the motives of his new will are honorable, he is pure in heart; and as long as he maintains that condition, he has the assurance that he may ultimately reach perfection through obedience.

In olden times, this purity of heart intention was as much as any one could have. On one occasion, Joshua said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Josh. 24:15.) In that statement the old warrior manifested purity of heart—the determination of the *mind* to serve the Lord. David and all the other Ancient Worthies had this determination. This was as much as they could do; and therefore, they had this testimony, that they "pleased God."—Heb. 11:5, 6, 39.

Whoever has this determination shall be blessed. He shall one day see the light of God's countenance. If, however, for a season he should fail to maintain this standard, there would be a cloud between him and the Lord. This can be removed only by repentance and forgiveness. Then with the Psalmist he could say, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."—Psa. 116:7.

During the Gospel Age, the people of God may have, not only this purity of heart, or conversion to the Lord, turning to Him in fulness of consecration through the precious blood of Christ, but also something more. They may have the Divine acceptance of that consecration and the begetting of the Holy Spirit. Therefore these are the children of God

in a sense peculiar to this Age. These may cry, "Abba, Father." (Rom. 8:15.) To them, God is not merely the Controller of the Universe, but their Father.

During the Gospel Age, the people of God may have special blessings greater than anything previously enjoyed. They have the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit, which comes through the Divine Word, the Divine providences, etc. It requires an illumination of our mental conceptions in order that we may see God. Therefore the Church of Christ, who are begotten of the Holy Spirit, may see Him with the eyes of their understanding in a sense in which the Ancient Worthies could not.

If we maintain our purity of *heart* by purity of *mind*, we may have the assurance of future blessings as well as of present favor and happiness. If this be our course in "the life that now is," we have the Lord's promise that we shall see Him in a very special sense in the life "which is to come." We shall be changed to spirit beings and shall see Him as He is and shall share His glory. Every one who has this hope within him purifies himself, even as the Lord is pure.—I John 3:2, 3.

JUNE 30

*In the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers ... gather the wheat into my barn—
Matt. 13:30.*

The time is short; the harvest work is great; the laborers are few; our time is consecrated; we must labor while it is called day, knowing that a night cometh wherein no man can work. We have consecrated our lives even unto death; we are commissioned of the great Lord of the harvest to seek for the true "wheat," and to gather it into the barn. What time have we for frivolities or worldliness or the many social amenities? Rather, we must content ourselves with giving very little attention to these things, and must press along the line, engaging heartily in the work given us to do, if we would have the approval of our Master, His "Well done, good and faithful servant"—Z '00, 234 (R 2674).

In the Harvest time the fruitage of all previous Gospel-Age work was gathered. Those who were privileged to reap that Harvest entered into the labors of all God's servants from the beginning of the Gospel Age. With confidence and joy God's servants garnered what was reaped and what others had sown; and both sowers and reapers rejoice together at the Harvest Home—P '32, 63.

Parallel passages: Psa. 50:5; Isa. 52:7; Mal. 3:17; Matt. 3:11, 12; Luke 3:17; John 4:34-38; Rev. 7:1-4; 14:14-16; Matt. 13:41-43; 1 Cor. 15:42-58.

Hymns: 260, 70, 116, 210, 275, 309, 337.

Poems of Dawn, 169: *The Time Is Short*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 269 (R 5761).

Questions: Have I this week spread God's Word? How? Why? With what results?

THE TIME IS SHORT

UP, up, my soul, the long-spent time redeeming;
Sow thou the seeds of better deed and thought;
Light other lamps, while yet the light is beaming;
The time, the time is short.

Think of the eyes that often weep in sadness,
Seeing not the truth that God to thee hath taught;
O bear to them this light and joy and gladness;
The time, the time is short.

Think of the feet that stray from misdirection,
And into snares of error's doctrine brought;
Bear then to them these tidings of salvation;
The time, the time is short.

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

R5761: THE TWO PARTS OF THE HARVEST WORK

SOME of the dear people of God have wondered what relationship the PHOTO-DRAMA and the Colporteur work have to the end of the Harvest. One's knowledge of the DRAMA would necessarily be limited to his contact with it. There are some who have heard of it, but who have not much knowledge of it. The general reports received since its production have been very satisfactory. In some parts the Classes have been largely increased in number. In certain places the friends at first felt disappointed; but these reported later that after a few Sundays, when the people had had time to let the Truth sink more or less into their minds, a number came out of the churches, where they could not get satisfactory food, and began to attend our meetings. As a rule, wherever the DRAMA has been shown the Classes have been increased. Some very remarkable characters have come into the light of Present Truth—some of the Lord's people who before were in the darkness through prejudice and superstition, and others from the world. These who became thus interested have been started to investigating and reading the STUDIES, through the Colporteur work.

Similarly, the 42,000,000 copies of BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY put out this last year, while they have not brought millions into the Classes by any means, have no doubt been doing a good work, a work of stirring up the minds of the people, awakening them to think, and reaching some of the Great Company class. Others, perhaps, have been brought directly to full consecration through our free literature. All of these works seem to belong to the Harvest; for they did not belong to a previous time.

THE PLOWMAN OVERTAKING THE REAPER

The Harvest work has been increased rapidly to its consummation. We are not to understand that the Harvest is yet wholly finished; for there are two parts to the work—the gathering of the wheat, and the burning of the tares. We might have thought that the gathering of the wheat has been accomplished; that if our expectations are true, with the end of the Gentile Times the number of the Very Elect would be complete, so that no more could enter. We are not positive of this, and we must not go by guessing. The latter part of the Harvest work is to be the burning of the tares, and the waking up of the Great Company class and preparing them to go out and purchase the oil for their lamps. Now seems to be the particular time, if we have the right focus on the matter, in which the Great Company class would hear—when the foolish virgins would get the light, get the oil, and the time when the wise virgins have gone in, or are soon to go in, to the Marriage.

In the text of Scripture which speaks of the plowman overtaking the Reaper, we are to remember that the Reaper is the Lord, and that the plowman is the great Time of Trouble. This Time of Trouble will overtake the reaping work, and bring it to a close. But the Time of Trouble will go on, the plowman will keep on plowing, after all our efforts have ended in respect to the reaping. But meantime, before this dark night fully sets in, we are to go right on with the work which the Lord has put into our hands. The Truth is designed, not only to perfect the "Bride" of Christ, the Chief of the First-borns, but to develop the Great Company class, and also to be a witness to the whole world. Any carelessness on our part, or any cessation of activity in the service of the Truth while opportunity yet remains, would in our estimation be a great mistake. If we are loyal, the Lord will give us far greater opportunities in the future—the blessing of all the nations, all the kindreds, all the families of the earth.—Galatians 3:8, 16, 29.

THOSE CONSECRATING BETWEEN THE AGES

It is our thought that with the closing of the "door" of this Gospel Age there will be no more begetting of the Holy Spirit to the spirit nature. Any afterward coming to God through consecration, before the inauguration of the Restitution work, will be accepted by Him, not to the spirit plane of being, but to the earthly plane. Such would come in under the same conditions as the Ancient Worthies who were accepted of God. The Ancient Worthies came in, no call being opened to them—the High Calling not being yet open, and the Restitution opportunities not open. But they freely gave themselves up to God without knowing what blessings their consecration would bring, except that they had the intimation that they would, in the future life, have a "better resurrection" than would the remainder of the world.

Our thought is that whoever under such conditions as these will make a full consecration to the Lord, to leave all to follow in His ways, and will live up faithfully, loyally, to that consecration, may be privileged to be counted as a similar class to those who preceded this Gospel Age. We know of no reason why the Lord would refuse to receive those who make a consecration after the close of the Gospel Age and its High Calling and before the full opening of the Millennial Age.

THE BURNING OF THE TARES

Whether the overcoming saints will have a part in the burning of the tare class is a thought not very clear at this time. "This honor have all His saints, to execute the judgments written." All the saints would include, then, those who would be living in the world when the judgments are executed, as well as the resurrected saints. Just how any living here would have a share in executing the judgments written we do not see; but we are keeping our eyes open, with the thought that this may be so.

It would seem that the burning of the tares has now been going on for some time; that is, some who have *professed* that they are Christians and have *thought* that they are Christians, but have never entered into true relationship with the Lord and become of the wheat class, are to be destroyed as tares, shown in their true light. If questioned now as to

their consecration, these will say, "I am no saint, but I wish to be right and just in my dealings so far as possible." Thus such demonstrate that they have not understood what it is to be a real Christian.

This great war in Europe is waking up people to think in a way that they have never thought before; and now is the time when the real Christianity and the counterfeit will be differentiated. Many people will come more or less rapidly to recognize this. But there is a large proportion of tares that have not yet been burned. Emperor William of Germany, King George of England, the Czar of Russia, the Pope, etc., have not yet learned the difference between the true Christianity and the imitation. So it is with many others. But the burning will progress to its completion, and the true and the false will be completely manifested to all.

JULY 1

Walk as children of light ... proving what is acceptable unto the Lord—Eph. 5:8, 10.

If we be sanctified to God by the Truth—if our wills be dead, and the Lord's will be fully accepted as ours, in thought, word and act—we have attained the will of God and shall win the prize as "overcomers"; even if, opportunities being denied us, we never preached, never gave to the poor and never suffered as martyrs for the Truth's sake. Let us all note well this point, "This is the will of God [concerning you], even *your sanctification*." Let nothing becloud or obscure this truth—neither other truths nor errors. Let it dominate our course in life, and then, if God's will is really our will, we have a clearly marked pathway before us, which is very important—Z '99, 4 (R 2411).

The children of the light are God's consecrated people who have the Truth. They conform their conduct to the doctrines, precepts, promises, exhortations, prophecies, histories and types of God's Word. They constantly study the Word and seek to apply its principles to the circumstances of their lives, that they may thus ascertain what is pleasing to the Lord, and then do it—P '26, 95.

Parallel passages: Matt. 5:14-16; John 12:46; 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Thes. 5:5; 1 John 1:7; 2:6, 9, 10; Rom. 12:2; 13:13; Eph. 5:2, 10, 17; 1 Thes. 4:3; 5:24; Phil. 1:10; 1 Tim. 2:3.

Hymns: 315, 1, 20, 196, 71, 125, 154.

Poems of Dawn, 77: *Not Seeing, Yet Believing*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 126 (R 5446).

Questions: Did I this week seek as a child of the light to prove my disposition, motives, thoughts, words and deeds? How? Why? Under what circumstances? With what results?

NOT SEEING, YET BELIEVING

THE clouds hang heavy 'round my way,
I cannot see.
But through the darkness I believe
God leadeth me;
'Tis sweet to keep my hand in His
While all is dim;
To close my weary, aching eyes
And follow Him;
Through many a thorny path He leads
My tired feet.

Through many a path of tears I go,

But it is sweet
To know that He is close to me,
My God, my Guide;
He leadeth me, and so I walk
Quite satisfied.
To my blind eyes He may reveal
No light at all;
But while I lean on His strong arm
I cannot fall.

R5446: CHRISTLIKENESS THE EVIDENCE OF SONSHIP

"He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked."—1 John 2:6.

TO ABIDE in Christ implies that one has first come into Him. This gives us the thought of a Body. The Scriptures everywhere represent the Church as being this Body, with Jesus as the Head. "God gave Him to be Head over the Church, which is His Body." During the Gospel Age an invitation has been given to certain persons to be of this Body of Christ. There is only one door by which these may come into the Body. It is the door of sacrifice, baptism into Christ's death. We are accepted only by giving up our own will, and taking instead the will of God. We pledge ourselves to walk in Jesus' steps, to become His followers, His disciples. We are buried with Him and rise to walk in newness of life.—Romans 6:4.

But it is not sufficient that we take these steps, not sufficient that we have received the Holy Spirit, and have been accepted of the Father. We should be sure that we continue to abide in Christ. Let us ask ourselves, Are we having the experiences common to all who are associated with Jesus? One of the ways to be sure that we are abiding in Him is to realize that we still love Him. Another is to know that we are still in harmony with God's Word. A third way is that we have no will but the Lord's will. Still another is to have His peace in our hearts and lives as the ruling and controlling influence.

PROFESSION ALONE INSUFFICIENT

Many have made a profession of being members of the Body of Christ who do not give evidence of being His. Our text says that any one who professes to be in Christ ought so to walk even as the Master walked. And how did the Master walk? He lived daily in harmony with the will of the Heavenly Father. He was fully submissive to the Father's will. And this meant sacrifice unto death—the cruel death of the cross.

Whoever has our Lord's spirit, and is controlled by the same will, is a member of the Body of Christ, and will seek to walk after this fashion, to do the will of God in all things. This will mean a walk of holiness, of full devotion to God, and of opposition to sin. Whoever is consecrated to God is opposed to every sinful thing; for God and sin are in

antagonism. God stands for His own righteousness, and sin is a violation of that righteousness. (1 John 3:4.) Whoever walks as Jesus walked is in harmony with the Divine Word and will. We are not to trust to our impressions, our own conceptions of what is right and advantageous, as many others do; but the Word of the Lord is to abide in us, and to govern our lives. Jesus said, "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me"—"everything written in the Book." And so it is to be with us. We must abide in Him, walk in Him, and be willing to do "everything written in the Book"—not merely forcing ourselves to it, saying, I *will* take this course; but saying, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O my God; Thy law is written in my heart."—Psa. 40:7, 8.

PROOFS OF SONSHIP

All who have accepted Christ claim, in a general way at least, to be sons of God, that Christ is their Elder Brother, and that they belong to this great family that God is selecting from the sons of men. They consider themselves heirs with Christ to the great Kingdom to come. But not all who claim to be sons of God are such. A great many are making this claim. Statistics tell us that there are four hundred millions of professed Christians; but we cannot think that many of these four hundred millions are sons of God. The Apostle Paul calls our attention to the fact that since we cannot read the hearts we must go by the professions which others make by mouth and by conduct. But professions of the mouth are not to be taken as final. We know that those who are sons of God will be led by His Spirit. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

But what is the Spirit of God? Primarily it is the spirit of Truth, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of justice, the spirit of love. And as many as are God's children, begotten of His Holy Spirit, will make some manifestation of their harmony with this general Spirit of God. If they are, therefore, walking in unrighteousness, making no endeavor to stem the tendencies of sin in themselves, if they prefer error rather than Truth, their fruits condemn them; for God stands for Truth, and was exemplified in our Lord Jesus.

Whoever, therefore, has the Spirit of God, is willing to sacrifice himself that he may serve the Truth. He loves the Truth, and will manifest this fact by the spirit of love and zeal. Satan is the personification of sin, envy, hatred, malice, strife. Righteousness, love, joy, peace, are fruits of the Holy Spirit. Wherever we see the works of the Devil manifested we have reason to question that such a one is a child of God. The spirit of envy, the spirit of hatred, the spirit of malice, the spirit of opposition to the Truth, the spirit of unrighteousness—these are to be repudiated and overcome by all who would be sons of God.

Yet despite one's best efforts, he might still find in his flesh tendencies to sin which would give him a great deal of trouble. He may take courage from the assurances of the Scriptures that the Lord looketh on the *heart*. Likewise in regard to others, we should judge according to the endeavor, the intention. Wherever the Spirit of God is, there is the spirit of love. And this spirit will make one wish to make reparation, if he has done wrong or been in error. To do so shows that it was not his spirit, his will to do wrong, but that he was merely entrapped for a time. But one who continues to do according to his

natural tendencies, with no evidence of going in the right direction and of serving the Truth, has reason to doubt that he is a child of God.

HOW WE CAN WALK AS HE WALKED

The Apostle's thought seems to be that those who profess to be the Lord's followers, profess to be Christians, should see to it that their walk in life is in harmony with their profession. The word *disciple* signifies one who follows—as a pupil follows his teacher. We recognize Christ as our Redeemer and also as our Pattern, our Instructor, in the glorious things which the Father has invited us to share with our Savior. If, therefore, we say that we are in Him, this profession should be borne out by our walk in life. We should walk as He walked.

But we are not perfect—how can this be done? The answer is that we "are not in the *flesh*, but in the *spirit*." God does not look upon our imperfect flesh. As New Creatures we are not fleshly beings, but spiritual. The Apostle is in our text speaking of that walk that the Master had after He made consecration. He walked in this way three and a half years. It was a walk, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. And so with us. We are walking, not according to the flesh, but according to the New Creature. We reckon ourselves dead according to the flesh, and the Lord so reckons us. If, then, we are dead to the flesh, we are not to walk according to the desires of the flesh.

We are to walk as our Lord walked, in our general deportment. We are to love everything that is good and to avoid everything that is evil. We are to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of our Lord and Exemplar. We cannot in an imperfect body walk up to all the perfection of Jesus, who was perfect in His flesh as well as in His spirit. But we are to walk *as* He walked—in the same path, in the same direction, toward the same glorious goal toward which He walked. And so doing, faithful day by day, we shall by His grace attain the same exceeding great reward.

JULY 2

Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it—1 Cor. 4:12.

If you are a faithful pupil (in the school of Christ), it will not be long until you see that the perfect law of liberty, the law of Christ, is a discerner of the very thoughts and intents of the heart, and that while you must hate all sin, you cannot hate any sinner, and yet have the love of God perfected in your heart. If even so much as a bitter feeling against our traducers and maligners arise, it is to be fought, and so complete a victory gained over it that every fiber of our beings will be in sweet accord with our Great Teacher's instructions, "Love your enemies. Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. Bless and injure not"—Z '99, 5 (R 2411).

Because of their loyalty to God and His cause, God's people are made the targets of bitter upbraidings from the wicked. These they are not to meet with counter-revilings, but rather with kindly benedictions. They must endure various forms of refined and gross persecution but instead of returning evil for evil are quietly to bear the mistreatment—P '36, 94.

Parallel passages: Acts 23:2; 16:23; 14:19; 2 Cor. 11:23-27; 1 Tim. 4:10; Matt. 5:44; 1 Pet. 2:23; 3:9; Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60; Rom. 12:20; Acts 22:22; 24:5.

Hymns: 299, 3, 57, 93, 305, 325, 326.

Poems of Dawn, 67: *If I Could Know*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 35 (R 5172).

Questions: What experiences of this week were along the lines of this text? How were they met? What benefits came through them?

IF I COULD KNOW

IF I could only surely know
That all these things that tire me so
Were noticed by my Lord—
The pang that cuts me like a knife,
The noise, the weariness, the strife,
And all the nameless ills of life—
What peace it would afford!

I wonder if He really shares
In all these little human cares,
This mighty King of Kings!—
If He who guides through boundless space
Each radiant planet in its place,
Can have the condescending grace

To mind these petty things.

It seems to me, if sure of this,
Blent with each ill would come such bliss
That I might covet pain,
And deem whatever brought to me
The blessed thought of Deity,
And sense of Christ's sweet sympathy,
Not loss, but richest gain.

Dear Lord, my heart shall no more doubt
That Thou dost compass me about
With sympathy Divine.
The Love for me once crucified
Is not the love to leave my side,
But waiteth ever to divide
Each smallest care of mine.

R5172: THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

"Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it."—1 Cor. 4:12.

SINCE GOD HIMSELF is Love, the very highest ideal of perfection which He has given to His people is the standard of Love. We cannot imagine a higher standard than this, nor one more difficult to attain. It is the special characteristic without which none will get the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This mark of perfection was stamped on our Lord. He delighted to do the Father's will in *all* respects, even to the extent of *laying down His life* for those who, on account of Adam's sin, were under the sentence of death.

Our Lord did not, however, need to run toward this mark of perfect love; for He was *always perfect*—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) The Church, on the contrary, are naturally imperfect and fallen by heredity; but we have been washed from all stain of guilt in the blood of the Lamb. The mark of perfect love we attain *gradually*. We first reach perfection of heart intention, and then we pass through experiences which crystallize our characters in righteousness. In all of these trials and difficulties, we must demonstrate that, if our physical organism were perfect, we would always do God's holy will.

As we see this quality of love in our Lord Jesus, we appreciate it, even though we realize that we are not up to the standard which God requires. Nevertheless, our great desire is that we have perfect love for everything in harmony with the will of God. After we have reached perfection of heart intention, the test is no longer upon us of *attaining* the mark, but of *pressing down upon* that mark *until our character has been crystallized*. As the Apostle Paul says, "Having done all, *stand*." (Eph. 6:13.) We do not progress

beyond *perfect love*; for no one can do more than to have a full desire that God's will be done in him. He could do no more, whether he lived five years longer or fifty years. Perfect love is the mark toward which he pressed, and he can attain no higher standard.

While one stands at the mark of Love, the *tests* grow *stronger*. We pass through experiences—often trivial enough—which tempt us to malice, envy, anger and strife. If we are overcome by these tests, and fall away from the condition of *perfect love*, we shall lose the prize for which we are running. (Phil. 3:14.) One who thus falls away may get into the Great Company for development; but if he were to lose all love, he would go into the Second Death. In either of these cases, the person has moved away from the mark of perfect Love, the only standard for those who desire to be in the Kingdom and to participate in the glorious things which God has in store for those who love Him supremely.

GENEROSITY AND BENEVOLENCE CHARACTERISTIC OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Our Lord desires to see in His followers the disposition to overcome the weaknesses and tendencies of the fallen condition and to follow in His footsteps. Of Him it is written, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in His steps; ... who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not." (I Peter 2:21-23.) To be reviled is to be made to *appear vile*, to be evil spoken of, slandered. The natural tendency of all is to resent injustice, to render evil for evil, to give as good as we get—and a little more if possible. This is the natural inclination because we are in the fallen condition, unbalanced in our minds.

Our Lord's teaching is all the opposite of the spirit of reviling. No matter how much we are reviled, we are not to revile in return; no matter how much we are persecuted, we are not to persecute in return. This is the Law of the New Creation. Instead of reviling again, we are to *bless*. This does not mean that when one has said a slanderous thing of us, we are to say, "God bless you"; but that if the person is in difficulty and needs help, we are to overlook altogether what he has done to us, and be just as ready to help him as any other person.

This spirit of generosity and benevolence should be the spirit of the Lord's people. We are to bless those who revile and persecute us by doing them good and by explaining to them, if possible, the situation, which evidently they have misunderstood. We are to bless them by helping them, if opportunity offers, out of darkness into light.

Our faith is greatly strengthened by considering the course of our Lord and noting the similarity between His experiences and ours. Both He and His Apostles were persecuted by the Jewish household of faith. The whole Jewish nation professed to be God's people; and our Lord recognized them as His own, as it is written. (John 1:11.) Yet when "He came unto His own," they received Him not, but persecuted Him and even crucified Him. Later, they persecuted His Apostles and their followers.

Apparently the household of faith has had a monopoly of persecutions. All down the Gospel Age, those who have professed to be God's people have persecuted others. Both Catholics and Protestants have persecuted each other and the Jews, God's chosen people. The majority of persecutions have been by those who professed to be the people of God, many of whom really *thought they were*.

The persecutions of today are of the same kind. They come from those who profess to be the Lord's people. In harmony with this fact is the Scripture which says, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My Name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." (Isa. 66:5.) This statement applies also to the members of our own families, who are not in sympathy with the Truth; that is to say, any persecutions coming from the members of our families are usually from those who profess to be Christians. As a rule, their opposition is not for personal reasons, but on account of some doctrinal point, which they do not see in the same light as do those whom they persecute.

It behooves the Lord's people to look with great sympathy upon those who may be their persecutors. We recall instances where persecution has been carried on with the thought that the persecutors were doing the will of God. Those who persecuted the Lord Jesus were to some degree ignorant of who He was. In Acts 3:17, St. Peter says, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." St. Paul says, "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (I Cor. 2:8.) When Saul of Tarsus persecuted St. Stephen and others of the early Church, he verily thought that he did God service, as he himself afterwards tells us.—Acts 26:9-11.

FIDELITY TO THE TRUTH A CAUSE OF PERSECUTION

All down through the Gospel Age, those who have been faithful to the Truth of God have been put "out of the synagogue." The creeds of men have been barriers to keep out those who understood the Word of God. There was a time when many were excommunicated as heretics *because of conscience*. One of these was Michael Servetus, a brother Christian, whose horrible death at the stake was brought about by John Calvin. This course of conduct literally fulfilled the Scripture which says, "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."—John 16:2.

Those who had charge of the synagogues were not always *bad* people, but they were *mistaken*, as was Saul of Tarsus when he haled men and women to prison. (Acts 8:3.) The same conditions exist today. The darkness hateth the light. When any become enlightened in the Word of God, they are told, "If you stay with us, you must not present these matters." Those who are loyal to God are in this way forced out of the synagogues.

Our day has a peculiarity, however, that other days have not had. The Divine Plan is so beautiful that by its light we see that others are in darkness. The voice of God, the voice of conscience, of enlightenment, calls the people of God out of Babylon, which is misrepresenting God's character, Plan and Word. Instead of feeling like bringing

vengeance upon our enemies, we should feel sympathy for them—not *with* them, but *for* them. We should realize that with them it is very much as it was with the Jews of our Lord's day, who, had they known what they were doing, would have been very much ashamed of their course.

The persecutions of today are different from those of any other period of history. Many faithful followers of the Lord are reproved and slandered for their loyalty to the Word of God. Our Lord's words, however, warrant us in expecting that those who are faithful to Him will be evil spoken of, even as He was. With His words before our minds, we should not be surprised at false charges and false insinuations made against His true followers in proportion to their prominence as His servants.

Our Lord's warning that men "shall say *all manner of evil* against you *falsely for My sake*" (Matt. 5:11), does not imply that those who malign the true Christian will say, "We do this to you for Christ's sake, because you are one of His followers." We have never heard of any one who was thus persecuted, and therefore such a course cannot be what our Lord meant. Evidently His meaning was that His followers, honorable, moderate, truthful, honest, virtuous, possessing the spirit of a sound mind, like Himself, would be highly esteemed amongst the nominally religious, were it not for their loyalty to the Word of God. Because of faithfully pointing out popular errors, because of fidelity to the Truth, they are hated by those prominent in Churchianity.

THE GOLDEN RULE A TEST TO CHRISTIANS

These conditions are testing the adherents of Churchianity along the lines of the Golden Rule; and when they speak evil through malice, hatred, strife and opposition, they are condemning themselves under that rule; for well do they know that they do not wish others to speak evil of them—either through hearsay or through concocted lies or through malice.

These conditions are also a test to the Lord's people, to prove whether they are willing to endure these persecutions and oppositions cheerfully, as a part of the cost of being disciples of Christ. If under the pressure they revile in return and slander and backbite, they are thus demonstrating their unfitness to have a place in the Kingdom. If, on the other hand, they receive these lessons with patience and long-suffering, they will develop more of the character-likeness of their Redeemer and thus become more worthy of a share with Him in the future glory.

Our Lord's declaration, "Ye are the salt of the earth," may very properly be applied to those of the followers of the Lord who give heed to His teachings and who cultivate His character-likeness. As salt is useful in arresting decomposition, so the influence of these faithful ones is preservative. At the time of the First Advent, the world was in a condition in which it would probably have hastened to degeneracy and decay, but for the introduction of the preservative influence extending from the members of the Body of Christ. That influence is still manifest in so-called Christendom.

Even today, although the truly consecrated believers in the great Redeemer are confessedly few in number, yet the saltness from the teachings of the Savior has a wide influence upon the world. Without it, doubtless, corruption and a complete collapse would have come long ago. In spite of it, we see very corrupting and corrupt influences at work everywhere; and the wider our horizon, the more general our information, the more we realize the truth of this statement. When the last member of the Body of Christ shall have passed beyond the veil, the salt will be gone. Then corruption will take hold swiftly, and the result will be the great time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.—Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1.

The Scriptures point out the fact that the Lord's consecrated people belong so completely to Him that in all their afflictions He is afflicted. (Isa. 63:9.) When Saul of Tarsus was persecuting the early Church, our Lord called out to him on the way to Damascus, and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME? And he said, Who are Thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am *Jesus*, whom thou *persecutest*." (Acts 9:4, 5.) Saul was not persecuting the glorified Savior directly, but he was persecuting the *followers* of Jesus—not the *New Creatures*, but the *flesh*. Since, then, our Lord adopts the flesh of His followers as His, the Church is said to be filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.—Col. 1:24.

Throughout the Gospel Age, the world has been blind to the fact that it has persecuted the Church of Christ—those whom God has chosen to be joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 8:17.) When later the eyes of mankind shall have been opened, they will realize what they have done, and will be very much ashamed of their conduct. After Saul of Tarsus saw that he had been fighting against God, his whole course of life was changed.

THE ANTITYPICAL BURNING OUTSIDE THE CAMP

As our Lord suffered in the flesh, so will also those who are members of the Church, which is His Body. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) St. Peter admonishes us to expect this, saying, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind." (I Peter 4:1.) It is the *flesh*, not the *New Creature*, that *suffers*. While we are suffering in the flesh, we are also being developed in the spirit.

In Psalm 44:22, we read, "For Thy sake we are killed all the Day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." St. Paul shows that this statement is a prophecy applicable to the entire membership of Christ, of whom our Lord Jesus is the Head. (Rom. 8:36.) The day to which reference is made is the Gospel Age (2 Cor. 6:2), the antitypical Day of Atonement. As on the typical Atonement Day the typical sacrifices were offered, so all down the Gospel Age the antitypical "better sacrifices" have been made. (Heb. 9:23; 13:11-13.) These "better sacrifices" began with our Lord and continue with His Body, which is the Church.

The antitypical sacrificing began at the time of our Lord's consecration, which was His full surrender of His life to God, to be used in any way that the Father saw fit and that His

providences might direct. The Church follows in His steps. Our consecration is our death to the world, to earthly hopes, aims and ambitions. In our Lord's case, we see that His sacrificial death not only meant the giving away of His physical strength in healing, teaching, etc., but included also the suffering resulting from the opposition of those about Him. Even from members of His own family He experienced ostracism. So Jesus died daily.

In proportion as we are faithful to our Heavenly Father and to the terms of our consecration, we shall have similar experiences. Faithfulness to our covenant of sacrifice will bring upon us opposition from the world, the flesh and the Devil. Particularly will our persecution come from those Christians who are not developed sufficiently to appreciate matters from the proper standpoint.

St. Paul, in speaking of his own case, says that he was dying daily. (I Cor. 15:31.) This statement applies to all who are laying down their lives in the Lord's service. Sometimes it is by the expenditure of physical strength; sometimes it is by a stab from some one who has hurt us, wounded us, injured us with his tongue. In the type, this kind of experience is represented by the burning of the flesh outside the camp, a place which typifies the outcast condition.

The faithful servants of the Lord will be ostracised by the world, as our Lord foretold. (Matt. 24:9; John 16:1-3.) Their attitude of full consecration to do the Father's will is not appreciated; for to the world it seems to be foolish. It is a reproof. As our Lord said, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd."—John 3:20.

To be faithful unto death is a part of the covenant of sacrifice. In some instances, death may come early; in others, it may come late. St. Stephen was faithful unto death, which came early in his Christian experience; St. Peter was also faithful, but met his death after a long lifetime. The promise to the overcomer is, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10.) "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."—2 Tim. 2:12.

JULY 3

I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved—Psa. 16:8.

He who has buried his own will completely in the will of the Lord can know no disappointment; but in every affair of his life he sees by faith Divine appointment or supervision, and hears the Word of the Lord in all of life's affairs assuring him, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." It is one of the evidences of reaching the graduating condition of heart, when we are able to take the oppositions of the great Adversary and of the world and of our own flesh *patiently, uncomplainingly, uncomplainingly, "joyfully"*—as a part of the disciplinary experience meted out to us by our all-wise and all-loving Lord—Z '99, 6 (R 2411).

God's people place God first in all the affairs of life. When their interests conflict with the Lord's, they sacrifice their own desires on behalf of the Lord. He is, therefore, the goal of all their endeavors. He is their chief favorite. He also loves them above all others. He is on their side and will in no wise permit them to fall from their steadfastness and standing before him—P '30, 78.

Parallel passages: Ex. 15:2; Deut. 10:12; 13:3; Psa. 37:4; 45:10; 66:8, 9; 73:25, 26; 91:14; Isa. 12:2; 33:22; Dan. 3:17; Mark 12:29-33; Rom. 8:35-39; Jude 24.

Hymns: 176, 177, 165, 339, 114, 307, 228.

Poems of Dawn, 297: *Our Father's at the Helm*.

Tower Reading: Z '07, 281 (R 4060).

Questions: How have I set God first in this week's experiences? How did this keep me standing?

OUR FATHER'S AT THE HELM

THE boisterous waves with awful roar
A little boat assailed,
And pallid fear's distracting power
O'er all on board prevailed.

Save one, the captain's darling child,
Who steadfast viewed the storm;
And, cheerful, with composure smiled
At danger's threatening form.

"Do you feel safe," a seaman cried,
"While terrors overwhelm?"
"Why should I fear?" the boy replied—

"My father's at the helm."

So when our worldly all is reft,
Our earthly helpers gone,
We still have one true anchor left—
God helps, and He alone.

He to our prayers will bend an ear,
He gives our pains relief;
He turns to smiles each trembling tear,
To joy each torturing grief.

Then turn to Him 'mid sorrows wild,
When want and woes o'erwhelm,
Remembering, like the fearless child,
Our Father's at the helm!

R4060: "BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE"

—Joshua 1:1-11.—

Golden Text:—"I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."—Joshua 1:5.

JOSHUA, the divinely appointed leader after Moses' death, is calculated to have been eighty-three years old at the time. His name originally was Hoshea, the same as that of the prophet. The name signifies "Salvation" or "Help." Subsequently this was changed to Jehoshea (Numbers 13:16) which signifies "Jehovah is salvation." This was afterwards shortened to Joshua and later modified to Jeshua. (Neh. 8:17.) The latter name in its Greek form in the Septuagint is Jesus, the significant name given to our Lord at his birth. It is reasonable to infer that in some respects Joshua typified him.

Joshua was evidently a great man, although that greatness does not so much appear until after the death of Moses and his appointment as his successor. Previously, in harmony with the divine will and arrangement, his greatness was overshadowed by that of Moses, whom he served as general assistant, private secretary, etc. This training was evidently most valuable to him as a preparation for his future work. It made him familiar with the divine plans and methods as understood and practised by Moses, whose confidence he seems to have had in a remarkable degree. It will be remembered that to him was entrusted the command of the people in their first battle, in which they, unused to war, worsted the Amalekites by the Lord's providential assistance. It was Joshua who went with Moses into Mount Sinai, it was he who led one of the companies of spies through the land of promise and who brought back a good report, and who courageously stood with Moses in advising that the people have faith in God and proceed to conquer and possess the promised land. He must have been either the oldest man in all the nation or next to the oldest, for only himself and Caleb of all the nation that were above twenty

years of age at the exodus remained alive. In every way, therefore, Joshua was peculiarly fitted to be the Lord's servant in leading the Israelites into Canaan, and in every way he must have had the confidence of the people for such a position and service more than any other man in the world.

JOSHUA DIVINELY COMMISSIONED

It was not sufficient that Moses had given Joshua a course of training preparing him for this service. It was necessary that the Lord, who proclaimed himself the real leader of Israel, should specially authorize Joshua to take command and to lead the people into Canaan. The intimation is that Joshua, like Moses, was a meek man, humble minded, and that instead of attempting to grasp authority he needed rather that the Lord should encourage him to undertake the responsibility of the position of leader. Happy would it be for all of the Lord's people if they were similarly meek and backward. All should criticise their own hearts and motives along these lines, and such as find in themselves an ambitious spirit should remember its dangers to themselves and to the Lord's people with whom they have to do, because the Lord resists the proud, the self-conscious, the boastful and ambitious, and shows his favor to the humble. The self-conscious need to be restrained, and cannot be permitted of the Lord to come so close to him nor to enter so fully into the secrets of the Lord as can those of more humble mind, who indeed need his encouraging words and gracious promises of assistance ere they could have strength and courage to proceed with his work. Realizing their own littleness and insufficiency and the greatness of the Lord and the importance of his work, these

"fear to touch
Things that involve so much."

The nation of Israel needed to be encouraged, because, although they had been forty years in preparation for this very event, still they realized that great difficulties stood before them. The river Jordan was to be crossed, and at this particular time it was swollen and large; the enemy, ready to repulse their advances, was keen and on the alert and better used to warfare than they. If they should succeed in crossing the river in the face of their enemies it would appear to mean a great expenditure of energy and a great loss of life. They had no bridges nor pontoons from which to construct temporary bridges; and on the other side, if they ever reached it, they knew that the cities were strong walled, with a view to withstanding attacks and sieges, and they were comparatively unprepared as respects military equipment, battering rams, etc. What wonder if the people of Israel needed encouragement to undertake such a conflict—to take possession of the land which God had given them. The Lord began this work of encouragement by strengthening the heart of Joshua as the leader, by reminding him that he had promised the land, and assuring him that "every place that the sole of your foot shall tread, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses." Nevertheless this promise implied that nothing was theirs except as the soles of their feet claimed possession. It was theirs by faith in that promise—a faith that would lead to works. And is not this a general illustration of all of God's dealings with us of Spiritual Israel? He gives to us better promises, exceeding great and precious promises, but they are ours only in proportion as we take them and appropriate them and

act upon them, and through such exercise of faith and obedience gain the desired strength and blessing.

Next the Lord outlined the promised land (v. 4), and practically gave the very boundaries which subsequently marked the possessions of Israel at the close of David's reign and throughout that of Solomon—from the Arabian wilderness on the south and Mount Lebanon to the river Euphrates on the north and the Mediterranean Sea on the west. This definiteness in statement of the boundaries would prove strengthening to faith, and would indicate to them clearly when they had attained possession of all that the Lord had given them. We may reasonably suppose that had their faith and courage been equal to the task they would have been capable of taking possession of that land promptly, but as it was they took possession of only a portion, and Amalekites and Canaanites still dwelt with them in the land and subsequently gave them trouble.

Some have used this as an illustration of how the Christian's full consecration means the surrender of everything to the Lord, that his Spirit and his will may have full control in our bodies and spirits, which are his. In proportion as we have faith and avail ourselves of the Lord's assistance we may equally take possession of our mortal bodies, and transfer our talents to the service of the Lord and his cause; but if through fear or sympathy with sin we permit the will of the flesh to dominate us here and there in this, that or the other affair of life, we will always have trouble in proportion. The sins and weaknesses which we fail to fight against will be sure eventually to fight against us and to injure us as New Creatures. Hence our consecration and our faith should be so full and so strong that we would fight a good fight against sin and meanness in every avenue of our natures and in our sentiments, at last bringing every power of our natures into captivity to God. In proportion as this new mind fails to take possession of the mortal body and to rule it, in that proportion will we be weak when we should be strong, troubled when we should have peace, overcharged and ensnared when we should have the full smile of God's favor. Not that we are advocating the thought of it being possible to reach actual perfection in the flesh, but that we do advocate as Scriptural the thought that we should have perfection of heart, of will, of intention, and that quite early in our Christian experience, and that only such as attain this are overcomers and may expect joint-heirship with the Lord in the coming Kingdom.

"I WILL BE WITH THEE"

God's encouragement of Joshua was not along the lines common amongst men. He did not say to him, "Remember your age and long experience and previous successes as a general," etc., but he did give to him the better counsel, the assurance that as he had stood by Moses as his servant so he would be with him and would not forsake him and would not fail him in any hour of test and trouble. As a consequence of the Lord's assistance he was assured that no one would be able to withstand him all the days of his life, nor would any Israelite be permitted to occupy his place as the captain of the hosts during his lifetime.

Was it not thus with our Lord Jesus, too? And is not the Lord's message a similar one to all the members of the Body of Christ—"I will be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee"? In this let us rejoice while realizing that of ourselves we can do nothing. Remember the Master's words to the disciples returning joyful when they had been used in his service. When they recounted how in his name they had been able to heal the sick and even cast out devils the Lord said to them, Let not your rejoicing be on this account, but rather that your names are written in heaven—rejoice rather that your Father himself loveth you, that you have been accepted of him, and that he is on your part as you are enlisted in his service.

"BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE"

Attention has been called to the fact that the Hebrew word here rendered strong is one which rather implies strength of the arms and of the shoulders, and thus gives the thought of aggressive warfare, while the word rendered courage has an association with the lower limbs and thus implies defensive or resistive power, steadfastness. So then the Lord exhorted Joshua to be strong, to have confidence, to lay hold upon the blessings he and the Israelites were commissioned to take and to possess; and he urged him to be of good courage, to be firm in the resistance of opposition and very steadfast in the face of difficulties. And how much all the people of God today need to apply to themselves this same encouragement and to remember that Joshua and the Israelites and the promised land were merely foreshadowings of the greater and more wonderful antitypes. To us the Lord has given still greater blessings and promises. If the typical Joshua needed to be strong and firm, bold and courageous, what shall we say of the Spiritual Israelites, who must not only wrestle against the world and the flesh, but also, as the Apostle says, must contend with wicked spirits in influential positions?

How much strength and courage we must have if we would come off more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us! And here is the point necessary to be remembered, viz., that this is not our battle but the Lord's, that we are not fighting at our own charges but with his commission and with his promised assistance and support. "I will be with thee, I will not fail thee nor forsake thee." No wonder that the Apostle, gaining a clear view of this situation, exclaimed, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13.) And so it is with all the true followers of the Lord: we do not know how much we can accomplish, we do not know if there would be any limitations to our powers within the limits of the Lord's commands and while upheld by his promise. We must remember, however, the limitations, "Without me ye can do nothing," and again, that what we are to do is clearly indicated in the divine Word, and that we are not to look for nor expect divine aid beyond those limitations: just as in the case of Joshua and Natural Israel. Had they gone outside the boundaries of Canaan specified in the Lord's Word they could not have expected the divine assistance. Here again we remember the Master's words, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you"—under these limitations we can do and be and pray anything and everything, but outside these limitations we must expect nothing.

Courage is always admirable, but there is a moral courage which should rank higher far than physical. This moral courage is greatly needed amongst the Lord's people; without it they can do nothing, and many of their difficulties in the Christian way are because they fail to appreciate this matter and fail to develop this courage. It requires real courage of the highest order to stand for the Lord's Truth and his people when these are misunderstood, misrepresented, antagonized. It takes real courage to stand for the light when the great Adversary with a world-wide influence brands it as darkness and leads an assault against it. It requires real courage to denounce the darkness, meekly, persistently, when it has on its side wealth, culture, influence and Churchianity.

The story was recently told of a general in the United States army, returned from the Philippine war, who received the Truth into a good and honest heart. Anxious to serve the good tidings to others, anxious to honor the great Captain of our salvation, the general inquired respecting opportunities for serving the Truth and was promptly informed respecting the various methods by which its propaganda is going forth in this harvest time. He was not so situated that he could take hold of the Colporteur work, and hence he concluded that he must be a sharpshooter and a volunteer tract distributor under the banner of his King. The Bible class of which he is a member elected him the captain of the Volunteer work for this year, and thus the duty of districting the city and assigning the various quarters for tract distribution fell into his hands. What portion did he assign to himself, a brigadier-general in the army, and widely known throughout the city? Instead of choosing some out-of-the-way place, where few would recognize him, he assigned as his district the very one in which he lived and in which he would be most widely known and recognized, his argument being, "I am not ashamed of the Lord, and if I have any influence amongst my fellow men, I want that influence to tell for the Lord and for his Truth." Surely this dear brother was strong and of good courage, and just as surely his faithfulness to the Lord and to the Truth must have brought him rich spiritual blessing and help to crystallize his character as a New Creature in Christ. Doubtless it requires courage in the field of battle, facing enemies and dangers of every kind; but surely it requires still greater, still more honorable courage to thus take one's stand for the Lord and for an unpopular Truth and to be seen and known as a tract distributor of the same.

Other cases somewhat similar might be mentioned, illustrating the same principle. We believe that the Lord has so ordered his work that it will always cost something to be soldiers of the cross and always serve to test the loyalty, the strength, the moral courage, of every member of the Body of Christ. This Volunteer tract distribution is certainly serving a valuable purpose in connection with the Lord's people, however much or little it may be accomplishing for those who receive the tracts.

VERY COURAGEOUS TO OBSERVE THE LAW

There is a peculiar force in the language of the seventh verse of our lesson—"Only be strong and very courageous to observe and to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee." Whatever of strength and courage may be implied in the sixth verse as necessary to the conquering of the land of promise, this seventh verse evidently refers to moral courage—strong and very courageous in obedience to the divine

commands. The injunction implied that Joshua would find obstacles and difficulties before him, and discouragements in respect to the observance of holy things. It is so with the Spiritual Israelites, the Body of Christ today: while some are lacking in courage as respects the outward things, a still larger number lack these qualities in their own hearts, in their own lives. They see and to some extent appreciate the divine will as being righteous altogether, but the self-denial necessary to a full obedience they are not willing to render. Perhaps the greatest battles any of us have to fight are those of which none may know except ourselves—our mental battles. As a Methodist brother once put the matter, "My greatest battle is to gain the consent of my own will." However, no Christian should be in this attitude. This should be our first battle—to gain the consent and full cooperation of our wills with the divine Word. Then let us go on to victory after victory, battling against the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Once our hearts are fully surrendered to his law it should never again be necessary to have a battle there; the victory should be so thorough, so complete, so far-reaching.

MEDITATING DAY AND NIGHT ON GOD'S LAW

The Lord explained to Joshua what would lie at the foundation of his success, and that neglect would mean his failure—"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous and thou shalt make good success"—v. 8.

No clearer expression of the divine will could be made to the antitypical Joshua and the members of his Body than is given in this Scripture. Its teaching is that there is no safety, no real success for those addressed, except in obedience to the divine will, as recorded in the divine Word. Thus also the Lord Jesus is represented as saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart"; and again prophetically—"O, how I love thy Law! It is my meditation all the day." (Psa. 40:8; 119:97.) Meditation on the divine law day and night is not, of course, to be understood literally—that we should do nothing else day or night than think upon the Scriptures. We are to understand the Lord to mean that we should ever have in mind, in connection with all of our life's affairs, the thought that we are his, and that he is our guide and director in all things, and that the slightest matter that would pertain to our lives and our interests, day or night, should be undertaken with due consideration of the Lord's will respecting the same.

In other words, as elsewhere expressed, whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we should do all to the Lord's glory; and this implies not merely a haphazard wish to do the Lord's will, but a studying of the divine Word that we may know what that will is—not merely a studying of the creeds and traditions of the past, however we may honor those who made them and believe in their sincerity. It is for us rather to prove all things that we accept, and then to hold fast that which we have proven to be the good, the acceptable, the perfect will of God. As Joshua was told that his good success would be in proportion to his attention to the divine Law, so Spiritual Israelites similarly are informed that their success in making their calling and election sure will be proportionate to their loving, zealous obedience to the divine message. Meditating on the Lord's Law day and

night implies a study of the Scriptures, a course which some of us at present are endeavoring to follow, using such helps as the Lord's providence has supplied to us—not relying upon any helps to the abandonment of the Word, but rather using these helps and proving everything received by the divine standard.

"HAVE I NOT COMMANDED THEE?"

This question is asked by way of stimulating Joshua's thought—that he might realize that he had not commissioned himself nor been commissioned of man to undertake this great work. Similarly the Apostle points out that our Lord Jesus took not the honor upon himself to be the High Priest of our profession, but that he was called of God to this position. Similarly, also, we who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus are to consider that we have not chosen him but he has chosen us, commissioned us and authorized us, so that we can go forth in his name as ambassadors for him and the Kingdom which he represents. What strength and courage this gives to the true soldiers of the cross—to realize that his labor is not in vain in the Lord. How it nerves him to be and to do in harmony with the Word and Spirit of his Master.

No wonder that these are in the Scriptures termed "more than conquerors." And no wonder, either, that the Lord has made the conditions of their present experiences such as to necessitate a good fight and a victory. He seeketh such, strong, courageous—not in themselves, but in the power of his might and through faith. As soon as Joshua got this message from the Lord he proceeded to put the people in order for an aggressive campaign, and instructed the proper officers to prepare the people and to prepare victuals and to be ready within three days to obey the divine command to enter in and possess the land which the Lord had given them. The promptness and zeal here displayed are worthy of emulation. We may be sure that, as we read, "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," so he loveth those who are prompt and energetic in everything they undertake to be and to do for him and his cause. Let us who are members of the greater Joshua, the antitype, be very courageous also, very prompt, very zealous, that we may be used and useful more and more in the Master's service.

JULY 4

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the Arm of the LORD revealed?—
Isa. 53:1.

The call of the Church in the present time is to let the light shine and thus attract persecution, and to endure the persecution for righteousness' sake, and to be rightly exercised by it in patience, brotherly kindness, pity and love—toward the persecutors and toward all men. Let all, then, who see the prize, and who see the light of God's glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, be faithful to the Father's conditions, calling, service. Let all such give attention to this ministry (service) which we have received, and faint not. Be not discouraged, whether men hear or whether they forbear, whether they think ill of us or whether they speak ill of us; let us remember that our report at the end of the trial is to be rendered to the Lord Himself, when He is making up His jewels—Z '99, 10, 11 (R 2413).

God's people bring a most heart-cheering message to our poor fallen race, a message that is thoroughly adapted to their needs; yet how few there are that receive it into good and honest hearts! The heart of this message is Christ crucified, the power and wisdom of God; but because of their failure to receive this message, the world cannot recognize Christ as Jehovah's mighty Agent nor should we be discouraged at their unbelief, since this is the way Christian discipleship is regarded by the world—P '35, 102.

Parallel passages: John 1:7, 12; 12:38; Rom. 10:16, 17; John 7:5; 1 Cor. 1:18, 19, 24; 2:8; 2 Cor. 4:3, 4; Matt. 11:25; 13:13-15; 16:17; Rom. 1:16, 17.

Hymns: 116, 70, 260, 54, 23, 49, 315.

Poems of Dawn, 91: *Into His Marvelous Light*.

Tower Reading: Z '05, 204 (R 3589).

Questions: Have I witnessed to the Lord this week? Under what circumstances? How was my witness received? What was the effect on myself and others?

INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT

OUT of disaster and ruin complete,
Out of the struggle and dreary defeat,
Out of my sorrow, and burden, and shame,
Out of the evils too fearful to name,
Out of my guilt and the criminal's doom,
Out of the dreading, and terror, and gloom;

Into the sense of forgiveness and rest,
Into inheritance with all the blest,
Into a righteous and permanent peace,
Into the grandest and fullest release,

Into the comfort without an alloy,
Into a perfect and permanent joy.

Wonderful love that hath wrought all for me!
Wonderful work that hath thus set me free!
Wonderful ground upon which I have come!
Wonderful tenderness, welcoming home!

Out of the terror at standing alone,
Out, and forever, of being my own,
Out of the hardness of heart and of will,
Out of the longings which nothing could fill,
Out of the bitterness, madness and strife,
Out of myself and of all I called life;

Into the light and the glory of God,
Into the holy, made clean by His blood,
Into His arms, the embrace and the kiss,
Into the scene of ineffable bliss,
Into the quiet, the infinite calm,
Into the place of the song and the psalm.

Wonderful holiness, bringing to light!
Wonderful grace, putting all out of sight!
Wonderful wisdom, devising the way!
Wonderful power that nothing can stay!

R3589: THE WORLD'S REDEEMER PICTURED.

(Isaiah 52:13-53:12)

Golden Text:—"The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all."

THIS little section of Isaiah's great prophecy is a very striking one. The original prophecy, as is well known, was without division into chapters and verses.

The preceding context points us clearly and distinctly to the second advent of our Lord and his gathering of his people to himself. It describes the present time, therefore, the harvest of this Gospel age, telling how the Lord's people would now know his name—understand and appreciate his true character, announce the presence of the King and the beginning of his reign. (Vs. 6-8.) It also tells of the beginning of favor upon natural Israel, and, looking into the future, points to the Lord's glorification through that people. (Vs. 9-10.) It also shows the separating work of this harvest time, the gathering of the good fish into the vessels, the gathering of the wheat into the barn.

Then, pointing to the Millennial reign of Christ, the first three verses of our lesson (13-15) picture the high exaltation and honor of Jehovah's servant Son, our Lord Jesus, saying, "He shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and honored and shall be very high." The whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, which will then shine forth through the blessed and wise government of Immanuel, as has been declared, "The Desire of all Nations shall come:" they shall see that the way of righteousness is the desirable way, the blessed way, the way of true wisdom and happiness, and all who will refuse to come into this attitude shall be cut off from amongst the people in the second death.—Acts 3:23.

Next a contrast is instituted between how our Lord was humiliated and how by and by he shall be exalted. The prophet, so to speak, takes his seat at the cross, and beholds the Lord sadly distorted in his crucifixion, torn in an inhuman manner, his features drawn with pain. The picture of this, as given in Cheyne's translation, is written in poetic form, as was the original. It reads as follows:—

"Deeply marred was his appearance, out of all human likeness,
And his form out of all semblance to sons of men;
But as deep will be the obeisance of many.
Before him kings shall be awestruck in silence."

The thought evidently is that his glory and honor, influence and power, will be proportionate to the sufferings and ignominy which he experienced. And this is the thought everywhere held out in the Scriptures, not only as respects our Redeemer but also as respects his Church. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." Present trials and sufferings work out for us a "far more and exceeding weight of glory." So in speaking of our Lord the Apostle declares that "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. *Wherefore* God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth."—Phil. 2:8.

We cannot claim that it is a divine law that glory and honor must be preceded by sufferings and humiliations. Our heavenly Father and the holy angels, highly honored, have never been humiliated. Nevertheless we are assured that so far as God's dealings with the Church of this present Gospel age are concerned, they are along these lines. The suffering is not compulsory but granted us as a privilege, and the exaltation is held out as a reward, marking the degree of divine approval. With this thought before us how it helps us to appreciate the sentiments of the Apostle, "Gladly, therefore, will I glory in tribulation." We glory not in the tribulations themselves, for sometimes they seem to the flesh to be grievous; but our hearts can glory in tribulations, since we know that under the divine arrangement governing our call as the Church of Christ these tribulations are working in us those elements of character pleasing and acceptable in the Father's sight, which eventually he will reward with a share in the exaltation of our Redeemer, our Bridegroom.

So grand, so glorious will be the demonstration of divine power and blessing in the Messiah that no word of dissent will be heard—unto him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. This will be true not only of the common people, the world in general, but true also of the greatest, the princes, the kings of earth, intellectual kings, financial kings, political kings. All eyes shall be opened, all ears shall be unstopped, to the knowledge of divine goodness and mercy, justice and truth, as it will then be revealed in the Messiah.

"WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR TEACHING?"

In the fifty-third chapter the Prophet looks backward from our day and the coming glory, and intimates that until the glory of the Lord shall be revealed his cause will make comparatively little headway in the world. The true teaching respecting him and his mission will not be generally received—various false teachings, false gospels will have the preference. The inquiry, "Who hath believed our report?" our teaching, our presentations, implies the answer, Few. And so it has been. There were few who had the hearing ears and understanding hearts at the time of our Lord's first advent, and only a few all down throughout the Gospel age have really and truly appreciated the message.

True, there are large numbers to-day who are nominally Christians, who with their lips draw nigh to the Lord occasionally one day in the seven for an hour, but who are at heart far from him. The vast majority, even in the pulpits of Christendom, seem not to have given heed to the report, the doctrines, the teaching of the Lord's Word in respect to Messiah, his sufferings of this present time and his glories to follow, but rather to have hearkened to false doctrines misrepresenting the divine plan of the ages, substituting therefor many "doctrines of devils," in which a little truth is mixed with much error, to the discomfiture and spiritual sickness and weakness of many of the Lord's truly begotten ones, and to the total confusion of the world, "Christendom."

"To whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" cried the prophet. Alas, it is so that few, very few, see in our Lord Jesus the powerful arm, the omnipotence of Jehovah, stretched down for the aid of our fallen race. Few realize that the work finished at Calvary is the foundation, the basis, upon which the great Jehovah will ultimately establish the Millennial Kingdom for the blessing and uplifting of all the families of the earth. The majority see Jesus as merely the finger of the Lord, doing a comparatively small work for a comparatively small class. As our eyes open we behold to our joy that Messiah, Head and body, will yet constitute the arm of Jehovah, that all-powerful force which shall overthrow evil and establish righteousness and bless all the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham. "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:29.

GOD'S WAYS NOT MAN'S WAYS.

The prophet proceeds to point out why the report, the teaching, of God's Word and the power of his omnipotent arm for man's salvation have not been discerned by mankind. It is largely because the Lord's way of accomplishing matters is the very reverse of what

mankind would have naturally expected. With our mental tendencies, our natural expectations would have been that the Son of the Highest at his first advent would have been manifested in glory and not in humiliation—that the heavenly Father would have sent him in glory and not in humiliation. Even in his taking of the human form and nature we would have expected it to be under such conditions and with such environments as would have shown forth strikingly and forcefully amongst the members of the human race.

It was a disappointment, especially to the Jews, who were expecting a glorious and powerful king, that our Lord came as the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. To them he appeared too tender a plant to ever prosper. They acknowledged him to be of the Davidic line, but esteemed him to be from one of the roots of David which had lost its virility, its life. They thought him a root out of dry ground, from which they could never hope for a sprout of power and glory and dignity and honor such as they had anticipated Messiah would have. In him they saw not the form of the soldier, the general, which to their conception was the grand, the comely form that Messiah would have, boasting of his power, his strength, his divine support, etc.

No wonder the poor Jews were disappointed, no wonder they considered him undesirable as material for a king, no wonder that they had no hope that he would ever be the great Messiah, the great deliverer. We sympathize with them deeply in their disappointments and in their failure to recognize him as Immanuel. He was despised and rejected of men, even of the men of his own nation, who for sixteen centuries had hoped and waited for his coming. They were ashamed of him, hid their faces from him. He was despised of the Romans and counted unworthy of particular notice, whether he claimed to be king of the Jews or what not, and the Jews esteemed him not—except the few who, because they were Israelites indeed, were guided to an appreciation of him with a wisdom from on high.

What meant all this? Why should the King of glory, the Sent of God, the heir of all the promises, be thus the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? Ah! says the prophet, I perceive surely that it was our griefs that he bore, our sorrows that he carried, not his own. We thought that he was stricken of God, that he was afflicted by the Almighty, and that this was an evidence that he was not in divine favor. We misunderstood the entire matter. Now we see that his wounds were for our transgressions, that his bruises were for our iniquities, that our peace with God was secured by the stripes, the chastisements, the penalties of the divine law inflicted upon him. We perceive that by his stripes we are healed,—that the punishment or stripes due to us were laid upon him, that the death sentence that was against us he bore, dying the Just for the unjust that he might bring us to God.

"BY HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED"

Yes, yes, continues the prophet, we all went astray like sheep, following one another into wrong paths. We, even of the seed of Abraham, brought nigh to God's favor through the Law Covenant under Moses, have failed to retain our position as proper sheep of his

fold, and the penalty of divine justice has been borne by the Shepherd for his sheep, Jehovah hath laid on him—charged up to him, accepted of him—the iniquity of us all. How gracious is this message! Those who received it first from Isaiah, having the guidance and enlightenment of the holy Spirit, could not appreciate his words to the full, but, nevertheless, must have to some extent appreciated them—must have drawn some blessing and hope from them. But now, we of this Gospel age, living since the redemption price was paid, and since it was accepted by the Father on our behalf when our Master ascended on high, and since the Pentecostal blessing evidencing our forgiveness has reached every member of the consecrated class to enlighten the eyes of our understanding, to enable us to see the deep things of God and his gracious promises, we may now rejoice in these things so hard for the Jew to understand, and equally impossible for the natural man of the Gentiles to comprehend. Truly our Lord's words are refreshing and explanatory—"To you it is given to know of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God;" to all others these things are "spoken in parables and dark sayings."—Luke 8:10; Mat. 13:10-15, 35.

"HE OPENED NOT HIS MOUTH"

He was oppressed, as a lamb he was led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb; yet he opened not his mouth. The fulfilment of this we see in the case of our Lord. Had he chosen to open his mouth, to argue his case, to defend himself, we may well suppose that the Scribes and Pharisees, high priests and doctors of the Law, Pilate and his soldiers and the Jewish rabble, would have succumbed to the eloquence of him who spoke as never man spoke. Thus he might merely have defended himself with his tongue, and righteously, too, without ever moving a finger in his own defence or exercising any of the divine powers deposited in him, or calling for any of the legions of angels who would have responded to his prayer. He did indeed reply to a question of the High Priest and also to a question by Pilate, but he was dumb so far as making any plea or endeavoring in any manner to deliver himself from the death which he perceived was upon him and which he knew was permitted of the Father. As he himself expressed it—"The cup which the Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"

We must not lose sight of the fact that our dear Redeemer is also our pattern and that we are to walk in his steps. The lesson to us, then, is full submission to divine providence in respect to all of our affairs—those which we see clearly and understand and those also which are obscure to us, some of which at times may seem unnecessary. Our faith must triumph; we must learn that our Father is too wise to err, and that he loves us too much to cause a needless tear, a needless pang. But if he permitted severe afflictions to come upon his Son, his well beloved and only one, that he might be tested and proven in respect to his loyalty to the last degree, shall we wonder that in calling us to be associates of that Son in glory, he should require of us also that we should learn obedience by the things we suffer? Gladly then, says the Apostle, will we suffer; gladly will we take this as an evidence that we are in the hands of the Lord and that he is shaping and fashioning us according to the glorious pattern, that we may ultimately be participants also of the heavenly glories and joys and immortality promised to his faithful.

"By oppression and judgment he was taken away," cut off from life—oppression or injustice so far as those who condemned him were concerned, by divine justice and judgment so far as God was concerned, because he had consecrated himself unto death as man's Redeemer, and the Father had accepted him as such.

"WITH THE WICKED AND THE RICH"

"And who shall declare his generation, for he was cut off out of the land of the living." Who could suppose that he would have offspring, children—that he would be ultimately the Everlasting Father to the world of mankind? Who could have seen any prospect, any hope, for the race through his death? Who could have foreseen that as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive? To have discerned these things would have been impossible, and the poor Jews and the world in general are not to be blamed for not discerning them. Rather those who have come into relationship to the Lord through faith and through obedience unto consecration, and who have been begotten of the Spirit to newness of nature, and through the Spirit's enlightenment are able to comprehend these wonderful things of the divine plan—these highly favored of God may rejoice in their blessings without condemning those who do not enjoy to the full the same blessings and opportunities in this present time. Yes, the entire secret of the matter lies in our perception that Jesus was the Redeemer, the one who bought the world with his own precious blood, the one who was stricken by the Father, not for his own sins but for our transgressions—for the transgressions of the people, "for the sins of the whole world."

Although he had done no violence he was numbered with the transgressors, with the wicked, in his death, being crucified between two thieves, although there was no deceit in his mouth and he had gained no riches by deceiving or overreaching his neighbor; yet he was buried in the tomb of the rich Joseph of Arimathea. Thus does the prophet mark certain incidents connected with our Lord's death, that our Redeemer's identity might be the more clearly established.

"IT PLEASED JEHOVAH"

All these things, apparently so unjust and so unreasonable and so contrary to anything mankind could have expected, Jehovah was pleased to permit. To have exacted such sufferings from Jesus as our penalty would have been an injustice, and this would have been an impossibility to God; but it did please him to allow his only-begotten one to demonstrate his loyalty and faith even unto death, even the death of the cross. It pleased him that the Son should thus be temporarily injured and put to grief because he foresaw the glorious results both to Jesus and to mankind. To his Son he would give more than compensating honor and glory and dignity and power, yea, eternal life, when to his hands would be committed all the remaining features of the divine plan.

Well did the Father know that his Son's faith and obedience would be abundantly rewarded. Well did he know that the soul of Jesus, his being, would constitute the sin offering for Adam and his race, and well he knew that ultimately the Son should see a reward from this travail of his soul which would satisfy him, which would more than

compensate every trial, every tear, every pain. And is it not wonderful that in God's providence the called ones of this Gospel age may apply these same consolations and assurances each to his own heart, and know that all things are working together for good to them that love God—to the called ones according to his purpose? Is it not wonderful that we also have the assurance that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, that if we experience travail of soul in following in the footsteps of our Redeemer we shall have more than compensating satisfaction, and that the Word of the Lord so guarantees it? To all who accept the Lord's promises in faith, the matter becomes a certainty—"Faith can firmly trust him, come what may."

Although when he was cut off from the land of the living none could have declared his generation, his seed, his posterity, yet he shall see his seed—the redeemed and restored of mankind, who at the close of the Millennial age shall be privileged to inherit all the earthly things lost by father Adam, redeemed by Jesus, restored by the Second Adam.

THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

The declaration that it was by his knowledge that our Lord Jesus, as the righteous servant of Jehovah, justified many and bore their iniquities, is an important item in this lesson. We see that it was from lack of knowledge of God that the first Adam in his perfection was weak. Not knowing the power of God, not realizing his gracious and merciful character, father Adam considered that all hope of comfort, joy and pleasure in life had gone from him when mother Eve transgressed the divine regulation respecting the forbidden fruit and came under the divine sentence of death. Being unacquainted with the divine character he was without hope respecting her recovery and his own future happiness, and therefore deliberately shared the death penalty with his wife—suicided, so to speak. On the contrary our Lord Jesus, knowing the Father, remembering the glory he had with him before the world was, trusting the Father implicitly, was able to be obedient to the Father's requirements, even unto death, even the death of the cross.

Thus did knowledge serve him in good stead and enable him to pass through the most trying experiences victoriously. It was his knowledge, then, in conjunction with his mental and moral and physical perfection, that enabled our Lord Jesus to fully meet all the requirements of his consecration and thus enabled him to justify many, to redeem Adam and his race—enabled him to bear their iniquities cheerfully, joyfully, delighting to do the Father's will, and for the joy that was set before him enduring the cross, despising the shame.

No wonder, then, that the Scriptures everywhere set forth the thought that knowledge is important to the followers of Jesus; no wonder that they urge upon us that we grow in grace and in knowledge, assuring us that to know God is eternal life. To attain to that relationship to God which will permit us to fully know him and appreciate his just and reasonable and loving commands would signify that we were in the condition which he would be pleased to bless everlastingly, and signify also that, possessing this knowledge, we should be able to fulfil all the reasonable requirements imposed upon us. Let none of us, then, despise knowledge.

Nevertheless, while heartily appreciating it, let us not forget that it is not merely knowledge about his plan, nor knowledge of the various so-called earthly sciences, but the knowledge or acquaintanceship of God himself. Thus the Apostle also declares of our Lord Jesus, "that we may know him," be acquainted with him, be intimate with him. Whoever has this intimate relationship with the Father and the Son has therein the power of God, which will work in him to will and to do the Lord's good pleasure, and ultimately bring him to a glorious inheritance under the divine arrangement. But, as the Apostle points out, to have knowledge of earthly things or of the divine plan without having the heart obedience and the heart acquaintanceship with the Lord, might leave us still poor and wretched and miserable, sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

THE "GREAT" AND THE "STRONG"

Therefore, because of his faithfulness as God's righteous servant, because guided by his knowledge in his obedience to the Father, because faithful in bearing the iniquities of the many, therefore "God will divide him a portion with the great." How great a portion is not here stated. Other Scriptures inform us that the Father has given him a portion with himself—he overcame and sat down with the Father in his throne. He has indeed been granted a portion with the great—the great Jehovah. In turn he shall divide the spoil with the strong, the spoil of his great conquest over sin and death at the cost of his own life, the spoil of victory, the reward of his own high exaltation far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named—the reward of his high relationship with the Father, the reward of his Millennial Kingdom and its opportunities and privileges of blessing the whole groaning creation, the reward of the Father's smile and favor eternally.

This "spoil," which all came to the dear Redeemer as the one who kept the Law and redeemed the world with his own precious blood, this spoil he proposes to share with the faithful of his followers, the overcomers, here called "the strong." O, what a thought! In all our weaknesses and imperfections we are by the Lord's grace enabled to come off conquerors and more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

With the Apostle we can say, "When I am weak, then am I strong;" when I realize my own imperfections and shortcomings then, by faith realizing the strength and perfection of my dear Redeemer and his provision for all who are his, I can be strong in faith and trust and love, and realize that the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word are yea and amen to me. In the present life, then, by faith we have a portion with the Lord, and may reckon ourselves as having passed from death unto life, as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. But the attainment of all these things, their fulness and completeness, lies beyond the grave, beyond the resurrection, when all the faithful shall be with him and, like him, share his glory, for "he will divide the spoil with the strong."

THE CAUSE OF THE MATTER

Our lesson closes with a reiteration of the general facts stated. All of this greatness given to our Lord and shared with his faithful followers is *because* he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. How emphatically the Scriptures point out to us that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, that without the ransom price being paid there could have been no release of Adam and his race from the sentence of death, no hope of any of them attaining life everlasting. As we appreciate this great central thought of the divine plan, let us reverence our dear Master the more as the author of our faith, who, by and by, will be the finisher of it, and let us seek more and more to be faithful to him and to walk in his steps and to lay down our lives for the brethren.

JULY 5

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ—2 Cor. 10:4, 5.

Let us remember that the first condition of acceptance with God is loyal *obedience* to His Word, the evidence of love for Him and faith in Him. Let us remember, also, that the second qualification He will look for in us is love for the brethren, readiness to be, to do and to suffer, to die on behalf of those who are really, truly consecrated children of God, seeking to walk in His ways—Z '99, 11 (R 2413).

The weapons of our warfare are the reverse of carnal weapons; they are the Spirit and Word of our God. These, however, are sufficient to overthrow the strongholds of evil within us, root up imaginations and every pride-producing thing, and to enable us to subject our dispositions, thoughts, motives, words and acts to Christ, our Head, which proves our weapons to be effective—P '34, 95.

Parallel passages: Eph. 6:12-18; 1 Thes. 5:8; 1 Tim. 1:18; 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:3; 4:7; 1 Cor. 2:4; 2 Cor. 6:7; 13:3, 4; 1 Cor. 1:19.

Hymns: 266, 20, 272, 198, 183, 130, 13.
Poems of Dawn, 127: *Gideon's Army In Antitype*.
Tower Reading: Z '16, 131 (R 5889).

Questions: What have I done this week in the Christian warfare? How? Why? With what results?

GIDEON'S ARMY IN ANTITYPE

ARISE! Then, O! Army of Gideon,
Let him that is fearful return;
Jehovah wants only the zealous,
Whose hearts with the love of truth burn.

Ten thousand remain! Still too many;
Once more He their loyalty proves,
To see who most faithfully serves Him,
To see who most fervently loves.

O! ye, who have sworn Him allegiance,
Mark well! He is now testing you,
With the water of truth He will prove you,
To see who is loyal and true.

Look well to your drinking, then, brother,
That you no impurities trace,
Take your lamp, your pitcher and trumpet,
And stand every man in his place!

Your sword is the "Sword of the Spirit,"
Your lamp is the light from His Word,
Your pitcher, this poor earthen vessel,
You break at the voice of your Lord.

Is your lamp burning bright in your pitcher?
Doth your trumpet give forth "certain sound?"
Soon the Sword of the Lord and of Gideon
The enemy's host will confound.

For sure is the victory promised,
And great is the peace He awards—
Then, "stand" in your place, all ye faithful,
The battle's not yours, but the Lord's!

R5889: THE CHRISTIAN'S WARFARE AGAINST PRIDE

**"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."
—2 Corinthians 10:4, 5.**

SOLDIERS of the Cross are of a different kind and are differently armed from the soldiers of the world. Ours is a fight against the spirit of the world and against the flesh. It is the fight not only against the imperfections that came into our flesh through our forefather's disobedience, but against the natural opposition of the flesh to sacrifice. The flesh instinctively struggles to avoid sacrifice. Moreover, our fight is against unseen spiritual foes. The world have their swords and their guns as weapons of warfare. And the Lord has provided us an armor; namely, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, the Sword of the Spirit, and the sandals of "the preparation of the Gospel of Peace." These are all weapons of defense, except the Sword. The Sword is an aggressive weapon.—Ephesians 6:11-18.

In the case of the Christian, "the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," is to be handled to accomplish good, to be used in opposition to Satan and sin. But the thought of this Scripture seems to be, not that we are commissioned to fight the world, but that we are to strive to be loyal to the Lord, to fight sin in ourselves and wherever it might properly be under our jurisdiction, and to repel the attacks of the Adversary. The exercise of our powers in bringing *self* into subjection means a great deal in the way of sacrifice, much in the way of battling. God has given us "exceeding great and precious promises."

The New Creature is made strong by these promises—strong in proportion as he perceives the significance of these promises, and feeds upon them.

MENTAL STRONGHOLDS TO BE CAST DOWN

The Apostle is pointing out that these strongholds which we are to pull down are in ourselves. Sin is entrenched in our minds, in our imaginations. Pride, selfishness and various other kinds of sin, are entrenched in us through the long centuries of the downward tendencies of our race. These things have dug deep trenches in our system; they are firmly fastened there. But, urges St. Paul, "Let not sin have dominion over your mortal body." Destroy the stronghold. Bring your entire being into subjection to the will of God.

By way of pointing out what these strongholds are—that they are *mental* strongholds—the Apostle says, "Casting down *imagination*s, and every high thing that exalteth." Our imaginations may be of many kinds. We may be beset by false doctrines and superstitions that have come down to us from past ages. The Word of the Lord is the only thing that can effectually cast these down and make us see God's real character, make us see His glorious promises to the Church now and to the world in the future. The Word of the Lord is the only thing that will cast down imaginations—ignorance, superstition, pride, unholy ambitions, idle speculations, and every form of thought that would lead us astray and hinder the work of grace in our hearts and minds. These imaginations of the natural mind exalt themselves against the true knowledge of God, the Spirit of God—"high things," the Apostle calls them.

We are to "mind not high things." The Apostle does not mean that we are not to mind the high things that are spiritual; for in another place he says, "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." (Colossians 3:2.) In other words, Set your affections on the *very highest things*. But the "high things" of the world are very different; they exalt themselves against the things which are truly high, which are of God. The Lord's children are to be humble, not high-minded, not to be carried away by the empty honors, projects and ambitions of earth. The desire to have a place among men, to shine in society, to have wealth and influence, to have whatever things would bring us into high esteem amongst mankind, is a temptation that the disciple of Christ must guard against.

It has been noted by those who have the care of the mentally defective that a great deal of difficulty lies in the imagination. It is said that if one visits an insane asylum, he will find one here who thinks he is a king; there another, who imagines that she is a queen; another who imagines he is fabulously rich and could draw checks for millions. The organ of self-esteem has been too large. The Lord only knows how much the individual himself has had to do in cultivating this tendency. But he has always more or less to do with the matter; the high imaginations and the desire to be great obtain dominion over him—get the mastery.

PRIDE LEADS TO MENTAL UNBALANCE

The same thing applies to Christians. After coming into the Church of Christ, they are still liable to the ambition to become some great one, to do some great thing, to find or promulgate some great doctrine, to discover some new interpretation of Scripture or some new type. All these are "high things that exalt." Our Lord gave a discourse upon this subject, telling us that when we are invited to a feast, we should not take a high seat, but a low seat—and perhaps afterward we might be exalted. To desire these things and to seek for them is to have "strongholds" of pride and unholy ambition in the imagination, aspirations for exaltation and honor. Then comes the thought that we are great, that we are worthy of attention, of special notice. Mental unbalance is there. The fact is that we are all insignificant, of very little importance in the execution of the Lord's Plan.

The Lord could have done all His great work without us and our cooperation, probably more easily than with us. But He very graciously *permits* us to have a part in His work, for our own good and blessing. He is dealing with us as children and is training us. Having begotten us of His Holy Spirit, He helps us to overcome our weaknesses and rewards us if we do overcome them. He drills and disciplines us to fit us for a noble and glorious future. A part of this drilling as soldiers of the King of kings is our fight against self-esteem and a desire for great things, high things, according to the standards of this "present evil world."

"BRINGING INTO CAPTIVITY EVERY THOUGHT"

The thought of casting down unholy and unprofitable imaginations is also borne out in the final words of our text, that we are to "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Whatever we *do* we have first *thought about*. We sometimes say, "I acted before I thought." What we mean is that we acted before we gave the matter *serious* thought. No thought should be harbored in our minds which is not in full harmony with the Word of God. As Christ was obedient to the Father in everything—saying, "Let not My will, but Thine, be done"—so every one of us should bring our thoughts into obedience to Christ. Our Redeemer is our Exemplar.

All the members of Christ's Body must have the same mind that was in Christ, must manifest the spirit of our Master. "Let us humble ourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt us in due time." (1 Peter 5:6.) No one can wholly follow the Lord without much of the spirit of humility, without bringing his *thoughts* into subjection to the Lord. This is not the time to exalt ourselves and to show how we can shine. But we are to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9), who has called us with this Heavenly Calling, not for our own sakes merely, but for His own glory and the blessing of others. God's glory is to be our chief concern always. We are to be efficient servants of the Lord, through His grace, not of our own strength. If we are to be great in the end, we must be humble, we must gladly be servants of all now. We must be glad to serve, not only when there is honor attached, but when the service is unnoticed or unknown.

God has arranged for our learning certain lessons of self-control, bringing ourselves into full obedience to God in a voluntary way, with a view to our being His representatives by and by, and of then enforcing obedience to God's requirements on the part of the world. It is a generally accepted principle that no one is qualified to rule others who has not himself learned obedience. At the cost of great suffering, our Lord Jesus learned what obedience means. He promptly and fully submitted Himself to God. This Spirit of Christ is to be manifested and developed in us, that we shall thus be ready for the future work of The Christ, the work of the Millennial Age.

In proportion as the Truth is received and assimilated, it brings to us the spirit of a sound *mind*. It does not bring us perfect soundness of *brain*; but where rightly received, it brings meekness, teachableness, thoughtfulness, seriousness. It leads us to take careful heed to the instructions of our Heavenly Guide. It thus gives balance to the judgment, greater than we had ever *before* known. This should increase as we go on in the good way and become disciplined soldiers in the army of the Lord. But if the Truth is not received in the *spirit* of the Truth, in the *love* of it, it might not only fail to be of any benefit, but might engender a spirit of pride and boastfulness.

This quality of pride seems to be particularly associated with all kinds of insanity. Many of the inmates of insane asylums are affected with a large degree of self-esteem—thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think. Their minds are unbalanced in that direction to a notable degree. We cannot be too careful to cultivate nearness to the Lord, which always brings humility and a proper realization of our own unworthiness and littleness before Him.

KEEPING CLOSE TO CHRIST OUR ONLY SAFETY

Satan is especially alert to trap the Lord's children in this "evil day." We might give an illustration which we have used before, but which seems well to picture wherein lies our special danger and our entire safety. Suppose we should consider a large circle, with Christ as the Center of that circle. Suppose the circle contained an abundance of space, so that there might be varying degrees of closeness to the Lord. Let the outer edge of that circle represent the utmost limit of God's care over His children. Any one, then, nearing the outside line would be coming more and more into a place of danger. We believe that in proportion as any of us live close to the great Center of the circle—our Lord Jesus—we are safe. In proportion as we fail to do this, and allow ourselves to drift or to wander away from Him, we shall be getting near the danger point, and are amenable to the evil influences from outside. Should we wander entirely over the outer line, our case would be beyond recovery.

The Lord has in a way put around the human race a barrier against danger. This barrier is, largely, man's *will*. Those who have given up their wills, their minds, to the Lord, to have His will done in them, are particularly liable to severe and subtle attacks of the Adversary. He especially seeks to delude and entrap the true children of the Lord, thus again to bring them into bondage to sin. Upon such as come under his influence, the delusion is gradual.

We are all born with unsound minds. As to the degree of unsoundness we need not quarrel. The armament which the Lord gives us is not merely a knowledge of how to quote Scripture. Neither is it merely to have the ability to dispute and to debate, though that ability is very good in its place. The real thing that God is looking for is in our hearts. He is not looking to see how much you know; for He could pump a good deal of knowledge into you in a few minutes if He so desired. But the Lord is looking to see to what extent you are meek, patient, fully submitted to His will. Let us have more and more of the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of a sound mind, and the earnest desire to help one another.

"The Lord shall judge His people." (Hebrews 10:30.) If they get into trouble through not being sufficiently watchful, the Lord will give them some experiences which will be good for them, if rightly received. Let us remember the warning words of the Apostle Paul: "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 11:31.) This means that when we neglect to judge ourselves, He has to do it for us. Then we are being chastened with a view to our correction, that we might attain unto the Heavenly reward and favor that is to be ours as New Creatures in Christ, if we remain humble and faithful unto death. If we continue to be meek and filled with the spirit of humility, not craving present honors and exaltation, but willing in perfect patience to await the Lord's own good time, our exaltation will come; and we shall share our Savior's Throne and His glory forevermore.

"O blows that smite, O wounds that pierce
This shrinking heart of mine!
What are ye but the Master's tools,
Performing work Divine!
How blest that all these seeming ills
That draw my heart to thee
Are each a proof that Thou hast set
Thy seal of love on me!"

JULY 6

What man is he that feareth the LORD? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose—Psa. 25:12.

It is not for us to supervise the trials and difficulties which may beset us. It is for us to make an unreserved consecration of ourselves to the Lord and then leave to Him the decision of how great shall be our trials and besetments, how great our sacrifices in following His leadings. The Lord may see that some need special trials more than others, and those things which to some would be great trials and imply great sacrifices, to others, because of greater love to the Lord and His cause, and greater zeal for service, the sacrifice might be, as the Apostle expresses it of his own, "light afflictions, which are but for a moment, and which are working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"—Z '99, 13 (R 2416).

To fear the Lord means to reverence Him; and the man who reverences God obeys Him, from duty and from disinterested love. Such an one God undertakes to teach the way of life, directing his heart and mind to eschew and reject the paths of evil and to love and choose the paths of right. If our reverence for God is genuine, we may trust with implicit faith that He will make our pathway bright. And our faith will be realized—P '33, 80.

Parallel passages: Deut. 4:10; 10:12, 20, 21; Josh. 24:14; 1 Sam. 2:30; 12:24; 2 Chron. 19:7; Psa. 2:11; 4:4; 25:13, 14; 33:8, 18; 34:7, 9, 11; 89:7; 103:13; 145:19; Prov. 1:7; Isa. 8:13; Matt. 10:28; Acts 13:16, 26; 2 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 11:18.

Hymns: 145, 11, 45, 55, 83, 46, 136.
Poems of Dawn, 112: *Lead Me*.
Tower Reading: Z '97, 255 (R 2208).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they used? In what did they result?

LEAD ME

I DO not ask, dear Lord, that life may be
A pleasant road;
I do not ask that Thou wouldst take from me
Aught of its load;
I do not ask that flowers should always spring
Beneath my feet;
I know too well the poison and the sting
Of things too sweet.
For one thing only, Lord, dear Lord, I plead:
Lead me aright,
Tho' strength should falter, and tho' heart should

bleed,
Through peace to light.

I do not ask, dear Lord, that Thou shouldst shed
Full radiance here;
Give but a ray of peace, that I may tread
Without a fear;
I do not ask my cross to understand,
My way to see;
Better, in darkness, just to feel Thy hand,
And follow Thee.
Joy is like restless day, but peace Divine
Like quiet night;
Lead me, O Lord, till perfect day shall shine,
Through peace to light.

R2208: DIVINE SECRETS REVEALED.

"The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his Covenant."—Psa. 25:14.

IS THERE any secret in connection with the divine plan? Are not all of God's arrangements so plain that "a wayfaring man, tho unlearned, need not err therein?" Are not all of the steps of the plan of salvation so simple that even a child may understand them?

Oh no! very evidently not; for everywhere we find the utmost diversity of opinion respecting the divine plan. Not only is there a great variety of heathen theories utterly false, but the various theories which obtain amongst Christian people are in violent antagonism the one to the other. Even amongst the worldly-wise of Christendom how various are the conceptions of God's intention and method respecting his creatures? These differences are represented in the various theologies of all the various sects. His plan is claimed to be one of "Free Grace" in which he gives an *equal opportunity* to all his creatures to share; yet, looking about us we see most evidently that all are not alike privileged, not alike informed and not alike circumstanced. On the other hand, there is the claim of an "Election" which denies that grace is free to all, and holds that it is restricted to the favored few. Besides these, we have various other conflicting theories in Christendom, and the most obtuse thinker must admit that where so many theologians, college professors and doctors of divinity are in dispute, the unlearned "wayfaring man" has many chances to err in his endeavor to grasp the divine plan.

Observation therefore sustains, as most literally true, the statement of our text that the Lord's plan is a secret: and it is in agreement with the statement of other Scriptures respecting the "mystery of God," "hidden from past ages and dispensations." In harmony with this is the fact that all the prophets have spoken more or less obscurely and in

parables, not excepting the Great Prophet, our Lord Jesus, of whom it is written, that "he taught the people in parables and dark sayings"—"and without a parable spake he not unto the people." He promised, nevertheless, that in due time the holy spirit would be granted as a guide and instructor to his true disciples: "He will guide you into all truth" and "show you things to come." (Jno. 16:13.) Some of the mysteries of God were due to be understood at once, and some more gradually down through the age, but the great unfolding of the divine mystery we are expressly told was reserved until the close of the Gospel age, when "the mystery of God should be finished," which he hath kept secret from the foundation of the world.—Rev. 10:7.

Even so much of the divine plan as was due to be revealed by the spirit and to be understood step by step during this Gospel age, was intended only for a special class, and not for the world in general. The Apostle Paul emphasized this when he declared, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "But God hath revealed them unto *us* by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep [hidden, obscure] things of God."—1 Cor. 2:14, 10.

This same thought is before us in our text, "The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." As this has been true all the way down throughout this age, it is still true, and the finishing of "the mystery of God" in the close of this Gospel age must therefore be expected to be understood and appreciated only by this special class of the Lord's people,—those who fear or reverence him. We are to make a distinction between those who fear or reverence the Lord and those who fear or reverence man and the work of man, sectarian systems, creeds, etc. "The fear of man [and of man's churches] bringeth a snare," and hinders growth both in grace and in knowledge;—hinders an appreciation of the "Secret of the Lord." "But the fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and this wisdom, if continued, leads to fuller knowledge of God, to greater confidence in him, and to that degree of intimate friendship and sonship which is the key to the understanding of the "Secret of the Lord."

Abraham was called the "friend of God;" because he had the divine confidence, so that God made known to him certain things that he did not make known to others: "The Secret of the Lord" was with Abraham, so far as that Secret could be communicated to any one at that time. For instance, in the matter of the destruction of Sodom, the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham [my friend] that thing which I do?" And it was because Abraham was the friend of God that he also made known to him something of the divine plan for human salvation: as the Apostle declares, God "preached beforehand the gospel to Abraham, saying: 'In thee shall all the nations be blessed.'"—Gal. 3:8.

While it was not possible for Abraham or any one else than God to fully comprehend this statement, or to understand therefrom the lengths and the breadths of the divine plan of salvation, yet it contained the whole gospel, in the same sense that an acorn contains a great oak tree. So likewise our Lord at the first advent spoke in parables to the nominal house of Israel, that "Seeing they might see and not believe, and hearing they might hear and not understand;" yet, a certain few, full of faith and obedience and consecration to the

Lord, were not thus treated; but, on the contrary, were treated as "friends" and had much explained to them. Thus our Lord said to the disciples when they inquired concerning the significance of a parable, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to them that are without, these things are spoken in parables." And again he said to the same devoted disciples, I have not called you servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called *you friends*, because whatsoever I hear of the Father I have made known unto you.—John 15:15.

This "mystery" of the divine plan, hidden in parables, in figures, and in symbols from the world, and from the nominal Christian,—hidden from all except the fully consecrated children of God—is most beautifully symbolized in the Book of Revelation. As therein recounted, John was shown in a vision a symbolic panorama, illustrative of the subject. The heavenly glories were symbolized and the Father shown seated upon the throne of his glory, holding in his right hand a scroll sealed with seven seals. This was the *Mystery*, the *Secret* of the Lord, unknown to any one but himself—his plan for the salvation of the world. John in the symbol hears the proclamation, "Who is worthy to open the Book and to loose the seals?"—who is worthy to have committed to his care, *the execution* of the great divine plan, wonderful for its wisdom and love, and its lengths and breadths and depths and heights past human comprehension—that he may open it and execute it? A silence followed; and John fearing that this signified that none would be found worthy, and that hence the divine plan would never be fully revealed, and therefore could not be fully executed, wept much. But in the symbol the angel again touched him and said, "Weep not! for the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the 'Root of David,' hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven seals thereon."

Ah yes! this was one significance of the severe trials and sufferings of our dear Redeemer;—in humbling himself, leaving the glory with the Father, becoming a man and ultimately giving his life a ransom for all, he was doing two works: not only (1) redeeming us with his own precious blood, but (2) additionally by this obedience he was commending himself to the Father, and proving himself worthy to be the Father's agent and representative in carrying out all the great "mystery of God" hidden from previous ages and dispensations.—Eph. 3:3-5.

The interim of thirty odd years, in which our Lord's humiliation and subsequent exaltation took place, is all passed over in the vision, and the symbol merely shows in the midst of the throne "a lamb, as it had been slain:" how forceful the illustration to those whose eyes are anointed that they may discern its meaning. And now the symbolical panorama proceeds, and shows us the Lamb approaching Jehovah and receiving from him "the mystery of his will," the great plan of the ages, as mapped out in the divine purpose from before the foundation of the world. As soon as the "mystery of God" was committed to "the Lamb of God;" who had already fulfilled an important part of that plan by redeeming the world with his own precious blood, he receives homage, as it is written: "Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things on earth," and "that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father."

Then came the opening of the seals: the disclosing of one after another of the various features connected with the divine purpose. Each seal as it was loosed permitted the scroll as a whole to open a little wider, and a little wider, thus permitting "the mystery of God" to be a little more clearly discerned. And so God's people down through this Gospel age have been privileged to know something of the "Secret of the Lord;"—the divine plan. But not until the last seal was broken, did the scroll fly wide open, permitting the "Mystery of God" to be fully disclosed; as it is written: "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the *Mystery of God should be finished*, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."—Rev. 5:1; 10:7.

This same thought, that God's consecrated people will have intelligence respecting his plans far different from any the world will have, is everywhere kept prominently before us in the Scriptures, and must therefore be considered a very important indication with all who profess to be God's people;—distinguishing whether they are merely his "*servants*," or whether they are still more intimately connected and have received the spirit of adoption as serving "*sons*," and are being treated as sons;—made acquainted with the Heavenly Father's plan.

Our text speaks merely of the fear (reverence) of the Lord, but, as we have seen, this reverence *continued* leads into the very deepest work of grace obtainable;—to a fullness of consecration to the Father's will and service. It is of this class who fear (reverence) the Lord that we read,—"They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared [reverenced] the Lord, and that thought upon his word [esteeming his Name, his Honor, his Will above any earthly, sectarian name or work]. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them [they "shall be accounted worthy to escape" the severity of the great time of trouble with which this age shall end], as a man spareth *his own son* that serveth him." These who reverence the Lord, in this full and Scriptural sense, are surely the Lord's "elect," "the body of Christ," the "overcomers," the "little flock," the "royal priesthood," who shall reign with Christ, and with him bless all the families of the earth in due time.

The privilege of this "royal priesthood" to know "the Secret of the Lord," to comprehend "the deep things of God" hidden from others, was beautifully symbolized and typified in the privileges of the Jewish priesthood. When the Tabernacle was set up, with its beautiful golden furniture, lamp stand, table of shew bread, golden altar, etc., all symbolizing spiritual things, they were covered over, hidden, not only from the ordinary Israelite, but even from the Levitical "servants" of the Tabernacle, who were not even permitted to *look therein*. The privilege of seeing those typical secret things, reserved exclusively for the priests, thus typified "the royal priesthood" and their exclusive privilege of understanding the mysteries of God, his Secret.

"HE WILL SHOW THEM HIS COVENANT."

But our text adds, "He will show *them* his covenant." This is stated as tho it were a very important matter to see or clearly understand God's Covenant: and it is an important

matter, for God's Covenant is really the key to the entire divine plan. What God promised to Abraham in the Covenant, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," included directly and indirectly all the riches of divine grace. Yet, how few see this. We do not say how few of the world see this, for we should not expect any appreciation of the divine Covenant on the part of "them that are without." But we say, How few of those who have named the name of Christ, and nominally stand related to spiritual Israel—how few of these know or care anything whatever about the divine Covenant.

Alas, that Satan should so grossly blind the eyes of so many, that they should have no interest in the divine Covenant and not even know that there is a divine Secret or Mystery! Satan has gotten them thoroughly imbued with the delusion that God's plan is,—that every poor human creature born in sin, shapen in iniquity and schooled more or less in vice and superstition, shall have a few years of very imperfect opportunity to hear one or the other of the many conflicting creeds and theories of Christendom (or a jargon of them all), to thoroughly reform his life and become *a copy of God's dear Son*; and that if he does not succeed in doing these things, with the thousand chances to one against him, he shall be relegated to an eternity of torture. Alas! we say, that Christians should ever conclude that this is the plan of God. Truly, it was an enemy of God (Satan) who put before the people so monstrous, so God-dishonoring a doctrine as this: and persuaded them that this is the length and the breadth, the height and the depth of divine wisdom, and love, and provision for poor fallen humanity.

But with our eyes anointed, and our hearts fully consecrated to the Lord and fully desirous to know just what is his will and his way, we look at the Great Covenant, and behold, it opens gloriously before us into three parts: (1) All the families of the earth—every member of the human family is to receive a blessing. (2) The Seed of Abraham is to be the *channel* of these divine blessing to every creature. (3) This Seed in its primary sense we find meant our Lord Jesus Christ; but in its secondary sense it includes the "bride the lamb's wife," his jointheir in this Covenant and in all of the divine mercies. This is clearly set before us by the Apostle in his letter to the Galatians.—3:16, 29.

With this thought in view we realize at once that none of the spiritual blessings of this Covenant were possible until Christ Jesus, the Head of the Seed had finished his course and been glorified; and we see that the Lord's work since that time has been the gathering of the "elect" Church to be the "bride," the "body of Christ." We see also that the work of blessing cannot begin in its proper sense until this entire "Seed" is *complete* and glorified: and that with this glorification of the Church with her Lord, in the end or "harvest" of this Gospel age, will come the time mentioned by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans (8:18, 23), when the "groaning creation" shall be blessed by the "manifestation of the *sons* of God," in the glory of the Kingdom. This spiritual Seed of Abraham (Christ and the elect Church) has indeed been the salt of the earth, throughout the Gospel age, and has helped to preserve the world from utter deterioration; but this is but a small part of the great blessing which God designs to send through the Church to the world. The "light" of truth as it has been dimly shining during this night, is properly compared to a candle or lamp, but the "light" of the Church glorified in the Kingdom during the

Millennium is properly represented as "the Sun of righteousness, which shall arise with healing in its beams."

The Covenant then shows us our privilege of the present time, of becoming "heirs of God and jointheirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." And it shows us the object of this trial, the object of this election, the object of the glorification of the Church, to be a work of mercy, blessing, helpfulness, toward the remainder of mankind. The Covenant is broad: it does not promise, merely, that all the families of the earth who will be so fortunate as to be living at the time when the Seed is complete will receive a blessing; neither does it merely say that all the families proceeding from Abraham, dead and living, will receive a blessing; but comprehensively it promises a blessing to "all the families of the earth,"—those who have fallen asleep in death as well as those who will be alive at the time of the establishment of Christ's Kingdom.

To this end our Lord Jesus became Master or "Lord of the *dead*:" he bought *all* with his own precious blood: "He is the propitiation for our sins [the Church's sins] and not for ours only, but also *for the sins of the whole world*." And as we have received a blessing as the result of his ransom, so in God's due time "all the families of the earth" will also receive a blessing because of the *ransom*. It is from this standpoint that the Church is called the "first fruits unto God of his creatures,"—not the entire harvest. The first-fruits are to be used of the Lord as his instruments for blessing the remainder.

And in the coming blessing, to the families of the earth, the natural seed of Abraham are to be given a place or preference, a priority over others;—"To the Jew first." As the spiritual blessings were offered to them first, so the earthly favors are to be offered to them first. They shall obtain mercy "through your [the Church's] mercy." (Rom. 11:31.) And after Israel shall have obtained mercy, a blessing through the glorified Spiritual Israel, then in turn natural Israel shall let the light shine upon others—"all the families of the earth;" until in due time the promise shall be fulfilled that Christ as the true light shall enlighten "*every man that cometh into the world*." (Jno. 1:9.) Oh glorious covenant! luminous with divine Love and Wisdom.—Rom. 11:33.

THE COVENANT SURE AND EVERLASTING.

And is this Covenant sure? It is sure; as the great Apostle points out, God took special care to so state this Covenant repeatedly to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and to repeat it through the prophets; thus giving us most absolutely his word on this subject. But lest this should not be thought conclusive enough on a subject of so great importance, lest some should fear that there might be a contingency involved, by which that covenant might be vitiated, the Apostle points out that God not only gave his word but also his oath, that its engagements should be strictly fulfilled and in no wise miscarry. He says,—"*God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor to the soul.*"—Heb. 6:13-19.

"HE IS FAITHFUL WHO HATH PROMISED."

Those who have the "Secret of the Lord," and to whom he has not shown the significance of his Covenant should forthwith examine themselves, to see whether or not the fault be unfaithfulness on God's part or failure on their part to come up to God's conditions. They should strictly inquire within whether or not they have been sufficiently and properly reverencing God, or whether their reverence and worship has to any degree been to man and to human institutions, churches, etc.—whether they ever became "servants" of God and, if so, whether they progressed and became servant *sons*.

And those to whom the Lord has disclosed his Secret, and the significance of his Covenant, should see to it that these divine favors lead their hearts to still greater reverence for the Lord. For we may be assured that if the reverence is lost the Secret will slip from us, and the Covenant become more and more dim. And here we perceive God has placed a great test: He has permitted the great adversary to malign his character, and to traduce his plan, and to misrepresent the teachings of his Word to such an extent that the majority of those who name the name of Christ are at first influenced to turn to the Lord chiefly from fear of eternal torment. Their activities in mission work and in their general Christian course are actuated chiefly by fear and sympathy—sympathy for those whom they esteem to be in danger of eternal torture at the hands of a loveless and unjust God, and fear for themselves, lest they should not be spared a similar fate. Love to God finds no room under such conditions. In fact, it would be impossible for any one to truly love a God of such merciless character. But, amongst those who outgrow their creeds and fears are some who, in opposition to their false instructions, learn to think better of their Creator, and by faith grasp sufficient from his Word to beget a love for him which produces a fullness of consecration to his service; and thus they become sons of God: and then, by entering into divine fellowship through Christ, these have committed to them the "Secret of the Lord" and are shown something of his Covenant.

This fullness, however, does not come all at once; it is a gradual development, step by step. If the truth is rightly received it leads onward into more of the truth, and into more of its grace; but if wrongly received, it may lead outward, away from the Lord and his Word, away from his Secret, away from his grace, into utter darkness with the world. Nor is it infrequently the case that those who lose their abnormal fears lose practically all their reverence for the Lord, and become careless with reference to his Word, and with reference to their conduct. Such "receive the grace of God in vain;" in some respects, indeed, it does them injury, instead of bringing them blessings.

In our fallen condition we need some strong impellent motive, to enable us to live righteously, soberly, godly in this present evil world. And if the abnormal fear and superstitious dread be removed before a love for God, for righteousness and for truth has been implanted, the probabilities are that the knowledge of God's grace in such will fall upon stony ground. But where the spirit of the Lord has been implanted, where the spirit of the truth, the holy spirit of Love, has begotten to newness of life, where love to the Lord and appreciation of his goodness is the ruling and controlling element of life, there

the increase of knowledge of the divine Secret and Covenant will bring increasing blessings of heart, of mind and of daily life. (Compare Isa. 29:13; 1 John 4:18.) It was for this that the Apostle prayed for the early Church, saying,—“That ye might be *able to comprehend* with all saints [the Secret of the Lord] the lengths and the breadths, the heights and depths of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”—Eph. 3:17-19.

THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT.

As we have just seen, the divine blessings are all hidden in the Abrahamic Covenant,—to which were added because of sin the Mosaic (typical) Covenant and its antitype the Covenant in Christ, the New Covenant sealed with his blood.

The Bible is the great Book of these Covenants. And it like every other feature is considerably hidden, obscured, to the natural man; and its deeper and grander presentations can be seen only through the veil of types and shadows, parables and symbols. And the privilege to look beyond this veil, and to grasp the spirit of the truth, is reserved in large degree for the class mentioned in our text foregoing:—“The Secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his Covenant.”

To this class—them that fear the Lord and have his Secret and know his Covenant—the Bible becomes a Chart of the Ages, which shows not only the coast lines and rocks and sand bars of the six thousand years of evil, but also the blessed port then to be reached, and the glorious land of blessing and righteousness and divine favor—the thousand years of Christ's Millennial reign.

To this same class the Bible is a Compass also, which, in connection with the Chart, indicates to them the divinely directed route, by which they are to *escape* certain troubles coming upon the world, and by which they are to *obtain* certain trials and experiences which will be valuable to them in fitting and preparing them to be jointheirs with Christ in the Kingdom. Without this Compass they might indeed be able to judge in clear weather of some portions of the route, but never satisfactorily: and in times of storm and darkness, sun, moon and stars obscured, these, like the world, would be left to the mercy of their own imperfect judgments as to which way to steer, and would feel all the trepidation and uncertainty which so many others feel, were it not for their Compass. But the Compass can be seen, and its directions followed, however dark or obscure the natural light; and following its directions the Lord's people are to attain unto their high calling—make their calling and election sure.

The Lord's Word, in the hands of this same class, may be compared to a Telescope, whose properly adjusted lenses represent the bringing into harmony of the human will with the divine will, in Christ. Careful adjustment is required that we may get a proper focus; but when this condition is obtained, wonderful things through the Bible we see. The far off and indistinct promises are brought nigh, made clear and plain. Hitherto unseen features of the divine character and plan are made manifest; and by the aid of this

Telescope the lengths and breadths, the heights and the depths of divine Wisdom and Love and Power may be much more closely approximated by our finite minds.

To this same class the Bible is also a Microscope. The proper adjustment of its lenses—the complete consecration of the human will to the divine—brings to bear upon all the *little* affairs of life a power which magnifies them, and shows us their importance as never seen by us before, and as cannot be seen by the world in general. Through the Bible as a Microscope, we can see that all the trifling affairs of the present life are potentialities, which, under divine direction, are working together for good to "the called ones according to his purpose." It *magnifies* the Law of God, shows us how grand, how sublimely perfect and altogether reasonable, is every requirement of God. It shows us that the weaknesses and imperfections which hinder us from measuring up to the standard of that perfect Law are inherited from father Adam. It shows us that the blemish of sin has affected not only our physical systems, but also our mental and moral faculties; and thus it points out to us that our own reasoning on every subject requires to be re-adjusted and harmonized with the spirit of the divine Law; and thus it enables us by such mental and moral adjustment to obtain what the Apostle calls "the spirit of a sound mind." It not only shows us what we could not see before of our own shortcomings, but graciously it indicates also how after coming into Christ and being covered with his robe of righteousness by faith, we may to some extent make up for these deficiencies by adding to our faith fortitude, and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience piety, and to piety brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness Love, which things, as they more and more abound, will incite us to cultivate fruitfulness, in the use of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.—2 Pet. 1:5-8.

In view of the blessings attached let us strive more and more to retain and to cultivate that true *reverence* for the Lord, which is not only the beginning of wisdom but also its end; that through it we may have the benefit and helpful assistance of all the gracious provisions which God has made for the progress of those who love him, in knowledge and in character; that in due time, if we faint not, we may inherit the promises and share the glories of our Father and our Lord.

JULY 7

Behold the Lamb of God—John 1:36.

All of the Lord's servants should call attention to the Lord and not to themselves. Let us each bend our energies to pointing men to the Lamb of God, and not to self-seeking. Modesty is a gem, wherever found, one of the graces of the Spirit, which all of the Lord's consecrated ones should seek to have largely developed and well polished. And let us remember that following Jesus, in the best sense, means that we walk in His paths, strive to do as nearly as we are able what He would do today, taking our lessons from what He did and said personally, and from the instructions which He has left for us, through the Apostles, respecting the path of fellowship in His sufferings, the path to glory and reward in His Kingdom—Z '99, 14, 15 (R 2417).

Christ is the Lamb of God, because as an unblemished One He was chosen on the tenth of Nisan, and put to death on the fourteenth as the Passover for God's people. Lamblike He submitted to death; and His blood sprinkling the lintels and doorposts of God's House, stays the hand of the Second Death from injuring us. Of His roasted flesh it is our privilege to partake with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth and with the bitter herbs of persecution, *etc.*, while we stand girded, shod, with staff in hand for our journey to antitypical Canaan—P '32, 95.

Parallel passages: Isa. 45:22; 65:1, 2; Heb. 12:2; Gen. 22:7, 8; Ex. 12:3; Isa. 53:7; John 1:29; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 5:6-14; 14:1, 4; 19:7-9; 21:14, 22, 23; 22:1, 3.

Hymns: 190, 5, 28, 168, 178, 157, 155.

Poems of Dawn, 31: *A Present Help*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 107 (R 4998).

Questions: Have I this week beheld the Lamb of God? How? With what results?

A PRESENT HELP

THERE is never a day so dreary,
But God can make it bright;
And unto the soul that trusts Him,
He giveth songs in the night.

There is never a path so hidden,
But God will show us the way,
If we seek for the Spirit's guidance,
And patiently wait and pray.

There is never a cross so heavy,
But the loving hands are there,

Outstretched in tender compassion,
The burden to help us bear.

There is never a heart that is broken,
But the loving Christ can heal;
For the heart that was pierced on Calvary,
Doth still for His people feel.

There is never a life so darkened,
So hopeless and so unblest,
But may be filled with the light of God,
And enter His promised rest.

There is never a sin nor a sorrow,
There is never a care nor a loss,
But that we may carry to Jesus,
And leave at the foot of the cross.

What more can we ask than He's promised?
(And we know that His Word cannot fail,)
Our refuge when storms are impending,
Our help when temptations assail.

Our Savior, our Friend and Redeemer,
Our portion on earth and in Heaven;
For He who withheld not His own Son,
Hath with Him all things freely given.

R4998: "YE WERE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE"

(I Corinthians 6:20.)

IT WILL BE noticed that the Apostle refers, not to the world, but to the Church in the statement, "Ye were bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ." Other Scriptures tell us that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man"—that He redeemed the world. We are to remember, however, that this work of redemption covers centuries. Promises respecting it were made long centuries before Jesus came. He accomplished a certain portion of the work—the all-important part of giving Himself a Ransom price for all—laying down His life.

But while His life was thus laid down, to be the price of the sins of the whole world, it has not yet been applied for the world's sins. If it were, then the world would no longer be under Divine condemnation, "children of wrath," but would in some sense of the word be back in fellowship with God. The price laid down by the Redeemer at Calvary is eventually to be made applicable to the sins of the whole world, but not yet. It will not be

made applicable to the whole world until after the gathering out of the world—of all nations, classes—the Bride of Christ, the "elect."

In harmony with this we read that our Lord Jesus after His resurrection ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us—for the household of faith—not for the world. Hence any blessing, and reconciliation with God, any arrangement of Divine favor and everlasting life, is not open to the world, but merely to believers, the "household of faith": "To us who believe He is precious"; "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous." Unbelievers have no Advocate with the Father, and consequently have no forgiveness of sins, no reconciliation, but are still under the condemnation of death. "We have escaped the condemnation that is on the world."

How fully these different texts of the Divine Word dovetail with each other and with the facts! We have peace; the world has no peace. God is our Father; the world is under condemnation, and are "children of wrath," under sentence of death, and not recognized by the Creator in the present time, although the Scriptures show us that He has very gracious plans and arrangements for mankind in general by and by—during the Messianic reign of Jesus and the Church, His Bride. Then, in this class, the Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29), all the families of the earth will be blessed.

THE WORLD IS NOT YET BOUGHT

Would it be right, some one inquires, to say that the world is "bought with a price"? We answer that it would not be strictly right to say, but we need not quarrel with those who fail to state the matter in exactly the proper language. Rather, we might surmise that they are speaking of things that are not yet accomplished as though they were already finished. God assures us that in due time the price which our Lord laid down at Calvary will be made applicable to the world under the gracious terms of the New Covenant, which He will make first with Israel. Nevertheless, the point stands out clearly and distinctly that thus far the Ransom-price has not yet been applied to any members of Adam's race except the household of faith—believers. All things belong to these. Nothing belongs to the world as yet.

The privilege granted to the Church through her great Redeemer and Advocate is that His merit imputed to her permits her to share with Him in His sacrifice of the earthly nature, and to become joint-heirs with Him in His glorious arrangements of glory, honor and immortality on the Divine plane.

When we speak of the Church of the First-born we are to remember that the words carry us back to the typical first-borns, who were delivered from death on the occasion of the first typical Passover. There the first-borns of Israel were passed over or spared when other first-borns perished. Subsequently, they were all exchanged for the one tribe of Levi, which thereafter was the tribe of the first-borns, and as such was set apart for Divine service in connection with the Tabernacle, and later the Temple. They were not all priests, though this was the priestly tribe. Only a few out of the whole number were selected for the priesthood. So it is with the Church of the First-borns; they will all be

overcomers, they will all be loyal and faithful to God, but only a "little flock" will be found specially saintly, holy, acceptable unto God through Christ, and these will be the antitypical Priests: "Ye are a Royal Priesthood."—I Peter 2:9.

Hence James declared (1:18), "Ye are a kind of First-fruits unto God of His creatures." Of course, our Lord Jesus was primarily the First-fruits of all God's creatures. Secondly, the Bride class will be a part of that First-fruit company. Then there will be a large company of saintly people who will come through "great tribulation," "will wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb," and attain the spirit nature. These also will be a part of the First-fruits of God to the spirit nature—all on the spirit plane. Then will come God's favor to mankind in general—the after-fruits of His earthly creation—a great company, gathered during the Millennium. All of the evil doers and corrupters of the earth will be destroyed, but those in full perfection will be a glorious fruitage unto God.

St. Paul writes respecting the resurrection of "every man in his own order"—his own band or company. The first of the earthly nature to experience resurrection—that is, a full resurrection, or raising up completely out of death and imperfection—will be the Ancient Worthies, but they will not be part of the First-fruits unto God of His creatures, for they will be, with the remainder of mankind, regenerated by The Christ, the Giver of everlasting human life, secured at the cost of His own sacrifice. With all the remainder of humanity, they will come under the terms of the New Covenant. Indeed, they will be the first to be blessed by that New Covenant arrangement. But since the Divine Programme deals with the world as a whole, Messiah will not deliver up any portion of the world, even those perfected, until the end of the thousand years of His reign of glory and restitution. Consequently, the Ancient Worthies will belong to the "after-fruits"—the human fruitage of the Divine Plan connected with our earth.

At the close of the thousand years, when Messiah shall have completed the work of restitution for all the willing and obedient, and shall destroy in the Second Death all refusing to make progress toward righteousness, then the Mediator steps out from between God and men and leaves the world exposed to the full demands of Divine Justice in letter and in spirit. This will not mean their injury, because in perfection humanity is quite capable of being and doing all that Divine Justice requires. The whole world then being perfect there will be no excuse necessary for any of them, and hence no mediation on behalf of any will thereafter take place.

It will be at that time, after the Mediatorial Kingdom shall have passed, and Jesus shall have delivered up the Kingdom to the Father (I Cor. 15:27), that Satan, the personification of evil, will be loosed from his prisonhouse for a little season—to tempt, to test, to try, to prove all those that dwell upon the face of the whole earth.

In the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom they will be shielded from all outside temptations and will be helped over and forgiven the imperfections of the flesh, while attaining the fleshly perfection. But at the close of the thousand-year period, having attained the perfection of the flesh, and having had large experience with sin and

righteousness, good and evil, it is as proper that they should be tested as that Adam was tested in the beginning—tested to see whether or not the lessons, blessings, experiences and opportunities have fully committed them as lovers of righteousness and haters of iniquity. If these have then the trials that will come upon them through the permission of sin and temptation will be met accordingly, with loyalty to God, to the truth and to righteousness. All such will gain the victory over the temptations.

But such as really at heart still love sin will be entrapped and ensnared and manifested. Then the trials or judgments from Heaven will destroy them and Satan, that the world may be cleansed of all who love sin, and be enjoyed thereafter only by such as love righteousness and hate iniquity.

True, God knowing the heart, could judge all of those people without any testing by Satan, but many of His creatures, unable to read the heart, might wonder respecting the Divine Justice which would smite down some of their fellows who outwardly were righteous, and they might consequently be continually in fear and trepidation lest they should thus be smitten down; hence the Almighty has adopted the method of making this temptation open and above board, to be witnessed by angels and men. Thus it was with Adam in his trial, in his sentence, and in the execution of the penalty. Thus it will be at the close of the Mediatorial reign of Christ. Those who then sin wilfully will be violators of the New Covenant and will die accordingly, just as Adam violated the Covenant under which he was placed, perfect, holy and with the promise of everlasting life.

The fact that this testing of mankind will be after the end of the thousand years of the Mediator's reign, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to the Father, does not prove that the glorified Jesus will have nothing to do with the destruction that will come upon Satan and those obedient to Him. Quite to the contrary. As Jesus was the Divine Agent, Instrument, Word, Mouthpiece, *Logos*, in all the work of creation, and prior to undertaking the Mediatorial work, so, highly exalted now in honor, next to the Father, and at His right Hand of Power, He will undoubtedly be the Father's Representative in that judgment upon the wilful sinners, who with Satan will be consigned to the Second Death.

Here the question may arise in the minds of some, What did the Apostle mean when he said in I Corinthians 15:25, 26, "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death"?

The Apostle is speaking of those things which are against or contrary to mankind—those things which hinder men from keeping the Divine Law, and thus being in full harmony with their Creator. Every such thing is an enemy, and is to be destroyed and be put out of the way—ignorance, superstition, vice, human weaknesses, are some of the enemies of righteousness, and, therefore, enemies to the best interests of humanity. Death is such an enemy, because it is death working in us that causes all of our difficulties.

All the imperfections, whether moral, or physical, or mental, are the workings of death. Because death is thus working in humanity, therefore the righteously intentioned

cannot do the things that they would. The work of Messiah's reign will be to put down, to put away, not only other oppositions, but this opposition of the workings of death. Gradually mankind will be lifted up, up, up, out of all that weakness, out of death, to the full perfection of his being. Then death will be destroyed—the Adamic death, which came upon all men through one man's disobedience, and which is to be canceled, done away completely, because of Christ's obedience, even unto death.

Only toward the close of that thousand years of the reign of the great Mediator will this work of completely overthrowing death be accomplished. Then all mankind will have been delivered, not only from the tomb, but from every shade and degree of death—the whole world will be alive in the same sense that Adam was alive before death passed upon him, or he was affected by the sting of sin.

Then the Kingdom will be turned over to the Father. Those who will die during the thousand years, as wilful evil doers, will die the Second Death. It is not an enemy of man; it is the righteous sentence of a righteous God in the interest of His creatures—those who wilfully prefer sin shall be destroyed from amongst the people, because their influence will be to corrupt the earth. The Second Death, therefore, is not included amongst the enemies, and is not the death that Jesus will destroy.

Neither is Satan one of the enemies whom Jesus will then destroy. He was an enemy before man sinned, and his rebellion was not brought about by man's sin. He was subject to Divine authority before man was created, and will be a subject of Divine authority after man shall have been redeemed and restored. It will not be for the Mediator to deal with him, but for Divine Justice to determine his deserts. Besides, it is said that he will be destroyed in the Second Death, in the death from which there will be no redemption, no resurrection, no recovery.

JULY 8

The house of God, which is the Church of the living God—1 Tim. 3:15; see Diaglott.

The Lord's Church, the only one to which the name *ecclesia* ... or Church, is properly applicable, is so insignificant, so unostentatious, and comparatively so poor in this world's riches, that it is not recognized nor recognizable from the worldly standpoint. It is neither man-made nor man-ruled; nor are its members enrolled on earth, but in heaven (Heb. 12:23). Its Head and Bishop is the Lord; its law is His Word; it has but one Lord, one faith, one baptism; and it is built upon the testimonies of the holy Apostles and prophets—Jesus Christ Himself being its chief Cornerstone—Z '99, 37 (R 2427).

The word "Church," in Greek, designates the elect character of God's people. They are indeed the "called out"; for they are separated by the Lord from the kingdom of darkness and the rule of Satan into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, and brought under the rule of Christ. The pillar that sustains Her and the foundation upon which She is built is Jesus Christ, Her Lord; and founded upon this Rock, She will remain to all eternity—P '26, 95.

Parallel passages: Isa. 62:12; Matt. 15:13; 16:18; Heb. 12:23; Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:20-22; 5:23-32; John 15:1-8; Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 3:9; 12:12-28; 2 Cor. 6:16; Heb. 3:6; Rev. 21:2, 9, 10.

Hymns: 281, 6, 23, 170, 322, 58, 72.
Poems of Dawn, 13: *The True Church*.
Tower Reading: Z '03, 37 (R 3142).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in respect to the Church? How did they affect me? What were the results?

THE TRUE CHURCH

I.

ONE Sabbath morn I roamed astray,
And asked a Pilgrim for the way:
"O tell me, whither shall I search,
That I may find the one true Church?"
He answered, "Search the world around;
The one *true Church* is never found.
Yon ivy on the abbey wall
Makes fair the falsest Church of all."
But, fearing he had told me wrong,
I cried, "Behold the entering throng!"
He answered, "*If a Church be true,
It hath not many, but a few!*"

Around a font the people pressed,
And crossed themselves on brow and breast.
"A cross so light to bear," he cried,
"Is not of Christ, the Crucified!
Each forehead, frowning, sheds it off:
Christ's cross abides through scowl and scoff!"
We entered at the open door,
And saw men kneeling on the floor;
Faint candle, by the daylight dimmed,
As if by foolish virgins trimmed;
Fair statues of the saints, as white
As now their robes are, in God's sight;
Stained windows, casting down a beam,
Like Jacob's ladder in the dream.
The Pilgrim gazed from nave to roof,
And, frowning, uttered this reproof:
"Alas! Who is it understands
God's Temple is not made with hands?"

II.

We walked in ferns so wet with dew
They plashed our garments trailing through,
And came upon a church whose dome
Upheld a cross, but not for Rome.
We brushed a cobweb from a pane,
And watched the service in the fane.
*"Do prayers," he asked, "the more avail,
If offered at an altar rail?
Does water sprinkled from a bowl,
Wash any sin from any soul?
Do tongues that taste the bread and wine
Speak truer after such a sign?"*
Just then, upon a maple spray,
Two orioles perched, and piped a lay,
Until the gold beneath their throats
Shook molten in their mellow notes.
Resounding from the church, a psalm
Rolled, quivering, through the outer calm.
"Both choirs," said I, "are in accord,
For both give praises to the Lord."
"The birds," he answered, "chant a song
Without a note of sin or wrong:
The church's anthem is a strain
Of human guilt and mortal pain."
The orioles and the organ ceased,
And in the pulpit rose the priest.

The Pilgrim whispered in my ear,
 "It profits not to tarry here."
 "He speaks no error," answered I,
 "He teaches that the living die;
 The dead arise; and both are true;
 Both wholesome doctrines; neither new."
 The Pilgrim said, "He strikes a blow
 At wrongs that perished long ago;
*But covers with a shielding phrase
 The living sins of present days."*
 We turned away among the tombs—
 A tangles place of briars and blooms.
 I spelled the legends on the stones:
 Beneath reposed the martyrs' bones,
 The bodies which the rack once brake
 In witness for the dear Lord's sake,
 The ashes gathered from the pyres
 Of saints whose zeal our soul inspires.
 The Pilgrim murmured as we passed,
 "So gained they all the crown at last.
 Men lose it now through looking back,
 To find it at the stake, the rack;
 The rack and stake are old with grime;
God's touchstone is the living time!"

III.

We passed where poplars, gaunt and tall,
 Let twice their length of shadow fall.
 Then rose a meeting-house in view,
 Of bleached and weather-beaten hue.
 Men, plain of garb and pure of heart,
 Divided church and world apart.
 Nor did they vex the silent air
 With any sound of hymn or prayer.
 God's finger to their lips they pressed,
 Till each man kissed it and was blessed.
 I asked, "Is this the true Church, then?"
 He answered, "Nay, a sect of men:
 And sects that shut their doors in pride
 Shut God and half His saints outside.
 The gates of Heaven, the Scriptures say,
 Stand open wide, by night and day.
 So, then, to enter, is there need
 To carry key of church or creed?"

IV.

Still following where the highway led,
Till elms made arches overhead,
We saw a spire and weathercock,
And snow-white church upon a rock—
A rock, where centuries before,
Came sea-tossed pilgrims to the shore.
My sandals straightway I unbound,
Because the place was holy ground.
I cried, "One church at last I find,
That fetters not the human mind."
"This church," said he, "is like the rest;
For all are good, but none is best."

V.

Then far from every church we strayed—
Save Nature's pillared aisles of shade.
The squirrels ran to see us pass,
And God's sweet breath was on the grass.
I challenged all the creeds, and sought
What truth, or lie, or both, they taught.
I asked, "Had *Augustine* a fault?"
The Pilgrim gazed at heaven's high vault,
And answered, "*Can a mortal eye
Contain the sphere of all the sky?*"
I said, "The circle is too wide."
"*God's truth is wider!*" he replied.
"Though Augustine was on his knee,
He saw how little he could see;
Though *Luther* sought with burning heart,
He caught the glory but in part;
Though *Calvin* opened wide his soul,
He comprehended not the whole.
Not Luther, Calvin, Augustine,
Saw visions such as I have seen."
While yet he spake, a rapture stole
Through all my still inquiring soul.
I looked upon His holy brow,
Entreating, "Tell me, who art THOU?"
But such a splendor filled the place,
I knew it was the Lord's own face!
I was a sinner, and afraid!
I knelt in dust, and thus I prayed:
"O Christ, the Lord! end Thou my search,
And lead me to the one true Church."
He spake as never man may speak—
"The one true Church thou shalt not seek,

Seek thou, forevermore, instead,
To find the *one true Christ, its Head!*"
The Lord then vanished from my sight,
And left me standing in the light.

R3142: THE TRUE FOLD NOT A PEN.

MANY OF THE LORD'S SHEEP are penned in behind various creeds of men and thus hindered from obtaining the food and exercising the liberty which Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, intended they should have. It is contrary to the will of the great Chief Shepherd that his sheep should be separated from *each other* by pens, and hindered from the proper liberties of the fold. There is one general enclosure behind which all the *true sheep* of this age and flock will be found; and to it the Lord informs us there is but the one *door*—himself.

We might assume that all know something about this *one fold* and its *one door*; but this would be a mistake; many are so confused by the numerous man-made folds of Christendom that they confound these with the true. Some "wolves" are disappointed to find that the Good Shepherd who gave his life for the "sheep" has provided certain limitations beyond which the sheep cannot go if they obey his voice (his Word), and beyond which they do not desire to go if they are actually his sheep.

Let those who like call this true fold, with its well-defined walls, "a man-made pen";—those who enjoy its security, enjoy also its liberty. It has one and only one wall, great and high, which so far has kept out the "wolves," except such as pretend to be sheep—who come arrayed in sheep's clothing. This wall is *faith in Christ* as man's *ransom-sacrifice*—finished at Calvary.

None whom that fence excludes are "sheep." And behind that simple, yet strong, creed-fence there is all the liberty proper for the Lord's "sheep;"—though probably not nearly enough for the "goats."

Further, while it is wrong for under-shepherds or anyone else to erect denominational fences inside this true fold, or to entice the "sheep" into them, and thus to restrain their liberties within the fold,—it is not only proper, but a part of the true under-shepherd's duty to protect the flock within the true enclosure of the true fold, from the "wolves in sheep's clothing" wherever found. No doubt it was as a type of the true Shepherd of the Lord's flock, that David [*i.e.*, the Beloved], while defending his flocks, slew a lion, and a bear, and delivered the sheep of his charge.

Our Lord, the great Chief Shepherd, set an example to the under-shepherds; and all true ones of his appointment must needs have the same spirit or soon lose their office. It was he who forewarned the true sheep, saying, "Beware of false prophets [teachers], which come to you in sheep's clothing [professing to be of the Lord's flock, but in reality not such, because they do not trust in the great sacrifice offered once for all for their

sins], but inwardly they are ravening wolves [who would destroy your faith in the *ransom*, and thus destroy you as "sheep"]. But he that is a hireling and not the shepherd, ... seeth the wolf [the false teacher] coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf [the false teacher] catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. ...I lay down my life for the sheep."—Matt. 7:15; John 10:12-15.

It is not the approval of the "wolves," in sheep's clothing or without it, that is to be courted by the true under-shepherd. He will, however, have the approval of the Chief Shepherd, and of all the developed sheep who have their senses exercised by reason of use. The Apostle Paul battled hard against such false teachers, who affected to be believers, "sheep," while they were not such. Speaking on this subject he said to the Elders (under-shepherds) of the Church at Ephesus:—

"I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all. ...Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the holy Spirit hath made you overseers [shepherds], to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood [—faith in which purchase constitutes them 'sheep']. For I know this, that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you [in sheep's clothing, of course, otherwise they would not be received], not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking contrary things [things different from what I, Paul, have taught] *to draw away disciples* [followers] *after themselves*. *Therefore watch*, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."—Acts 20:26-31.

The Apostle Peter, too, made a similar appeal to the under-shepherds, saying, "The elders which are among you I exhort. ...Feed the flock of God, as much as in you is, taking oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a willing mind." "But as there were false prophets [in the past—'wolves in sheep's clothing'] even so there shall be false teachers among you, who *privily* [deceptively, covering the real purport of their teachings] shall bring in [to the fold] damnable heresies [errors leading to condemnation and rejection] even denying the Lord that bought them. ...And *many shall follow* their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."—1 Pet. 5:1-4; 2 Pet. 2:1, 2.

The Apostle John also cautions us, saying: "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. ...He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ [that the Son of Man came to give himself a *ransom* for all—Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6] he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you [as a would-be teacher of the 'sheep'] and bring not this doctrine [of the *ransom*, taught by Christ], receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed [or who even indirectly helps to spread the 'damnable heresy' that we were not *bought* by the Lord] is partaker of the evil work [of him who publicly and openly does so]."—2 John 8-11.

Thus we see that the duty of under-shepherds to protect the flock from deceptive wolves, as well as to feed them meat in due season, has been recognized from the start;—

because from the start there have been such wolves. And since the holy Spirit gave special warnings that in the end of the age "evil men and leaders astray" would wax more and more bold, and that through their instrumentality Satan would propagate error, and affect to be a messenger of light, is it not due time for all the sheep to recognise these facts, and not to be deceived by "feigned words" and "fair speeches"? The true sheep must not judge of fellow sheep by the pelt; for a wolf can wear a sheep's pelt: they must learn to note the Shepherd's voice and manner—directly through his Word, and indirectly through those whom he shall use as his representatives to "*feed the flock* over which the holy Spirit hath made them overseers [shepherds]."

Not only did the Apostle Paul thus direct the under-shepherds, but he points out the advisability of this to the flock, since it is thus that the Chief Shepherd leads and feeds and keeps his flock.—Heb. 13:17; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 12:27-31; Psa. 91:11, 12.

Let us stand fast, therefore, in *that* liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free;—allowing no one to pen us up by human creeds;—neither allowing any to lead us out beyond the bounds fixed for us by the Chief-Shepherd, into liberties, licenses and speculations that he never authorized. Let us abide in Him, keeping ourselves in the love of God, as saith the Apostle.

JULY 9

When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice—John 10:4.

The voice of the Good Shepherd is a blending of various sounds in a manner in which they are blended by no other voice. His voice sounds forth the chord of justice commingled with the chord of love, and the whole intoned with wisdom and with power. Other theories, plans and schemes of men and devils have no such harmony of sound as has the message which the Great Shepherd has sent us through His Son. Moreover, when the true sheep hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, it satisfies their longings as nothing else could do. They will no longer be in danger of being attracted by other sounds or voices, theories or schemes, but will reply to all,

"Jesus has satisfied, Jesus is mine."

—Z '00, 230 (R 2672).

The Lord put forth His sheep from the Mosaic Covenant fold by His death and their consecration into Him. Like a true shepherd, He did not drive but led them; and they followed Him to the green pastures and the quiet waters of the Word and the blessed paths of righteousness. They recognize His voice—the Truth—by its sweet, comforting and harmonious ring, which is life to them—P '36, 94.

Parallel passages: Ezek. 34:2, 12, 14, 23; John 14:6; Rom. 5:1, 2; Heb. 10:19-22; John 10:1-18; 15:13; Psa. 23:1-4; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4; Zech. 11:17; Nah. 1:7; 1 Cor. 8:3; 2 Tim. 1:12; Isa. 53:6.

Hymns: 284, 286, 288, 257, 12, 87, 145.

Poems of Dawn, 70: *The Lord My Shepherd*.

Tower Reading: Z '10, 398 (R 4732).

Questions: How did Jesus as Shepherd and I as a sheep act toward one another this week? Under what circumstances? With what results?

THE LORD MY SHEPHERD

THE Lord my shepherd feeds me,
And I no want shall know;
He in green pastures leads me,
By streams which gently flow.

He doth, when ill betides me,
Restore me from distress;
For His name's sake He guides me
In paths of righteousness.

His rod and staff shall cheer me,

When passing death's dark vale;
My Lord will still be near me,
And I shall fear no ill.

My food He doth appoint me,
Prepared before my foes;
With oil He doth anoint me;
My cup of bliss o'erflows.

His goodness shall not leave me,
His mercy still shall guide,
Till God's house shall receive me,
Forever to abide.

R4732: THE TRUE SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCKS

"When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice."—John 10:4.

WE understand that the sheepfold was the Law Covenant arrangement under which Israel was placed at Sinai, that they were glad to be thus folded or put into the Lord's special care, and that Moses did all that he could for them as a kind of shepherd, but was not able to give them the liberty from the Law which they needed. Various others who pretended to be shepherds came afterwards. The Lord says that all these false shepherds who came before him were thieves and robbers. They did not come in through the door. They were endeavoring to take advantage of the sheep; hence they were selfish. He who is the Good Shepherd is willing to lay down his life for the sheep. It required the true Shepherd to bring about the conditions and the relationship thus expressed. "When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them." They needed to be led out into the green pastures. The fold is a place for rest and protection, but not a place for feeding.

So as respects the Law. The Apostle says that the Jews were shut up under the Law. Until the due time should come there was no way of escape. There was only the one door, which had not been opened, and which none of these would-be leaders could open. That door was the Door of Redemption. Our Lord, by laying down his life for the sheep, could open that door.

Having made satisfaction for the sins of his people, our Lord gained the right to be their Shepherd or Leader. When he puts them forth, he shows them the way they should walk. He is not only the Leader, but also the Shepherd to watch over and care for them. Thus he leads them through green pastures and finally will bring them to the heavenly fold. Jesus became the door of egress from the Jewish sheepfold, and there is no other egress. Any of the Jews who came out came through Christ. Any of them who did not come out through Christ are still shut up under the Law—to remain until the Mediatorial reign. Others might take advantage of the offer through Christ now, that they might have

life and have it more abundantly. He is the good Shepherd. A stranger will the sheep not follow, because they know not the voice of strangers. This indicates that in the voice of the True Shepherd there is something that has the proper ring. And the sheep will not follow another having a different voice—a different sound or message.

Now is the Harvest time. The voices of the false shepherds who have temporarily bewildered some of the "sheep" are losing their influence and more are listening to the Voice of the True Shepherd, which is unlike that of any other voice, and which is unmistakable. In the sound is the chord of Justice mingled with those of Love and Wisdom and Power. All other theories and doctrines have no such power or harmonious sound as the glorious message of "good tidings" which the Father has sent us through his Son. The voice of the True Shepherd satisfies the longings of the sheep as nothing else can do.

"Send out thy light and truth, O Lord;
Let them our leaders be
To guide us to thy holy hill,
Where we shall worship thee."

The question has been suggested, In what way could we apply our Lord's statement to the Gentiles, "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me?" Our answer is that the Lord had sheep amongst the Gentiles; that is, those who were seeking to serve him. But at that time he had not received anyone from amongst the Gentiles—the middle wall of partition was still standing. But subsequently they had the opportunity of hearing his voice and following him, the middle wall of partition then being broken down. A little later than when he used the above words he said: "Other sheep have I; these also I must bring and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." While this may be particularly applicable to the sheep of the next Age, it may not be amiss to apply it now to those who are received from amongst the Gentiles. In the next Age he will receive some from the natural house of Israel and some from the Gentiles. At the present time he is receiving some from the natural house and some from the Gentiles. During the next Age there will be but one fold and one Shepherd; and all the sheep will be brought into full harmony with God.

To carry out the thought of Revelation 7, and viewing the number of the Lord's people of the "little flock" as one hundred and forty-four thousand, this offer being originally made to the twelve tribes of natural Israel, others subsequently were permitted to take the places of those who were first called or first recognized as sheep, and who proved unworthy.

When Christ said, "All that ever came before me were thieves and robbers," we understand that these to whom our Lord thus referred were those who attempted fraudulently to palm themselves off on the Jewish people as their leaders. These are particularly referred to by Gamaliel in his address to the Sanhedrin, when he said to them, "Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves; who was slain; and all, as many

as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to naught. ... And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught."—Acts 5:35-38.

JULY 10

All bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth—Luke 4:22.

This should be true as far as possible with all of the Lord's footstep followers: their speech should be with grace, with moderation, the overflow of hearts full of loving sympathy for the Truth and all who love and seek it. Their words should always be well within the limits of reason and righteousness, and strictly in conformity to the Word of the Lord. And their manner, their conduct, as living epistles, should harmonize with these, so that even their enemies would marvel, and take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of Him—Z '99, 53 (R 2437).

The gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth were beautiful, deep, agreeable and helpful. They proved Him to be a great orator, a persuasive speaker and a most pleasing preacher. His extraordinary ability in these respects awakened the wonder and admiration of His auditors and made them involuntarily concede His supremacy in public speech. "Never man spake like this man"—P '30, 78.

Parallel passages: Psa. 45:2; Prov. 15:23; Eccles. 10:12; Isa. 50:4; Matt. 7:28, 29; 13:54; Mark 1:22; 6:2; Luke 4:32, 36; 21:38; Prov. 25:11; Rom. 15:4; John 7:45, 46; 13:31-17:26.

Hymns: 22, 49, 311, 322, 264, 83, 97.
Poems of Dawn, 7: *The Word of God*.
Tower Reading: Z '06, 185 (R 3795).

Questions: What part of the Word was especially unctuous to me this week? Under what circumstances?

THE WORD OF GOD

OH, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
True wisdom its pages unfold;
And though we may read them a thousand time o'er,
They never, no never, grow old!
Each line hath a pleasure, each promise a pearl,
That all if they will may secure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away,
God's Word shall forever endure.

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
The lamp that our Father above
So kindly hath lighted to teach us the way
That leads to the arms of His love!

Its warnings, its counsels, are faithful and just;
Its judgments are perfect and pure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away,
God's Word shall forever endure.

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
Our only salvation is there;
It carries conviction down deep in the heart,
And shows us ourselves as we are.
It tells of a Savior, and points to the cross,
Where pardon we now may secure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away
God's Word shall forever endure.

R3795: "NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN."

—John 7:46—

AT THE END of the quarter a review is in order. We begin at the Mount of Beatitudes and close with the Mount of Transfiguration, and on the way in the Master's words and conduct find illustrations of the wonderful teachings of the Sermon on the Mount and how faithful obedience to the instructions there given will mean to us eventually a place in the Kingdom, pictured in the Transfiguration scene. The blessings of the meek, the merciful, the persecuted for righteousness' sake, etc., etc., all will find their fulfilment when, by the grace of God, we shall eventually be changed, transfigured, by the power of the First Resurrection, and made like to our great Redeemer and Lord—"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."—Matt. 13:43.

How wonderful are the Lord's dealings with us and yet how reasonable. His appeal is, "Come let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." (Isa. 1:18.) He shows us how he has prepared for this: that he himself was provided, the sacrifice for sins; that our Lord has already died the Just for the unjust that he might bring us to God, and that God can be just when he receives us, just in his dealings with us, because the justice element of his Law has been fully met on our behalf. He gives us a glimpse of the blessings he proposes to bring to the world of mankind, points us to the Lamb of God, whose sacrifice takes away the sin of the world, and invites all those who have love and sympathy and appreciation to come now and accept not only life eternal but favor upon favor—joint-heirship with his Son in the glorious Kingdom which is to bless the world in the great uplift of "restitution, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-23.

This message comes to us through the Son of God, of whom our Golden Text declares, "Never man spake like this man." No wonder the apostles said to him when some were forsaking him, "Lord, to whom should we go? Thou hast the words [the message] of

eternal life." Others may indeed think that they have eternal life in themselves—they may persuade themselves that by some inherent, immortal principle they will live forever, and that when they die it will merely be the appearance of dying, and actually they will become in that moment more alive than ever. At best that is a very difficult thought, and few are able to so hypnotize their own judgments as to believe it. We on the contrary, hearkening to the voice that spoke as never man spoke, hear his declaration that our hope is in him as the "resurrection and the life." (John 11:25.) We hear him telling us that the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth. (John 5:28, 29.) It is reasonable.

We can reason together with God when we take the voice of his Son and reject the voices of the "dark ages." From this standpoint—that a resurrection has been provided through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus—the whole matter of death and eternal life is clarified before our mental view. We see the condemnation through Adam, and how death is justly reigning throughout the whole world of mankind ever since. We see the death of Christ, the Just for the unjust; that he has bought us with his precious blood, that he has paid our ransom price, and that as a result, in God's due time, all shall come forth from the power of the tomb. We see the keys of death and of the grave in the hands of the one who has purchased all; we rejoice in the proclamation of the coming blessing to all the families of the earth, through a release from this power of sin and Satan and death.

We hearken still more intently to the voice of him that speaketh as never man spake, and hear him assure us that there are two resurrections—one a life resurrection, the other a judgment resurrection. We hear him tell us that only those who through faith and obedience attain a standing with God under the cover of the precious sacrifice will be counted the good, the justified, and only they will share in the life resurrection, because only they will have passed their trial and be counted worthy of life. All others will come forth to the judgment resurrection to be disciplined under the Kingdom, to receive stripes in proportion to the wilfulness in which they have cooperated in their own downfall into mental, moral and physical degradation, but to be helped by the stripes, to be corrected in righteousness, if they will, and to be brought step by step out of the sin-and-death conditions, up, up, up, by resurrection power of Jesus, to the full perfection, to all that was lost in Adam.

Well may we rejoice in this one who spake as never man spake, in him who has the words of eternal life. Respecting those words the Apostle Peter says, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature." (2 Pet. 1:4.) Ah, yes! wonderful words of life, tell them over again, think them over again, rejoice in them more and more—let them fill our hearts and be in our mouths a new song of the loving-kindness of our God, whose tender mercies are over all his works.

Of these words, which the Master spake as never man spake, the Apostle further declares that he spake of our salvation. He says, "Which salvation began to be spoken by our Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." Not only was there no

eternal life in our race, and no hope for attaining any except through Jesus, but all of the promises of the past would have been powerless without his work of atonement, and not until he came was it known how our redemption was to be accomplished. True, the Lord had provided various types and shadows in the numerous sacrifices of the past which illustrated the fact that without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin; but they could not be understood until the antitype had come. Then he brought life to light and immortality to light—life for the world, eternal life to be conferred during the Millennial age—immortality for his Church, his Bride, his little flock, his joint-heirs. These were never brought to light before; they were faintly seen and vaguely described, but it remained for the great teacher to set forth before us the salvation which God had proffered through him. Thank God that our hearts have made our lips more and more tell forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. Through faith in him we are already reckoned risen to walk in newness of life, and through him by and by the Father will raise us up by his own power, that we shall be like him and share his glory, honor and immortality.

JULY 11

Whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but ... keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not—1 John 5:18.

So long as the heart (the mind, the will) is holy, in harmony with God and righteousness, that is to say, so long as the ... spirit of holiness continues in us, the new mind cannot approve of sin, but must and will be its opponent. Even though many of the battles fought are with the members of our fallen and weak human nature, their appetites and desires, we nevertheless ... are separate and distinct from the flesh; and the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh are not imputed to the new mind in Christ Jesus, but are reckoned as covered, hidden under the merit of our Lord's redemptive sacrifice—Z '99, 58 (R 2438).

A new creature is begotten of God. It is a spiritual quality in every organ of the brain, enabling each organ to co-operate in willing God's will. The new creature, therefore, as the will to will and to do God's will, never sins. This new creature keeps guard over all the thoughts, motives, words and deeds, to subject them to God's will, and this prevents the Adversary from contaminating the one begotten of God—P '35, 102.

Parallel passages: John 1:13; 3:3-5; Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:5, 23; Rom. 7:17; Jude 20, 21, 24, 25; Luke 22:31, 32; Rom. 16:20; 2 Cor. 4:4; 11:3; John 8:44; 1 John 2:13, 14.

Hymns: 136, 183, 21, 82, 78, 130, 184.

Poems of Dawn, 50: *God Knows*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 237 (R 5742).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What resulted therefrom?

GOD KNOWS

GOD knows—not I—the devious way
Wherein my faltering feet must tread,
 Before into the light of day
My steps from out this gloom are led.
And since my Lord the path doth see,
 What matter if 'tis hid from me?

God knows—not I—how sweet accord
Shall grow at length from out this clash
Of earthly discords which have jarred
 On soul and sense; I hear the crash,
 Yet feel and know that on His ear
Breaks harmony—full, deep and clear.

God knows—not I—why, when I'd fain
Have walked in pastures green and fair,
The path He pointed me hath lain
Through rocky deserts bleak and bare.
I blindly trust—since 'tis His will—
This way lies safety, that way ill.

His perfect plan I may not grasp,
Yet I can trust Love Infinite,
And with my feeble fingers clasp
The hand which leads me into light.
My soul upon His errand goes—
The end I know not—but God knows.

R5742: RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

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

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

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

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

will. The offering is then slain by the High Priest, our Lord Jesus, the acceptance of the Father being marked immediately by the begetting of the Spirit.

Just what God does at this juncture we do not fully understand. We do not understand clearly what a natural begetting is, though we have better means of understanding the natural begetting than of understanding the spiritual begetting. As to the spiritual begetting, we have the Divine expression that it is the starting of a new life. The one receiving it gains a supernatural illumination. Thereafter he is a changed person, a new person, a New Creature. He is now *in Christ Jesus*. He has new hopes, aims and objects, and is more and more enabled to apprehend spiritual things as the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit operate upon his mind.

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

NEW CREATURE DOES NOT PRACTISE SIN

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

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

So we see the Apostle John's meaning—whoever is in the spirit-begotten condition, whoever has this embryo of the new nature, could not sin wilfully, could not take pleasure in sin, could not give himself over to sin. To do so would signify that he had lost this Holy Spirit, and that he had become unholy again. As St. Peter explains, it would be

like the sow that was washed returning to her wallowing in the mire. The Apostle John says that one begotten of the Holy Spirit will "keep himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not." He not only will not sin wilfully, but he will keep constantly on guard, watching himself, just as a watchman guards the castle or the city or the house. He watches all the doors, all the avenues of access.

THE NECESSITY FOR VIGILANCE

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

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

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

JULY 12

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed—John 8:36.

The true disciples, heeding the Word of the Great Teacher, and continuing in all things to be His pupils, are not only set free from superstitions and ignorance but also from the service of sin, and receive instead a correct appreciation of their own natural weaknesses and blemishes, and of the Divine mind—the Truth. In consequence, their freedom is one which blesses instead of injuring them; one which brings humility instead of pride and boastfulness; one which brings patience instead of anger; one which brings generosity and benevolence instead of spitefulness and selfishness; one which brings joy and peace instead of discontent and bitterness of spirit. Truly, the Son alone can make us free indeed—Z '99, 57 (R 2438).

The Son of God is the great Emancipator. He frees the most pitiable kind of slaves from the most oppressive kind of bondage (Satan's) at the hands of the most cruel kind of taskmasters (sin, error, selfishness, worldliness, death and hell). He gives them the best kind of glorious liberty, that of willing the will of God, exercised from the purest motives—faith, hope, love and obedience—unto life everlasting, and all this as a gift of His love, made possible by the most unique sacrifice and ministry recorded in the annals of the world's history—P '34, 95.

Parallel passages: Isa. 49:24-26; 61:1-3; 63:4; Luke 4:18; John 8:31-35; Rom. 7:22, 23; 8:2; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 3:28; 5:1; Col. 3:11; 1 John 1:7-9; Rev. 1:5; 5:9.

Hymns: 246, 54, 15, 132, 194, 255, 95.

Poems of Dawn, 98: *A Little Talk With Jesus*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 227 (R 5506).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in Christian freedom? How were they met? In what did they result?

A LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS

A LITTLE talk with Jesus,—
How it smoothes the rugged road!
How it seems to help me onward,
When I faint beneath my load!
When my heart is crushed with sorrow,
And mine eyes with tears are dim,
There is naught can yield me comfort
Like a little talk with Him.

I tell Him I am weary,
And I fain would be at rest;
But I still will wait His bidding,

For His way is always best.
Then His promise ever cheers me
'Mid all the cares of life:—
"I am come, and soon in glory
Will end thy toil and strife."

Ah, that is what I'm wanting,
His lovely face to see—
And I'm not afraid to say it,
I know He's wanting me.
He gave His life a ransom
To make me all His own,
And He'll ne'er forget His promise
To me, His purchased one.

The way is sometimes weary
To yonder nearing clime,
But a little talk with Jesus
Hath helped me many a time.
The more I come to know Him,
And all His grace explore,
It sets me ever longing
To know Him more and more.

R5506: THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

"If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free."—John 8:31, 32.

AT HIS FIRST Advent our Lord came to the Jewish nation, which was a House of Servants in covenant relationship with God. To these was to be granted the first privilege of becoming sons of God, and their blessing would be in proportion as they were faithful to the light that would come to them. Before they could become *sons* of God, however, it was necessary that Jesus should be their Redeemer, should make reconciliation for iniquity, and thus open up the way. This He had come to do, but He had not done it as yet. Whoever would come to understand the Divine purposes and arrangements, and act in harmony with them, should be made free, should be liberated from the condemnation resting upon them as Jews, from the results of the weaknesses of their flesh, and would be brought into full accord with God.

We can see that this great privilege also meant something more than all this. It meant something still higher—even joint-heirship with Messiah. But all these things were a hidden mystery as yet. They were known up to that time only by our Lord Himself; they were made clear to Him because He had been begotten of the Holy Spirit. There were many things hard to be understood. Jesus spoke in parables, in dark sayings, for the very

purpose of making the Way of Life then opened up a "narrow way." And so we read in the Scriptures that some said of the Master's words: "This is a hard saying! Who can hear it?" Who could believe it?

The particularly hard saying referred to was that His "flesh was meat indeed, and His blood was drink indeed," and that by eating and drinking of these they might gain eternal life. And so we read that after this many forsook Him and abandoned the thought of being His disciples, so blinded were they to their own interests. Instead of following on patiently, they said, This is all foolishness! We do not understand it!

Jesus was anticipating this condition of things when He spoke these words to them. He would put them on their guard. It was as though He would say, You have declared that "never man spake like this man!" Already you have heard words very different from the words of the Scribes and Pharisees. Now continue; hold on for a little while. If you will do this, you will grasp the situation in due time. Exercise faith—exercise patience. You have begun to have interest in these things, and as you fully become My disciples you will be granted a knowledge of the Truth. And this Truth will make you free; it will give you all the blessings and privileges that come to the children of God. Greatly blessed were the few who took heed to the Master's counsel!

BLESSINGS BEGUN AT PENTECOST

These words of Jesus were not addressed especially to the twelve Apostles, but to the Jews in general who were sympathetically drawn. Nicodemus may have been one of these; he was inclined to stumble over the spiritual things; he could not see how one could be born again. The Holy Spirit was not yet given, we read, "because Jesus was not yet glorified." St. Paul tells us that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Corinthians 2:14.

But some saw enough in Jesus to attract them to Him. These, in honesty of heart, said, Surely His words are true, and His criticisms of our nation are true. We do not see how He is going to fulfil these prophecies; but He says to us, Hold on and you will understand later. And some did hold on—"above five hundred brethren." As Jesus had promised, these were given the privilege of becoming disciples indeed.

When Pentecost came, the Heavenly Father received all who had continued in Jesus' Word, and they were begotten of the Holy Spirit into the Lord's family. Then they began to see spiritual things—they were illuminated. All the light did not come at once, but they progressed as the days and years went by. They were indeed Christ's true disciples—such followers of Jesus as the Father was pleased to recognize. They were not only made free from the condemnation of the Law Covenant, but made free from sin and death. They received a new *will*, a new *mind*, and the Holy Spirit showed "the deep things of God" unto them.

In His prayer to the Father, our Lord said, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." By the word Truth Jesus was here referring to the Father's revelation of His Divine Plan through the Holy Spirit; and the sanctifying influence would come through the knowledge of that Truth, received into an honest heart. This sanctification, or setting apart, strictly speaking, began with the Pentecostal blessing, and still continues to operate. And this sanctification progresses as long as the individual allows the Truth to have its designed influence in his life. We see a difference between our text and the one just quoted. In the latter case it is the Word of Jehovah, and in the former it is the Word of Jesus. Jesus says, If you continue in *My* Word, you will become more and more acquainted with the Heavenly Father, and will know His will, His way, His method; thus you will know His Word. All things are working out His will—the will of the Father—and seeing and doing the will of the Father, the sanctifying process will follow. Jesus says to all, "I am the Way; I am the Truth; I am the Life." I am the only One through whom you can come to the Father and become His sons; and abiding in Me will bring you the grand consummation.

THE CHANNEL OF ALL OUR BLESSINGS

We perceive, then, that Christ is the sufficiency which God has provided for us in all respects. "He of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness [Justification], and Sanctification, and Redemption [Deliverance]." (1 Corinthians 1:30.) We first receive, through learning of His sacrificial work on our behalf, necessary wisdom, instruction and guidance, by which we may through His merit come to the Father. And He is our Wisdom all along the way. The Heavenly Father had a glorious Plan before the foundation of the world; this was hinted in Eden, just after the fall. In due time He gave a further intimation of that Plan through Enoch and through Abraham, and still later through Moses and the Prophets. But how the world was to benefit from it was all hidden, all kept secret.

Not until Jesus came was the way of life opened up, made manifest. "He [Christ] hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." The essence of the Gospel was never even declared, much less known, before Jesus came. The Apostle Paul says that this salvation "at the first *began* to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him." (Hebrews 2:3.) Our Lord *began* to speak it; but the secret of the Gospel, its *Mystery*, was not fully revealed until after Pentecost. It was not until after Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit that He Himself began to comprehend it clearly—not until then did He begin to set before us the way of life and immortality. And even then His words were parabolic, and it was not until His followers were begotten of the Holy Spirit that they were able to enter into "the deep things of God."

JESUS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

In addition to His being our Wisdom, Jesus becomes our Righteousness. He covers our sins. He imputes to us His own righteousness, the merit of His own sacrifice. And this imputation brings us to a condition of complete righteousness—not *actual*, but reckoned, which God is pleased to recognize in the way He has arranged.

Our Lord does not become the Righteousness of everybody—not even of those who give some heed to His Words—but to those alone who come to the point of full submission to the Father's will. And there is a good reason for this; for only those who offer themselves to become members of His Body during this Gospel Age, only the spirit-begotten, would be profited by a justification by faith. Others would be condemned to death by it now. In the next Age, others will come to Him. But only those who come to Him now, to walk in His steps, have a faith-justification.

JESUS OUR SANCTIFICATION

The step of consecration on the part of those who become Jesus' disciples is in the Scriptures called *sanctification*. But it is not the same sanctification which comes to us through Him. God says, "Sanctify yourselves, and I will sanctify you"—that is, Set yourselves apart, and then I will set you apart; I will put you into this place where you desire to come. So, to all of us who come to the Father through Him, Jesus not only becomes our Justification, but through Him we also have Sanctification—the complete setting apart. We are accepted in Him, and His grace and Advocacy enable us to attain complete and final sanctification.

God sets us apart by begetting us of the Holy Spirit to the new nature and making us prospective members of the Royal Priesthood—prospective members of the Body of the Anointed One. This is Scripturally called a foretaste, or "earnest," of our inheritance, which will be experienced to the full when we are changed from the human to the spirit nature—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." But this "earnest of our inheritance" is given us with the intention of our growing in the process of sanctification already begun in us until its completion. We attain this through Christ.

JESUS OUR DELIVERANCE

Those who make satisfactory progress will have in the resurrection full deliverance from sin, from all imperfections of the flesh, and from the flesh itself—full deliverance through the power of the First Resurrection. Christ thus becomes our Deliverance. We shall then attain the full completeness of sons of God on the Divine plane.

In all these things Christ is the Center; through Him alone can we obtain these blessings. While the Father gives them, they are given through His Son, who is the Father's Representative. Jesus received the Spirit of the Father and has shed it forth upon us. This is pictured in the type, in the anointing of the high priest. The holy anointing-oil was poured upon his head, and it ran down over his body. So we are anointed through our Head as members of the great High Priest.

"He who raised up Jesus from the dead will raise us up also by Jesus"; that is to say, Jesus will be the active agent. But there are certain features of the Divine Plan which Jesus will accomplish *in His own name*; for instance, the world's blessing and uplifting. While the Father is the Author of the entire Plan, yet this blessing comes to the world

exclusively through the sacrifice of the Son. Christ will do the work of the Millennial Age, and will then deliver mankind up to the Father.

But His work for the Church is different: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us." (1 Peter 1:3.) It is not the Son who has begotten us, though it is through the Son that we receive this Divine favor. The price, or cost, of obtaining this special Divine favor is the sacrifice of our lives. The particular thing which the Church receives more directly from the Son is *justification*. Yet this justification is *of* the Father, and it is not an *actual* justification, but an imputed justification. It is a special arrangement on the Father's part for us that we may come into His favor now in advance of the world—the First-fruits unto God and the Lamb.

Ours is a wonderful God, and His great Plan of the Ages is marvelous beyond expression! Our hearts rejoice that our eyes have been anointed to see these glorious things hidden to the many during this Gospel Age, knowing that all the blind eyes shall yet be opened, and all the deaf ears be made to hear!

"THEY TURN THEIR EARS FROM THE TRUTH"

The Lord's preaching always produced two opposite effects upon the promiscuous multitudes that heard Him: He attracted one class and repelled the other. Those who were full of pride and conceit, and who preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil and because they realized that if they admitted the light of Truth they must of necessity conform their characters to it—all such were repelled by the teachings of Christ. And if the Lord had undertaken the work of the ministry according to the methods pursued today, depending for support on the good will and contribution of the people, that support would often have been very meager, or at least, very fluctuating.

On some occasions multitudes received His testimony, but later deserted Him, walking no more with Him as He continued to enforce the lessons of Divine Truth. (Luke 4:14-29.) Sometimes the multitudes hung upon His teachings, "wondering at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth"; yet again and again they forsook Him, only the merest handful remaining.—John 6:60-69.

What consternation would follow in the various churches of today, if the professed ministers of the Gospel should follow the Master's example in similarly declaring the whole counsel of God! How quickly they would become unpopular and be charged with breaking up the churches! The congregations of the great temples of fashion ostensibly dedicated to the service of God and the teachings of Christ would not stand it. They go there to be entertained with pleasing and eloquent discourses from titled gentlemen who presumably know the tastes and ideas of the congregation, and will preach to please them. They are quite willing to pay their money for what they want, but they do not want the Truth.

Those who followed the Lord only for a little season and then forsook Him, of course then ceased to be His disciples and were no longer so recognized; nor did they presume

longer to claim to be His disciples. A disciple is a pupil, a learner; and when a man ceases to be a student and pupil of Christ, the great Teacher, he is no longer His disciple. This was very manifest when the Lord was present, and when His name was one of reproach among men; but later, when His presence was withdrawn, and when His doctrines were unscrupulously mixed with human philosophies to such an extent as to divest them of reproach, and to make them really void, then men began to claim to be His disciples. This was long after His doctrines had been utterly repudiated.

THE REWARD OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

The Lord's expression, "Then are ye My disciples *indeed*," implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be Jesus' sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: "If ye continue in *My Word*, then are ye My disciples indeed." The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord.

It is a blessed thing to take the first step in the Christian life—that of acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer and Lord and yielding ourselves fully to the Father through Him. But the reward of this step depends entirely upon our *continuance* in His Word, in the attitude of true disciples. The disposition of human pride is to wander away from the simplicity of Divine Truth and to seek out new theories and philosophies of our own, or to pry into those of others who desire to be considered wise and great according to this world's estimate.

The reward of continued discipleship is, "Ye shall *know* the Truth"—not, Ye shall be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth." (2 Timothy 3:7.) Here is the mistake many make; failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies, which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. To those who seek for Truth among these human theories, there is no promise that they shall ever find it, and they never do.

Divine Truth is found only in the Divinely appointed channel—our Lord, the Apostles and the Prophets. To continue in the doctrines set forth in the inspired writings of the Prophets and the Apostles, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and to faithfully conform our characters to them, is what is implied in "continuing in the Word" of the Lord. And this is entirely compatible with the heeding of all the helps which the Lord raises up from among our brethren in the Body of Christ, as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. (Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14.) The Lord always has raised up, and will to the end raise up, such helps for the edification of the Body of Christ; but it is the duty of every member carefully to prove their teaching by the infallible Word.

If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the Truth," be "established in the Present Truth" [the Truth due], and "be rooted and grounded in the Truth"; we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us"; to "earnestly contend for the Faith once delivered to the

saints"; to "war a good warfare"; to "witness a good confession" and to firmly "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our conflict.

We do not come into the knowledge of the Truth at a single bound; but gradually, step by step, we are led into the Truth. Every step is one of sure and certain progress leading to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in established character.

The Truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power, bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue and every grace, which time and cultivation ripen to a glorious maturity.

Not only shall the true disciple thus know the Truth and be sanctified by it, but the Lord also said, "The Truth shall make you free." Those who have received the Truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance, superstition and fear. Its health-restoring beams penetrate the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorate the whole being; it quickens our mortal bodies.

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORDS GIVETH LIGHT"

Sin cannot endure the light of Truth; and those who continue to live in sin when a sufficiency of light has been received to manifest its deformity must inevitably lose the Light, because they are unworthy of it. Ignorance and superstition must vanish before this Light. And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions, however, are still under the blinding influence of error. Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation, because they hypocritically claim Divine appointment; and they have been made to fear God as a vengeful Tyrant, consigning the vast majority of His creatures to an eternity of torment. Thank God! We who have received the Truth have awakened from that horrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken. The Light has scattered our darkness.

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see coming upon the whole world as the great civil and ecclesiastical systems that have so long ruled the world are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of anarchy and terror; the alarm of all is increasing as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more apparent. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God as to the terrors of the conflict through which the world will soon have to pass, the true disciples of Christ who abide in His Word are not afraid, but rejoice; for they know that God's object in permitting this mighty storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world, and that after the storm, there shall come, by His providence, an *abiding peace*. Instructed in the Truth, they realize the necessities of the situation, and have confidence in the Divine providence

that can make even the wrath of man to praise Him, make all things work together for good.

Blessed promise!—"If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free." Dearly beloved, having received this wondrous favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines but bringing forth its blessed fruitage in our lives? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of the glorious Light by our loyalty and faithfulness, working out our salvation with fear and trembling.

JULY 13

Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness—2 Cor. 11:14, 15.

If it be asked, How could Satan be interested in doing a good work? we answer, the Adversary thus assumes the garment of an angel of light and mercy, not to lead to the Light of the World—not to lead to the cross of Christ—not to lead to the Bible—but to lead away from these, to another hope of salvation, and to another teacher, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. And be it remembered that our Lord's words indicate that when matters come to this condition, where Satan will cast out Satan and heal disease, it is a marked evidence that his throne is tottering to its fall—that, so to speak, this is the last extremity of the Adversary's efforts to deceive—Z '99, 62 (R 2669).

In Satan we have a foe testful of our hearts. In conflict with him, we, alone and unassisted would, because of his great cunning, be as pygmies in the hands of a giant. So cunning is he that he can make good appear evil and evil appear good; and for his own selfish purposes he causes his servants to appear as servants of righteousness, so that he might, if possible, deceive the very elect. Hence we should be ever vigilant against his and his servants' machinations, which are always deceitful—P '33, 80.

Parallel passages: Gen. 3:1-5, 13-15; John 8:44; 2 Cor. 11:3, 4, 13; 2 Thes. 2:9; Rev. 12:9; 20:1-3, 7-9; Acts 20:29-31; Rom. 16:17; Gal. 1:8; Phil. 3:18, 19; 2 Tim. 3:1-9; 2 Pet. 2; 1 John 4:1-6; 2 John 7-10; Jude 4-19; Rev. 2:2, 13-15, 20-24.

Hymns: 49, 22, 296, 311, 315, 332, 343.

Poems of Dawn, 109: *My Prayer*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 341 (R 5799).

Questions: Have Satan and his servants sought this week to deceive me? How? Did I succumb or overcome? How? With what results?

MY PRAYER

BEING perplexed, I say,
Lord, make it right!
Night is as day to Thee,
Darkness is light.
I am afraid to touch
Things that involve so much.
My trembling hand may shake,
Mine unskilled hand may break;
Thine can make no mistake.

Being in doubt, I say,

Lord, make it plain!
Which is the true, safe way,
Which would be vain?
I am not wise to know,
Nor sure of foot to go;
My poor eyes cannot see
What is so clear to Thee—
Lord, make it clear to me.

R5799: WHY GOD HAS PERMITTED SATAN'S LYING DECEPTIONS

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

GOD'S children realize that this text is to them full of deep significance and import. It can scarcely be considered too often or be too strongly emphasized. The word *prove* has the sense of test, demonstrate. The words were addressed to Israel, God's chosen people who had entered into a special Covenant with Him, agreeing to be His people, set apart from the heathen nations by whom they were surrounded, to be a holy nation, Jehovah's peculiar treasure; and He had agreed to be their God. As they had promised to obey all God's requirements, so it was proper that the Lord should prove them. He did not prove the heathen nations; for they had made no covenant with Him and were not in relationship to Him as His servants. But Israel must be proved. The character of their testing is shown in the context. This proving would be accomplished by permitting false teachers, false prophets, to be amongst them.

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

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

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

GOD'S WORD HIS PEOPLE'S GUIDE

We are not informed regarding the power used by the fallen angels in their miracle working and cures, but we know that it is not from God. It is for the Lord's children to remember that He has given us His Word, and that He reveals Himself through this Word. It is sufficient that He warns us against having anything to do with these occult powers. Examples of such warnings are found in the following Scriptures: Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; 2 Kings 17:17; 23:24; 1 Chronicles 10:13; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Isaiah 8:19; Jeremiah 27:9, 10; 29:8, 9; Luke 8:26-35; Acts 16:16-18.

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

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

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

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

The Apostle Paul, in referring to the close of this Gospel Age, declares that false doctrines will be multiplied. He tells us why many will be misled and deceived. He says, "They received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe *the lie* [Genesis 3:4]: that they all might be condemned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.) The intimation here seems to be that those who have come into touch with God and with His Truth will be so attracted by the Truth that it will be like the needle attracted to the pole. God is the great Pole. Those really drawn to Him will be difficult to swerve. Although a magnetic needle may be temporarily diverted from the pole, yet it will surely swing back and point in the right direction. And so it is with God's true people. They have an affinity for the Truth, they are influenced by it, magnetized by it, drawn.

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

FALLEN SPIRITS ESPECIALLY ACTIVE TODAY

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

Amongst barbarians there is no reason why the spirits should try to bring new light; for these are asleep and already under the power of delusion and false doctrines. But amongst the enlightened and civilized, thought and investigation are being aroused in this

the beginning of the great Day of the Lord. Despite the blinding influences of Satan and the hosts of fallen spirits many of these are awakening, and it is here that Satan is kept busy.

Amongst mankind today the old time necromancy and incantations will not do; their intellects are too alert to be much or long hoodwinked by these things. Even the deceptions of Spiritism in its manifestations of superhuman powers through tipping, writing, spirit-photography, voices, etc., all for the purpose of proving human immortality and the ability of the dead to commune with those on earth, are too gross and foolish to deceive and captivate a large proportion of intelligent people, and especially God's consecrated ones, the very class Satan is most anxious to stumble. Consequently there are changes in progress—new "garments of light" are assumed continually; and every feature of Present Truth sent by God as "meat in due season" for His saints is promptly *counterfeited* to "deceive if possible the Very Elect."

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

DELUSIONS OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THEOSOPHY

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

The name "Christian Science" is a misnomer for the tenets of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy. Her teachings are devoid of scientific elements, and the word "Christian" attached as part of the name given her theories is only calculated by Satan to deceive and destroy God's people. To Christian Scientists Christ is not a Savior, nor was a Savior needed. Christ was only a good man, a Christian Scientist, who but imperfectly understood the new science which He introduced, but which in these latter times has been perfectly and fully set forth by the late Mrs. Eddy, of Boston. It has for its trademark, so to speak, "All is life; *there is no death!*" Thus they declare Satan's old falsehood started in Eden, "Ye shall *not* surely

die." Jesus declared that Satan "was a liar from the beginning and abode not in the truth," not from his own beginning, but from man's beginning.

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

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

In harmony with the philosophy of Socrates and Plato (while denying these as the authors or even the burnishers of their doctrine, and claiming that these Greek philosophers got their information, as *they* now get it, direct from God by communion and intuition), Theosophy claims not only that man will live forever future, but that he has lived forever past. It appeals to the weak-minded with the question, "Have you never seen places that seemed strangely familiar the first time you visited them? Those were places you had seen *before* your present existence began." And, as of old, Satan may sometimes assist a sluggish imagination with a dream. Theosophy holds that death is not death, but a new birth; and that each individual will be reborn again and again until he has developed sufficiently the Divine nature; and that then he will be reabsorbed into God for eternity.

MAN'S WISDOM IS FOOLISHNESS WITH GOD

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

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

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

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

SATAN'S LIE THE BASIS OF FALSE DOCTRINES

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

The strength of these delusions lies in the grave errors mixed with truths long held by Christian people, because of the "falling away" from the pure faith of the Apostolic

Church, foretold in the Scriptures. Among these errors none is designed to open the heart and mind to these delusive and destructive theories of today more effectually than the general belief of the first lie—"Ye shall *not* surely die." The general acceptance of this lie results from a failure to understand the Bible doctrine concerning *life* and *immortality*, which were brought to light by our Lord Jesus through His Gospel of salvation from sin by His Ransom-sacrifice.

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

ALL BUT "VERY ELECT" TO BE DECEIVED

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

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

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

The doing of many wonderful works is one of the old tricks of Satan and his evil hosts. If disease and death are to a considerable extent under Satan's control during the reign of evil (Hebrews 2:14), why might he not, in his present emergency, when his fall is so near, reverse his methods of working and do some works of healing, thereby to clinch

his errors and deceptions and to re-blind some whose eyes have been gradually opening under the light of the dawning Millennial Day, the Day of Christ?

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

THE FAITHFUL SOON TO SHINE FORTH

These various errors, "doctrines of demons," are gathering out of God's Kingdom "all that offend, and them which do iniquity" (and these constitute the great mass); while the faithful, who are to receive the Kingdom and be joint-heirs with Christ in His great Messianic Reign now about to be inaugurated, alone will stand. (Eph. 6:11-13.) When this separation is complete—and we believe it is now almost accomplished—the fire of the great Time of Trouble will make general havoc of present arrangements—social, financial, political, ecclesiastical. Then all errors and falsehoods in religion will go down forever. Then the Lord's faithful Little Flock, having received immortality and the Divine nature, "shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father," seated with Christ in His Throne. (Revelation 3:21.) For a thousand years they shall reign over the world, for the scattering of all ignorance and blindness and the uplifting of all the families of the earth, the living and the dead.

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

JULY 14

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice—Eph. 4:31.

From his high standpoint of appreciation of the Divine law, the advanced Christian sees that in the Lord's sight hatred is *murder*, slander is *assassination*, and the destruction of a neighbor's good name is *robbery* and rapine. And any of these things done in the Church, among the professed people of God, is doubly evil—the assassination and robbery of a *brother*. The only exception to this rule, "Speak evil of no man," would come in where we might know of an absolute necessity for making known an evil—where the relating of the evil would be contrary to our heart's wishes, and only mentioned because of necessity—because of love for others who, if not informed, might be injured—Z '99, 71 (R 2442).

Bitterness, wrath, anger, evil-speaking and malice are works of the flesh. Therefore, it behooves saints to put them aside. We should exercise faith, hope, love and persistent determination as well as the cleansing power of the Word against them. Let us by these good qualities seek to detach our sentiments and divert our attention from, and restrain, displace and become impervious to, them—P '32, 95.

Parallel passages: Rom. 12:14, 18-21; Col. 3:8, 13, 19; Titus 3:2; Jas. 3:5-18; 4:11; 1 Pet. 2:1, 23; 3:9; 1 Cor. 13; Eph. 4:26, 32; 5:1, 2; 2 Cor. 3:12-18.

Hymns: 194, 130, 198, 215, 95, 196, 165.

Poems of Dawn, 199: "*So As By Fire.*"

Tower Reading: Z '11, 45 (R 4759).

Questions: What experiences of this week were connected with this text? How were they met? What were the results?

"SO AS BY FIRE"

I SOMETIMES feel so passionate a yearning
For spiritual perfection here below,
This vigorous frame with healthful fervor burning,
Seems my determined foe.

So actively it makes a stern resistance,
So cruelly it sometimes wages war
Against the higher spiritual existence,
Which I am striving for.

It interrupts my soul's intense devotions;
Some hope it strangles at its very birth

With a swift rush of violent emotions
Which link me to the earth.

It is as if two mortal foes contended
Within my bosom in a deadly strife;
One for the loftier aims Jesus intended,
One for the "Mammon" life.

And yet I know this very war within me,
Which brings out all my will-power and control;
This very conflict yet through Christ shall win me
The loved and longed-for goal.

And when in the immortal ranks enlisted,
Sometimes I wonder if we shall not find
That not for deeds alone, but also what's resisted,
Our places were assigned.

R4759: TAKING HEED TO OUR HEARTS

"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice."—Ephesians 4:31.

THIS list of *dis-graces* seems to have a connection or relationship, the one to the other, and usually, it is presumed, the relationship is inbred. The Apostle speaks in one place of a danger of having a root of bitterness spring up, and thereby many being defiled. In this case he seems to indicate how defilement grows from such a root of bitterness, and what would be the evil results from permitting such a root to grow. Bitterness is frequently represented by brackish water—not pure water, but alkaline, unpalatable. In the text under consideration it seems to represent first the heart condition. And so, if the fountain become defiled or impure, the thoughts, words and actions will be impure—brackish.

The thought seems to be to take heed to our hearts—not to have an ungenerous sentiment. And if such intrude, it must be immediately repulsed, just as we would resist anything contagious. And so we must resist everything of bitterness of spirit, not only anger toward a person, but even a disposition to criticize, or find fault with anything he would do. This is the place to watch our hearts. As soon as the bitter spirit has found place, all the faults of that person will be exaggerated and all his good qualities minimized. Then would come an angry feeling, a bitter spirit of opposition. The angry feeling persisted in would immediately lead to hatred for the individual.

The person would not merely feel indignant, but the feeling would grow to a positive dislike. It is the growing of a feeling of bitterness which will develop into a plant which will do much harm. Next would come the disposition to speak evil of that person.

Naturally that which people do not love is that which they hate. And then comes the condition of malice, a resentful feeling—not only willingness to speak evil, but a willingness to do them some injury, and to feel glad if some injury befalls them. And thus the evil goes on.

The influence of all this is to stifle the New Creature, to mortify the New Creature. As every victory of the spirit over the flesh is a victory of the New Creature over the old creature, so any victory of the flesh over the spirit is a victory of the old creature over the New Creature.

THE SCRIPTURES ARE A MIRROR

To get a proper view of ourselves seems to be a most necessary thing to any reformation movement in connection with ourselves. It was not until we saw ourselves without strength that we appreciated the great offer of God to draw us to himself, reconciling us through the merit of his Son. The Scriptures are a mirror. So if we are living in the right attitude it will be proper to take a look into the mirror every day and see what manner of persons we are. Our Lord's prayer is, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

We are to be in a right attitude of mind. The very suggestion, Is there anyone against whom I have trespassed, or who has trespassed against me, ought to be enough, so that if we find any trace of unforgiveness we should eradicate it, put it away. The roots of bitterness would not only be put away, but hindered, if the very first sign of such a feeling were heeded and dealt with. If any one found that he had gotten into such a condition of heart, he should think, How does the Lord view such a condition; how impossible it would be for him to have love for one who has such a disposition? Anyone who really loves God would be so shocked at the picture he would thus get in the looking-glass of God's Word that he would immediately want to ask forgiveness and go forthwith to the one he had wronged. If the wrong had proceeded to anger, evil-speaking, then this should all be overcome, nullified. If the matter had gone so far, and no one else knew it, then this would be the end of the matter.

But since anger and bitterness are entirely out of order, the flesh should be humiliated in some manner. For instance, on going to the person one had been acting bitterly against the latter should be told that he had thought bitterly of him, but that he should have left the matter in God's hand. It is our belief that some make a mistake in not giving themselves a correction in righteousness. "Well," they may say, "I will stop it and not do this thing again." When that is done, it is our opinion that the flesh is being fostered and encouraged. A special blessing comes to those who chasten themselves, judge themselves. As the Apostle says, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord."—I Cor. 11:31.

In this connection we are reminded of the story that is told of a man who was driving along the road and saw a beggar and then said, "I will give this man twenty-five cents; it is Christmas morning." Then he thought, "I won't; I will give him a penny." As this

thought came he thought how mean he was. He thought that he should have given him the quarter, should have allowed the generous impulse to have sway. Then he said to himself, "Give that man a dollar—make it four-fold." So he gave him a dollar, and was out seventy-five cents.

Using that same principle or illustration, we believe that it is most advisable for the Lord's people to judge themselves—not after the manner of our Catholic friends, who would say, "Now go and pray so many hours," or, "Wear something uncomfortable," or "Take a whip and lash your back." But it would be wise to judge ourselves in a more rational way. A certain kind of penance tends to produce fruit of an acceptable kind.

JULY 15

Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor ... and have not love, it profiteth me nothing—1 Cor. 13:3.

In our ministrations to others we are not to forget that money is not the only thing of which people are sorely in need—some need love and sympathy who do not need money. Our Lord was one of these; His own heart, full of love, found comparatively little companionship in the more or less sordid minds of even the noblest of the fallen race represented among His Apostles. In Mary He seemed to find the depth of love and devotion which was to Him an odor of sweet incense, of refreshment, of reinvigoration, a tonic; and Mary apparently appreciated, more than did others, the lengths and breadths of the Master's character. She not only delighted to sit at His feet to learn of Him but also delighted, at great cost, to give Him some manifestation of her devotion, her love—Z '99, 77 (R 2447).

The Apostle's words imply the possibility of giving without charity and as we think of the matter, we recognize the truth of his statement from the fact that some give for vainglory, some for show, some for profit and some from envy and strife. Instead of such giving benefiting, it positively depraves character. In order to bless both him who gives and him who receives, giving must flow from Divine love—P '26, 95.

Parallel passages: John 13:34; 1 Cor. 13:1, 2, 4-13; 16:14; 2 Cor. 9:7; Matt. 6:1-4; 7:22, 23; Prov. 17:9; Gal. 5:6; 1 Thes. 4:9; 2 Thes. 1:3; 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Pet. 4:8; 1 John 3:14-18.

Hymns: 170, 165, 166, 22, 201, 95, 105.

Poems of Dawn, 157: *I Was Longing to Serve My Master.*

Tower Reading: Z '16, 215 (R 5926).

Questions: From what motives did I do good this week? What was helpful or hindering therein? What were the circumstances and results?

I WAS LONGING TO SERVE MY MASTER

I WAS longing to serve my Master,
But, alas! I was laid aside
From the busy and happy workers,
Who toiled in the field so wide.
They were few, yes, few in number,
And I could not understand
Why I should be kept inactive,—
It was not as I had planned.

I was longing to serve my Master,
I knew that the work was great,

For me it was easy to labor,
But, oh, it was hard to wait;
To lie quite still and be silent,
While the song was borne to mine ear
Of the reapers with whom I had mingled
In the work to my heart so dear.

I was longing to serve my Master,
Oh, this was my one fond thought,
For this I was ever pleading,
When His footstool in prayer I sought;
And the seasons of sweet communion
Were few and far apart,—
Not of *Him* so much as His *service*,
Were the thoughts that filled my heart.

I was longing to serve my master,—
He led to a desert place
And there as we stopped and rested
His eyes looked down in my face,
So full of tender reproaching,
That filled me with sad surprise.
Did He think I had grudged my service
And counted it *sacrifice*?

"Oh, Master, I long to serve Thee,
The time is so short at best,
Let me go to the field," I pleaded,
"I care not to stay and rest!"
I knelt at His feet, imploring,
I gazed in His face above;
"My child," He said gently, "*your service*
Is nothing without your love."

I was longing to serve my Master,
I thought that His greatest care
Was to keep all His workers busy
In reaping the sheaves so fair.
But there on the lonely desert,
Afar from the busy scene,
It dawned on me slowly and sadly
Where the great mistake had been:

My mind was so full of *service*,
I had drifted from *Him* apart,
And he longed for the old confiding,

The union of heart with heart.
I sought and received forgiveness,
While mine eyes with tears were dim,
And now tho' the work is still precious,
The *first* place is kept for *Him*.

R5926: THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD

—1 Corinthians 13.—

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

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

—Verse 13.

LOVE is a quality which seems beyond the power of man to describe. The best that we can do is to describe its conduct. Those who possess this quality are able to appreciate it, but are not able to explain it; for it is of God—God-likeness in the heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts, permeating all the human attributes and seeking to control them.

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

THE "MORE EXCELLENT WAY"

The Church at Corinth had been founded for nearly five years, and had enjoyed a wide range of Divine providences. In addressing this Epistle to them, St. Paul was evidently considering well their needs, and seeking to minister to them the Divine Message of

grace. He may not have realized how great a work he was doing and how far-reaching would be the scope of his instructions. Perhaps it was better for himself that he did not know how important was his service to the entire Church of the Gospel Age. Such a knowledge might have made him heady—the very condition of things which the Lord was warding off by permitting him to have still the "thorn in the flesh."—2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

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

The gifts of the Spirit, which the Apostle discusses in the chapter preceding our lesson, took, with the early Church, the place of other blessings which we now enjoy. They had no Bibles, as we have, no Concordances, no helps in Bible study. Therefore they needed the miraculous "gift of tongues" to draw them together once a week to consider the Lord's Message. They needed that the Message should come in this miraculous manner, in order that they might the better appreciate it and realize that it was of the Lord, not of themselves. This made opportunity for another gift, "the interpretation of tongues." Thus by the various gifts of the Holy Spirit they were drawn together and edified—built up—until such times as the books of the New Testament gradually accumulated. After the death of the Apostles and the consequent cessation of the gifts, these Divine providences of the written Word were quite sufficient, as the Apostle here sets forth.

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

SUPERIORITY OF THE TONGUE OF LOVE

Boldly the Apostle sets forth a great truth, which has come to be more and more recognized amongst Christian people everywhere, in proportion to their development in the character-likeness of their Redeemer, in proportion to their development as the children of God. St. Paul declares that not knowledge, not wisdom, not talents, not gifts

of any kind are the things to be sought for above all else, but that love should be most highly esteemed.

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

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

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

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

LOVE'S CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS

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

(1) Patience—"Love suffereth long"; (2) Kindness—"and is kind"; (3) Generosity—"Love envieth not"; (4) Humility—"Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up"; (5) Courtesy—"Doth not behave itself unseemly"; (6) Unselfishness—"Seeketh not her

own"; (7) Good Temper—"Is not easily provoked"; (8) Guilelessness—"Thinketh no evil"; (9) Honesty—"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth."

Despite all our pains and aches physical, what a wonderful world this would be if every member of the race were perfect in these qualities enumerated! However, it would be a useless waste of time to weep over what we have not, or to chide unnecessarily our neighbors and our friends because they, like ourselves, are not perfect in love. Indeed, the more we come to understand the teachings of the Bible, the more sympathy we may have with the poor "groaning creation." In one sense of the word our sympathies are all for this glorious standard which the Apostle holds up before us. We cannot sympathize with the wrong, the error, the evil. It is uncongenial to us. But, understanding the situation, we can sympathize with our fellows and with ourselves as being in a fallen condition, in which none can do the things he would.

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

NEW CREATURES ALONE ADDRESSED

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

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

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

LESSONS TAUGHT IN THIS SCHOOL

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

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

LOVE VIEWED IN COMPARISON

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

Viewed from another standpoint, these qualities might be interpreted thus: Love "beareth all things," as enduring pressure on every side without being crushed. It "believeth all things," as being full of faith in the Divine promises and arrangement, doubting nothing. It "hopeth all things," in the sense that this perfect love toward God enables the heart to be filled with confidence in the Almighty, in whose love it reposes. It "endureth all things," in the sense that the soul which is united to God by the link of love cannot be vanquished, cannot be overcome; for this is the Divine will and arrangement. God will not suffer any of these little ones to be tempted above that which they are able to bear, but will with every temptation provide a way of escape.—1 Corinthians 10:13.

The Apostle institutes a comparison between love and some of the gifts of the Spirit which the Corinthian Church properly held in high esteem. He would have us all see how infinitely higher love is than any of the gifts in which the early Church rejoiced. Love is

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

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

"GIFTS" VS. "FRUITS"

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

St. Paul points us further to the fact that we are living not merely for the present, but especially for the future; and that whatever will last us into the eternal future must certainly be the most important matter for us to acquire. He would have us see that to the Christian that most important thing is the Love which he has described in our Study. Our knowledge, our tongues, etc., of the present time are mere shadows of the great powers which will be ours if we attain to the glorious blessings of the First Resurrection. Whatever clearness of sight we have at the present time we shall then find to be darkness in comparison with the full light of the glorious Millennial Day. Where now we see as through an obscure glass, then we shall see face to face. Now we know in part; then we shall know even as we are known.

The Apostle would have the Church see that faith, hope and love—three fruits of the Holy Spirit—are far superior to all the gifts of the Spirit; for these fruits will abide

throughout the Age. Until the Millennial Morning we shall need faith, hope and love. We cannot get along without them. We cannot make any progress in the Master's footsteps without these qualities. But if we seek to contrast these imperfect qualities amongst themselves, he points out that the chiefest of these is love.

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

JULY 16

Be ye filled with the Spirit—Eph. 5:18.

The measure of our filling will correspond with the measure of our emptying of the spirit of self-will, and filling with the spirit of faith and obedience. And although the obedience cannot do otherwise than manifest itself in the daily life, nevertheless, it is the obedience of the *intention*, of the *will*, of the *heart*, that the Lord regards in His consecrated people. Hence some whose hearts are thoroughly loyal to the Lord may be pleasing to Him, while not the most pleasing to some of those with whom they come in contact; while others, "highly esteemed among men" because of outward moralities, may be an "abomination" in the sight of God, because of coldness or dishonesty of heart. Nevertheless, he that hath the new hope in him, and the new spirit, will seek to purify himself, not only in his thoughts but also in his words and deeds and all his affairs, inward and outward—Z '99, 92 (R 2455).

To be filled with the Spirit means, as disciples of Christ, to be dominated by the primary graces, harmoniously adjusted one to another. To receive such a filling implies a faithful use of the Spirit, Word and providences of God; and to remain so filled results not only in the crystallization of a character like Christ's but also in a fitness for the Kingdom with Him. Such Spirit-filling has the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come—P '36, 94.

Parallel passages: Mark 13:11; Luke 11:13; John 3:34; 7:38, 39; 14:16, 17, 26; Acts 4:8, 31; 5:32; 6:5; 9:31; 11:24; 13:52; Rom. 5:3-5; 8:1-16; 1 Cor. 2:4, 10-14; 3:16; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6, 17, 18; Gal. 5:16, 17, 22, 25.

Hymns: 198, 90, 91, 95, 128, 1, 201.

Poems of Dawn, 150: *The Watered Lilies*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 182 (R 5912).

Questions: Was I filled with the Spirit this week? How did it take place? What was helpful or hindersome? With what results?

THE WATERED LILIES

THE Master stood in His garden,
Among the lilies fair,
Which His own right hand had planted,
And trained with tend'rest care;

He looked at their snowy blossoms,
And marked with observant eye
That the flowers were sadly drooping,
For their leaves were parched and dry.

"My lilies need to be watered,"
The heavenly Master said;
"Wherein shall I draw it for them,
And raise each drooping head?"

Close to His feet on the pathway,
Empty, and frail, and small,
An earthen vessel was lying,
Which seemed of no use at all;

But the Master saw, and raised it
From the dust in which it lay,
And smiled, as He gently whispered,
"This shall do My work today:

"It is but an *earthen* vessel,
But it lay so close to Me;
It is small but it is empty—
That is all it needs to be."

So to the fountain He took it,
And filled it full to the brim;
How glad was the earthen vessel
To be of some use to Him!

He poured forth the living water
Over His lilies fair,
Until the vessel was empty,
And again He filled it there.

He watered the drooping lilies
Until they revived again;
And the Master saw with pleasure
That His labor had not been vain.

His own hand had drawn the water
Which refreshed the thirsty flowers;
But He used the earthen vessel
To convey the living showers.

And to itself it whispered,
As he laid it aside once more,
"Still will I lie in His pathway,
just where I did before.

"Close would I keep to the Master,

Empty would I remain,
And perhaps some day He may use me
To water His flowers again."

R5912: "THEY GO FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH"

"Be ye filled with the Spirit."—Ephesians 5:18.

LET us consider together briefly these words of the Apostle Paul, addressed to the Church of Christ, the saints. They do not apply to those who are merely empty professors, having a form of godliness only, but to those who have fully accepted the terms of God's Call, who have made the full consecration which alone brings us into the position of sons of God. These are the only ones who have the Spirit of God. These only are begotten from Above. But St. Paul would have us remember that it is not sufficient that we receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit, which comes to us at the very entrance of the narrow way. We should see that the Holy Spirit of God abounds in us more and more as we go on in our Heavenward course. The little spark of the new mind should grow stronger and brighter day by day.

If this development does not take place, if we merely stand still, we shall soon begin to lose ground; but if we progress, the natural man will gradually perish and the new man will thrive. Christian development should be steady and continuous. We are to be more and more filled with the Spirit. Sometimes the Lord's children say, "I do desire to be filled with the Lord's Spirit, but it seems as if my capacity is so small. I wish to have His Spirit in large measure, but I am unable to be what I long to be. I am not satisfied with my attainments." But if we are striving earnestly and prayerfully to become like Christ, let us not be discouraged. Let us remember that if we keep filled to our present capacity, this very infilling will enlarge our capacity. Then our earthen vessel will hold more of the Holy Spirit. This, in turn, still further enlarges our capacity; and so the expanding and filling goes on. Thus it is possible for us to be filled continually.

If it were an impossibility for us to be filled with the Spirit of God, the inspired Apostle would not have so instructed us. To the truly consecrated child of God this is possible, and not only possible, but obligatory. But as there are ebbs and flows in the ocean tides, so with our sense of the Lord's presence with us and His smile upon us. We may not always realize His presence to a large degree, but the Lord's saints must learn to walk by faith, to trust Him and His abiding love and presence with us even though physical ill health or untoward outward circumstances or conditions may at times cause a mental depression. We are to rejoice in the Lord even though there may be for a time more or less heaviness of spirit.

DAILY SELF-EXAMINATION NECESSARY

In speaking of the glorious salvation of the Church the Apostle Peter says, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through

manifold temptations [trials], that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (1 Peter 1:6-8.) And we can thus rejoice even in the midst of severe trials that cause pain and tears. There may be times when it will seem as though we are more filled with the Spirit than at other times. But if we are striving earnestly to daily walk with God, this will not really be the case. It may be only a difference of surface feelings. The true child of the Lord should steadily progress.

The spirit, or disposition, of the world will seek to invade the dominion of the New Creature. But the New Creature must be on the alert to see that his mind and body are freed from everything that would not be in fullest harmony with God's Holy Spirit. Each one should seek to judge himself in this respect. We may not judge one another, but we should judge ourselves. We are to see to it that the Spirit of the Lord is manifest in our words, our thoughts and our conduct. We should be able to do this more and more successfully, more and more continually, as we go on in the good way and grow in grace and knowledge. This we shall do if we are watching, praying, striving, day by day.

The Spirit of the Lord dwelling in us in fulness, as it should be, will cause our entire being to be so absorbed by the principles of righteousness laid down in the Lord's Word, to be so in love with the Heavenly things, Heavenly hopes, Heavenly prospects, that everything else will be of no value to us. And this will be more and more our blessed experience if we continue faithfully in the narrow way, if we "follow on to know the Lord."

But if, on the contrary, we find ourselves making provision for the flesh, making worldly plans; if we find ourselves inclined to lay up treasures on earth instead of in Heaven, we should take alarm, and should ask ourselves whether we are deficient, whether we are neglecting the means of grace—prayer alone with God, study of His Word, meditation upon the glorious things to which we have been called, watching ourselves as to our growth in the fruits of the Spirit. If we find that we are considerably controlled by the spirit of contention, we should ask ourselves, "Are we seeking to deal justly and equitably with others—to give them their rights and not to intrude upon them? Are we cultivating the love which is forbearing, forgiving and kind?"—2 Timothy 2:24; Ephesians 4:31, 32.

If we find after close introspection that we are in full sympathy with the spirit of love, and can see that we are gradually developing this crowning fruit of the Spirit, let us rejoice; for we should greatly deplore the matter if it were otherwise. If we find that we are controlled by this spirit of love, we may know that we are filled with the Spirit. This spirit of love will enlarge our hearts and minds, making us broader and nobler day by day.

But we need to continually watch and pray; for there is constant danger otherwise that we may be tripped up or stumbled either by our own faults or those of others. We are

never safe from being side-tracked unless we go often to the Throne of Grace; we cannot be filled unless we keep very close to the great Fountain from which our infilling comes. We must daily carry our earthen pitcher to this Heavenly Fountain to be replenished; for we are leaky vessels. We are not to feel discouraged if we do not find in ourselves the rapid growth that we desire to see. Strong, sturdy trees that can withstand the fiercest storms are not developed in a day. Their growth is a slow, steady process. We should show our loyalty to the Lord by renewed effort every time we fail. He is looking at us not to see if we are perfect in the flesh—for He knows that we are not and can never be—but to see whether or not we have the spirit of earnestness and loyalty which daily and hourly seeks to keep the body under and to cheerfully take up the cross.

BLESSED RESULTS OF SPIRIT'S INFILLING

The Christian is not to be like the worldling who seeks to drown his troubles and afflictions in drink or in pleasures, dissipations and frivolous diversions; but in every trouble he is to fly to the only true Source of solace and comfort and strength. This will drive away all anxiety and give him rest and peace even in the midst of trouble. Like the fabled halcyon, which built its nest and brought forth its birdlings in the midst of the sea, the true child of God can be at rest even amidst the billows and storms of life, and can prosper as a New Creature and accomplish all the good pleasure of God's will.

This unwavering trust in the Lord, this abiding rest of the soul, this zeal in God's service, is a matter of growth. "They go from strength to strength," the Psalmist declares of the inhabitants of Zion. "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear," said our Lord of this class. (Psalm 84:7; Mark 4:28.) Notwithstanding the difficulties of life, these can continue to make melody in their hearts unto the Lord. They rejoice no matter what may be the outward earthly conditions. They can smile even through their tears, knowing that, according to His promise, all things are working together for their good. To attain this development is to be filled with the Spirit; and each consecrated disciple of Christ should reach this plane.

Some Christian writer has well said: "Wherever there has been a faithful following of the Lord in a consecrated heart, several things have, sooner or later, inevitably followed. Meekness and quietness of spirit become in time the characteristics of the daily life. A submissive acceptance of the will of God, as it comes in the hourly events of each day, is manifested; pliability in the hands of God to do or to suffer all the good pleasure of His will; sweetness under provocation; calmness in the midst of turmoil and bustle; a yielding to the wishes of others [where there is no conflicting principle involved], and an insensibility to slights and affronts; absence of worry or anxiety; deliverance from care and fear—all these, and many other similar graces, are invariably found to be the natural outward development of that inward life which is 'hid with Christ in God.'"

"Jesus, my Lord, Thou art my life,
My rest in labor, strength in strife;
Thy love begets my love of Thee;

Thy fulness that which filleth me.

"Mine effort vain, my weakness learned,
Weary, from self to Christ I turned,
Content to let His fulness be
An unbought fulness unto me."

JULY 17

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee—Isa. 26:3.

This is not worldly peace, not the peace of indifference, not the peace of sloth, not the peace of self-indulgence, not the peace of fatalism; but it is the peace of Christ—"My peace." Looking back we can see that the Master preserved His peace with God under all conditions. It is a peace which implicitly trusts to the Divine wisdom, love, justice and power—a peace which remembers the gracious promise made to the Lord's faithful, that nothing shall by any means hurt His faithful, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. This peace can accept by faith whatever Divine providence permits, and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy, for the ultimate blessings which the Master has promised, and of which the present peace and joy are merely foretastes—Z '99, 95 (R 2455).

For the mind to be stayed on the Lord, implies not only justification and consecration but also a faithful compliance with their terms. To such and to such only does God promise perfect peace. Nor is this peace the rest of the heart and mind of their humanity; it is the peace of God that as consecrated ones they are privileged to enjoy—a peace that increases in length and depth and height and breadth in proportion to the thoroughness of their spirit of consecration—P '30, 79.

Parallel passages: Psa. 29:11; 119:165; Isa. 54:10, 13; John 14:27; Rom. 8:6; 15:13, 33; Eph. 2:14-17; Phil. 4:7, 9; Col. 1:20; 3:15; Heb. 4.

Hymns: 56, 109, 110, 244, 273, 233, 307.

Poems of Dawn, 178: *God's Perfect Peace*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 102 (R 5431).

Questions: Have I kept perfect peace this week? Why and how? What hindered or helped therein? With what results?

GOD'S PERFECT PEACE

LIKE a river glorious is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious in its glad increase.
Perfect; yet it floweth *fuller* every day;
Perfect; yet it groweth *deeper* all the way.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand;
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry toucheth spirit there.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,

Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the Sun of love.
We may trust Him solely, all for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly, find Him wholly true.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

R5431: PEACE WITH GOD AND THE PEACE OF GOD

"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."—Isaiah 26:3.

TO HAVE come into a condition of Peace with God means that one has become reconciled to God. This implies a former condition of alienation, of "enmity through wicked works." Peace with God, then, means that this estrangement from God is a thing of the past, and that the estranged one is now in harmony with God—that he has turned his back upon sin and is seeking to walk in the path of righteousness. This is a step of faith, and is accompanied by reformation of life. We rejoice with all who have come thus far; we are glad that they have this position of advantage over the masses of mankind whom the god of this world has so blinded that they cannot see the beauty of the Lord nor the desirableness of peace with Him, and who have not learned the bitterness of the fruits of sin.

But in our second text above, the Prophet is referring to a class who have gone further than the condition of peace *with* God. He is speaking of a class who have come into possession of "the peace *of* God, which passeth all understanding," as the Apostle Paul declares. This peace can come only to those who have given themselves unreservedly to God—their time, their talents, their influence, their life, their *all*. These have a peace that none others can know. This peace of God rules the heart even amid turmoil and trouble; it is an inward tranquility and rest which is the direct result of a close, personal relationship of the soul with God. It is the peace *of* God because it is a peace that God only can give, a peace which only His very own can fully know.

What a precious legacy our dear Lord left with His disciples when He went away from them! He said: "Peace I leave with you; *My* peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27.) This was truly a legacy of priceless value, and it is the inheritance of the entire Church throughout the Age, even unto its close. To the world it may seem that the course of the Christian is far from peaceful, for the Lord's saints often have a stormy voyage. But if our hearts continue to be stayed on Christ by faith, and we do not let go our anchor, we shall be kept through all the tempests of life, however severely we may be tossed, however fiercely the storms may rage.

Faith can exclaim with the Prophet Isaiah, "For the Lord will help me, therefore I shall not be confounded; therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." (Isaiah 50:7.) On the assurances of the Lord we may rest, because our anchor holds fast to the Throne of God. The language of our Master's heart was, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee." He had been with the Father from the beginning and He knew His love and goodness; He had seen the manifestations of His power; He had marked His loving-kindness. So we who have come into similar relationship to God have come to thus know and trust His love and faithfulness.

PEACE IN THE LORD

The Lord does not bless His people with peace in an outward sense. The Master's special associates, the Apostles, were buffeted, and so all His followers have been. The Adversary does everything in his power to make their lives anything but peaceful and happy. This is true of all who walk in Jesus' footsteps. We have *fightings* without and fightings within, rather than *peace* without and peace within. We have fightings with our own flesh; and it is part of our victory that we "fight a good fight," a conquering fight. We are to put forth our best efforts in fighting against the world and the Adversary, against all the things that Satan would put into our minds and hearts, and we are to get the better of these things. The Lord blesses His people with strength to surmount these difficulties.

We are not to be at peace with the flesh, but always at warfare with it. Yet there is a peace in the Lord that is born of faith in Him and in His promises. He has promised us grace *sufficient*; He has promised that we shall not be overcome through having trials and difficulties that are too great for us. We are assured that we shall have the victory if we trust in His strength. This gives us a rest and peace in all our experiences.

"Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear the music ringing!
It finds an echo in my soul;
How can I keep from singing?"

We are resting in the Lord's promises—we are resting in His strength and in His ability to make good His promises; for we know that He who has called us is able to fulfil all His good Word. This peace, or rest, is the special blessing of the Holy Spirit. Only in proportion as we receive the Holy Spirit, the holy mind of God, the holy disposition, can we have this peace fulfilled in us. It is a matter of simple ratio. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord, in the knowledge of the Truth, we shall have this to comfort and strengthen us; and we shall thus have more of the peace of God every day, and be able to abide in His love.

It has been written for our instruction and comfort—"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." This faith is built upon the testimony of God's

Word—a sure foundation. It is only through strong and unwavering faith that the peace of God will abide with His children. God has made us His sons and heirs, joint-heirs with our Lord. "No good thing will He withhold" from these; "All things shall work together for their good"; "He shall bear them up in His hands, lest they dash their foot against a stone"; "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry." Then let us be strong!

PEACE FOUNDED UPON FAITH

This peace of God is not dependent upon the smile of fortune, nor upon physical health, nor upon a host of friends. But it is a peace which abides even when health fails, or poverty comes in, or death steals from us the treasures of our hearts. It is a peace which none of the changes and vicissitudes of this life can take from us, and which enemies are powerless to touch. What gift so rich could our Father give to His children!

How poor would be our inheritance today if we were without our anchorage in Christ! But with it we can endure all things which the Father's loving providence shall permit. Then let us face the coming days with calmness and courage. He who was with His dear disciples upon the stormy Sea of Galilee, and whose word of power quelled the mighty storm and stilled the raging of the sea, has the same care over His disciples today. When they cried out in fear, He quieted their hearts, saying, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" *Nothing* can in any wise hurt us if our hearts are stayed on Him.

In order to enjoy this perfect peace we must have unswerving trust in our Father's love and abiding faithfulness. As we look out into the starry heavens we see a manifestation of God's mighty power and majesty, but our hearts and minds would not be stayed and sustained by this; we might receive gifts from Him, but without knowledge of His abiding faithfulness we would not know whether these might be only traps for our injury from the Adversary. But if we have this proper foundation for faith, if we learn to *know* our Father through His Word (the only way we can know Him), we come to have confidence in Him.

If we trusted to our own reasoning, we would be in a very unsatisfactory condition. All would be uncertain; we would have no sure basis for faith or assurance. But when we see that the testimony of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, reveals to us a God of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, our minds and hearts have something reasonable and convincing to lay hold upon, and we say: We can trust such a God, because He is trustworthy. This conviction deepens into joy as we step out upon His promises and prove them for ourselves, thus learning their reality and realizing their fulfilment. We rejoice that this loving God has called us to redemption through His Son. We rejoice that He has offered us eternal life, and has called us even to a glorious joint-heirship *with* this Son.—Romans 8:17.

PEACE DEPENDENT UPON FULL OBEDIENCE

We rejoice, further, to know of the wondrous provision for the whole world in the future. All these things form a firm basis for peace and joy and confidence in the Lord. But our peace is proportionate to our constancy—our staying qualities. No one can retain this peace of God whose mind is not "stayed," fixed, on God. It is not a peace of recklessness nor of sloth, but a peace begotten of God Himself, through His promises, which we have made our own. It is dependent also upon our full obedience to the Lord. It is the peace of Christ—"My peace." This peace and the faith which inspires it, can look up through its tears with joyful expectancy for the glorious fruition of our hopes, which God has promised and of which our present peace and joy are but the foretaste.

"Peace, perfect peace? our future all unknown?

Jesus we know, and He is on the Throne!

"Peace, perfect peace? death shadowing us and ours?

Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers!

"Peace, perfect peace? 'mid suffering's keenest throes?

The sympathy of Jesus brings repose.

"It is enough! Earth's struggles soon shall cease,

And Jesus call us to Heaven's perfect peace!"

keeping?
O where—in His *presence*—is faith the world
o'er?
The rich, every sense in soft luxury steeping;
The poor, scarce repelling the wolf from the door.
O man, and O maiden, drop trifling and pleasure,
O! hark, while I tell of the sorrows to be,—
As well might I plead in the path of yon glacier,
Or cry out a warning to wave of the sea!

R5413: THE END OF THE AGE A PERILOUS TIME

"In the last days perilous times shall come; men shall be traitors, heady, ... lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."—2 Timothy 3:4.

THE expression, "the last days," or the latter days, the closing days, refers, not to the end of the world in the sense that many expect this event, but is a Scriptural designation of the present time, the end of this Age, when the Reign of Righteousness is about to begin. We are glad to be living now in this Harvest time! "The Harvest is the end of the Age." (Matthew 13:39.—Diaglott.) The warning given by the Apostle is that, instead of the world's being Christianized and converted to God at this time, the reverse condition will prevail. It will be a time of great peril—peril to the Lord's people—peril for those who have started out to follow Christ. However, it will not be so much a perilous time for the world.

The only ones who are on trial for life or death are those who have been released from the Adamic condemnation. To these the time described by St. Paul will be one of severe testing. The whole course of the world will be turned aside from the high standard that might have been expected. Men will be traitors. As long as it will be of advantage to them to perform a contract they will do so; when not advantageous they will not fulfil the contract. It will be a time when every man's hand will be lifted against his neighbor. Selfishness will be rampant. Each will do what will be to his own interest, regardless of obligation. There will be manifest headiness and selfishness and self-conceit. Men will be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." This condition is to be a sign of the end of the Age.

Every thoughtful person must perceive that this condition of things is prevailing now. Whenever a contract is found to be unsatisfactory—whether it be a marriage contract or a business contract—the dissatisfied contractor is liable to break the agreement. This party to the contract then assumes the attitude of one who declares, Force me to keep it if you can. The Lord's people will keep their word and be firm for principle and true to their contracts, even when these prove disadvantageous to them. This attitude is pleasing to the Lord.

PREVALENCE OF THESE CONDITIONS UNIVERSAL

We find headiness of spirit in the world everywhere—a loss of respect for authority. No doubt there has been *too much* respect for authority in the past. Now the pendulum is swinging to the other side, and there is *no* respect for authority. This condition has been brought about by a lack of reverence for God—the inevitable result of loss of faith in the Bible as the Word of God. As people lose faith in the Bible, they lose faith in God, and become more selfish and more self-willed. This condition of affairs has been brought about by false doctrine, error. People think that God is their Adversary, purposing to do them harm.

The Higher Critics have been seeking to put away what they have considered the absurdities of religious thought, and to this end have done away with the Bible. Bible students see that the absurdities have been brought about by the creeds and not by the Bible. But the world, losing confidence in God, are becoming more heady than ever before. Even the reverential fear which once held them is departing, and there is a disposition to doubt everything. People are in the condition of mind where they say, "Let us eat, drink and be merry"; nobody knows about the future; the preachers are all confused. Everything has come about by evolutionary processes. Let us enjoy the present. Let pleasure be our aim in life. This would seem to be the attitude of the world. They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

WORLDLY SPIRIT IN SOME OF THE CONSECRATED

These conditions of our day make it a perilous time for the Church. Do you ask, Would not the Church, on the contrary, be more than ever led to love God? And would this not guard them and keep them from danger? We answer that some of God's people are becoming more and more immersed in the world. The spirit of the world surges all around them. With great difficulty could these come to realize that the whole world is astray in their ideas and ways. The tendency of all such is to have the mind of the world, even though they be spirit-begotten.

This worldly spirit, the Apostle suggests, would affect the Church to some extent. Consequently some of the Lord's people would thus come into special peril at this time, because of neglecting their Covenant with the Lord. Others would remember that Covenant, and watch and pray, and so make good progress. Those who are living close to the Lord are, for this reason, developing in mind and heart. But these are few.

The Great Company class, while still loving the Lord, are becoming immersed in the spirit of the world. Even those who are living nearest to the Divine standard will be more or less imperiled through this spirit, unless they continue diligent in prayer and the study of God's Word. What we see going on about us seems natural to our minds. The way in which other people spend time and money is a temptation to the Lord's people which must be *steadfastly resisted*.

A SUBTLE TEST

The Lord's people spend and are being spent in His service—by volunteer work, by attending meetings, by holding meetings and in various ways, according to opportunity. They are living separate from the world—distinct lives, lives of consecration. The world now has an eight-hour day. The Lord's faithful people would, on the contrary, make theirs a sixteen-hour day. But all these present-day conditions constitute perils. For us to do what others do, and to devote to the Lord's service only what the world considers a reasonable day's work, would not be fulfilling our Covenant of Sacrifice at all. Those who seek merely to do right, and to put in eight hours or so a day faithfully, after the manner of the world, will be judged from this standpoint; and they will merely obtain a place in the Great Company. They are not fulfilling the conditions of the Covenant of sacrifice.

But the Little Flock will serve the Lord with such delight that they will scarcely know how to cease their efforts. They recognize that their bodies are fully consecrated to the Lord, and they are daily putting them to death in a reasonable, rational manner. In view of these perilous times, let us each ask himself the question, *To which class do I belong?*

JULY 19

The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?—John 18:11.

How the grace of humility shines out in all the little affairs of our dear Redeemer's ministry; even at the moment of His surrender to His enemies He does not boast that His course is a voluntary one, nor seek praise as a martyr! He declares the simple truth that the Father required this of Him as an evidence of His personal loyalty to Him. He confesses Himself a servant of God, a Son who learned obedience by the things which He suffered. No other lesson, perhaps, is more needed by the Lord's followers than the one of willingness to drink the cup which the Father pours—a recognition that the Father is guiding and directing in our affairs because we are His, as disciples of the Anointed One—Z '99, 118; '01, 91 (R 2467, 2778).

The cup symbolizes experiences of bliss or woe; and as nothing happens to the saints, and as all things coming into their lives are of the Father's will, they recognize their experiences as the cup that the Father offers them to drink. As it was to their Master, it should be to them a self-evident matter that they drink it always with a contented mind and, as far as possible, with a thankful and appreciative heart, to God's glory and others' and their own profit—P '34, 95.

Parallel passages: Job 13:15; Psa. 119:75; Jer. 10:19; Matt. 20:22; 26:39, 42; Luke 22:20; Rom. 5:3-5; 1 Cor. 10:16, 21; 2 Cor. 7:4; Phil. 3:8; Psa. 23:5; 116:13; Isa. 51:22, 23.

Hymns: 168, 276, 5, 299, 325, 326, 134.

Poems of Dawn, 237: *The Angel of Gethsemane*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 84 (R 5421).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they borne? In what did they result?

THE ANGEL OF GETHSEMANE

'Twas midnight, and the Man of Sorrows took
His chosen three,
And sought with weary step the shelter of Geth-
semane
To pray, His soul exceeding sorrowful, e'en unto
death,
And heavy laden with the sin and woe of all the
world.
In agony of bloody sweat He fell upon His face,
And cried, with tears, "My God, My Father, if it
be Thy will,

Oh, let this cup of shame and numbering with trans-
gressors pass,—

If it be possible! Yet not My will, but Thine be
done!"

And then His thoughts turned to the sacrifice,—a
fear bore down

With agonizing weight upon His heart, lest to comply
With every jot and tittle of the Law, He might have
failed!

He saw the priestly type, He knew eternal death
awaited,

Should He seek to pass the second veil unworthily.

Eternal death! Oh, anguish inexpressible, to see
No more His Father's face! He sought His well-
beloved three,

Perchance they might refresh His fainting heart with
some sure word

Of prophecy. Alas! Their eyes were heavy and
they slept.

Three times He sought them, and three times *in vain!*
Yet He was heard

In that He feared. The Father sent a *heavenly*
comforter

To touch with tender, strengthening hand that dear,
devoted head,

And whisper, " 'I, the LORD, in righteousness have
called Thee, I

Will hold Thine hand, and keep Thee.' Neither shalt
Thou *'fail* nor be

Discouraged.' Lo, Thou art 'a Priest *forever*, and a
King

Upon Thy throne, like to Melchisedec.' And *Thou*
shalt see

The travail of Thy soul, and shalt be satisfied.'"

His heart

Revived, He knew His Father's faithful Word could
never fail;

He knew it would accomplish that whereunto it was
sent.

He rose, and from that hour went forth to trial and
to death,

In peace,—a calmness born of perfect confidence in
God.

How oft, throughout the many-centuried "night" of
this dark Age,

The Father's "little ones" have knelt in sad Gethsemane
To pray! E'en now the Garden's shade re-echoes
with the cry
Of God's elect, "*How long*, oh, Lord, how long
until we see
The travail of our soul? How long until Thou shalt
avenge
Thine own elect, who cry to Thee, with tears, both
night and day?

* * *

Dear Lord, oh, use *me* as the Angel in Gethsemane!
Oh, fill me with Thy holy Spirit of Divinest love!
Oh! make me sympathetic, *wise*, that every anguished
heart
May come, nor seek in vain for consolation from
Thy Word,
And strengthened, comforted, go forth to prison or
to death,
To suffer patiently the cruel mockings of the tongue;
To bear the cross unto the bitter end, then calmly say,
" 'Tis finished," *and with faith unwavering pass beneath "the veil!"*

R5421: "ARE YE ABLE?"

"Are ye able to drink of the Cup that I shall drink of?"—Matthew 20:22.

WE RECALL the circumstances under which these words were uttered by our Savior: It was just a few days before His crucifixion Jesus had promised His disciples that they should sit with Him in His Throne in His Kingdom. So confident were they that this would be as the Lord had said that they were discussing the position they might occupy. The mother of the two disciples, James and John, came to Him and asked whether her two sons might sit, the one on His right hand and the other on His left, in the Kingdom. And Jesus, turning to the two disciples, replied by asking them: "Are ye able to drink of the Cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

We know that Jesus' baptism in water took place at the beginning of His ministry. In harmony with the Divine Plan, He was to die as the Savior of men. And He symbolized this death as soon as He was thirty years of age—as soon as was possible under the Law. During the three and a half years of His ministry, He was accomplishing this baptism, He was pouring out His soul unto death, and this death He finished at Calvary. Jesus said,

"The baptism that I am [being] baptized with"—*now*—not a baptism which was either *future* or *past*.

But He spoke differently of the Cup—"the Cup that I *shall* drink of." He thus implied that the Cup was *future*—not in the present nor in the past. He had told His disciples that He would go up to Jerusalem; and that there He would be crucified, and on the third day He would rise again. And He said on another occasion, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." What the Master said about His being crucified the disciples did not understand. But Jesus understood the situation, and He knew that this Cup was about to be poured for Him. And so He spoke of it again, saying of Himself, "The Cup that My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?"

OUR LORD'S SPECIAL TRIAL

We might think of the word, *Cup* as representing various experiences of life—that everybody has his Cup of mingled joy and sorrow. But Jesus used the word in a different sense. When He was in the Garden of Gethsemane He prayed, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from Me! Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." And again, the same night He prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this Cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done!" In the matter of His baptism into death, there was no hesitation on our Lord's part. On the contrary, from the very beginning He voluntarily participated in it. The *ignominious* death was the thing that He prayed might pass, if it were possible. But this was what He learned was the Father's will for Him, and He was content to have it so.

There was nothing in the Law to indicate that our Lord should be executed as a blasphemer of the Divine Law. Yet blasphemy was the charge preferred against Him. The Sanhedrin decided that He was a blasphemer in that He had said, "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it again," and also in claiming that He was the Son of God. Apparently, then, the thing which was specially weighing on His mind and from which He would have liked to be relieved was the ignominy and shame of being crucified as a criminal, as a blasphemer of the Father He loved so well.

Jesus knew that He had come into the world to die, and that He must suffer. But *this* part of His experience He had not fully understood. Evidently He knew that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up"; for comparatively early in His ministry He had stated this in His conversation with Nicodemus. But as He came down nearer and nearer to the time of His humiliation, His degradation, and realized all that it meant, He felt a great shrinking from it and poured out His heart in the cry, "*If it be possible*, let this Cup pass from Me!" But immediately—proving that His affirmation, at the time of His consecration, "Lo I come to do *Thy* will, O God," was not empty words—He added, "Nevertheless, not as *I* will, but as *Thou* wilt!"—Matthew 26:39.

ARE WE WILLING TO SHARE HIS IGNOMINY?

And so to His disciples our Savior said: Are you able to lay down your lives completely, even though this shall mean to you injustice in the taking away of your lives? Are ye able to drink of the Cup that *I* shall drink of? There will be disgrace and ignominy connected with it all. Are ye willing to share with Me in this, My Cup? They answered: "We are able." They were willing.

This, we see, is the same Cup represented in the Communion Service. The bread represents the body and the wine the blood of our Lord. The Cup especially represented the shame and ignominy connected with His death; and the two disciples said that they were willing to share His Cup—they had no hesitancy. At any cost they would be faithful. They would comply with any conditions He would make. They did not, of course, yet know the full import of the word *baptism* or of the word *cup*. These were things all His disciples were feeling after. When Pentecost should come, these things that Jesus had spoken to them would come to their remembrance, as He had foretold. (John 16:4; 13:19.) But they were willing and anxious. And that is all that we can be. Jesus guaranteed that, being willing, they should have these experiences; that, continuing willing, continuing to suffer with Him here, they should reign with Him in His Throne. But as to the particular place for each in the Throne, that would not be for Him to say, but for the Father.

The courage, the fortitude, of our dear Redeemer in walking the narrow way fills us with admiration. How strong and brave was His character! He had no thought of looking back; His whole being was intent upon accomplishing the will of His Father in Heaven—upon sacrificing Himself in the interest of the world. What a noble Example was set before the Apostles!—greatness in humility, victory through entire self-surrender!

DRINKING OF THE LORD'S CUP BY THE CHURCH

The drinking of the Lord's Cup by the Church, represents our participation in the sufferings of Christ in the present time. None shall be a member of the Body of the great Mediator of the New Covenant unless he come in now under the proper terms. The drinking of the blood, then, is the sharing of the Cup. For if we drink not of His Cup, neither shall we share with Him in His glory. He said, "Drink ye *all* of it." *All* must drink, and the *entire Cup* must be drained during this Age.

It is a very great privilege that we are permitted to have a share in the sufferings of Christ. "If we suffer [with Him], we shall also reign with Him." We shall participate in the inauguration of the New Dispensation, and in dispensing its blessings. The Antitype of Moses, who will do the sprinkling, is Christ the Head and the Church His Body, glorified, of whom we read in Acts 3:22: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me"—that is, Moses was His type, on a smaller scale. The Body is now being raised up. Jesus was first raised up, then all the Apostles; and following after, the remaining members of His Body.

As Moses sprinkled *all* the people, so this antitypical Moses, when completed, will "sprinkle" the world of mankind; and this will mean the bringing of them into harmony with the Divine Law. It will require the thousand years to "sprinkle" mankind. So there is a great difference between the drinking of the Cup and the sprinkling of the blood. The sprinkling with the blood represents justification, while the drinking of the Cup by the Church represents, not only justification, but sanctification.

OUR LORD'S RECOGNITION OF THE DIVINE PURPOSES

Our Lord, in His memorable words to St. Peter—"The Cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"—referred, evidently, to His dying experiences, which were severe in the extreme. He was dishonored of men and reckoned as an enemy of God—a blasphemer. His physical sufferings He knew would be intense, but to His perfect mind the shame and desisted, the opprobrium, added greatly to the poignancy of His anguish. Yet this was the Cup the Father had given Him; it was the Divine purpose respecting Him.

Our Lord had all the experiences necessary for proving and testing His loyalty; for it was necessary that He manifest His loyalty before both angels and men. The whole matter had been Divinely arranged from before the creation of man. He was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8.) Everything pertaining to that slain Lamb was foreknown by the Father. Jesus was to drink the Cup which belonged to the sinner, in order that He might redeem man and might thus be a faithful and merciful High Priest. This was the Cup of suffering and death. It was necessary that Jesus should suffer the death of the cross, in order that He might redeem the Jew.

LOVE AND LOYALTY MANIFESTED BY SUBMISSION

All His sufferings were foretold in the Scriptures. The crucifixion was pictured by the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness. All of His experiences were foreknown, forearranged and necessary. When He came to earth to do the Father's will, He did not know of all that was to come. But He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, the things which were "written in the Book." He submitted Himself to all the Father's will, and thus He proved His loyalty. As He Himself declared, "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of My Father which sent Me!" As the hour of the consummation of His sacrifice drew near, in the lonely shades of Gethsemane, the Master prayed, "My Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from Me!" We are not to suppose that He prayed for the Cup of death to pass away; but He wondered whether or not the ignominious experiences of the crucifixion might pass. Yet we find that He did not murmur nor rebel, but said, "Not My will, but Thine, be done!"

SPECIAL SUPERVISION OF OUR CUP

We see that our beloved Lord drank of the bitter Cup to its dregs, and did so thankfully. And we are to remember that He gave the Cup to *us*, that *we* should all drink of it—not that we should all have exactly the same experiences that He had, but that we

must all drink of the Cup of suffering and death in the Father's own way. Jesus was the Perfect One, and the Father dealt with Him in a very particular manner.

In our cases the experiences would be different; because of our imperfection we could not be dealt with from the standpoint of perfection. We are, therefore, not to think of our Cup as a definite, fixed program as was the Master's, but rather that the Father permitted us to have a share in the Cup of death with His Son. Our Cup is supervised by our Savior, although it is the Cup poured by the Father; for it is the Father's Program.

In the Master's case the Cup was necessary for the sins of the whole world. In our case it is not necessary, but it has pleased the Father to grant us a share in the sufferings and glory of our Lord. Jesus makes good our deficiencies and develops our characters, fashioning us into His own glorious Image. Without this supervision of our Cup by our Lord, we might be very poorly developed in many qualities; therefore our Cup needs to be specially supervised. And so He assures us that, while the necessary experiences are coming to us, at the same time His grace will be sufficient; and His strength will be made perfect in our weakness, and all things will be made to work together for our good.

Let us never forget that unless we partake of His Cup, unless we are immersed into death with Him, we can have no share in His Kingdom of glory, we can never sit with Him in His Throne. Let us then count all the things of this earth as loss and dross that we may attain this Pearl of Great Price. As the experiences of suffering come to us, let us not be affrighted, nor "think it strange concerning the fiery trials that shall try us, as though some strange thing happened unto us"; for even "hereunto were we called," to suffer with our beloved Master now, and by and by be glorified together with Him in the Kingdom eternal!

"Are ye able to walk in the narrow, strait way,
With no friend by your side, and no arm for your stay?
Can ye bravely go on through the darkening night?
Can ye patiently wait till the Lord sends the light?"

"Ah, if thus ye can drink of the Cup He shall pour,
And if never the banner of Truth ye shall lower,
His beloved ye are, and His crown ye shall wear,
In His Throne ye shall sit, and His glory shall share!"

JULY 20

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. ... Every branch in me ... that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit—John 15:1, 2.

As even the best branches in the vine, which give evidence of fruit-bearing, require pruning, so even the most honest and earnest of the Lord's people require the Lord's discipline and providential care—otherwise they might soon run to wood-making also, and fail to bring forth much fruit. The true child of God whose will has been entirely immersed into the will of the Lord is neither offended nor discouraged by these prunings. He has learned something at least of his own unwisdom, and has confidence in the wisdom of the great Husbandman. Hence when Divine providence estops his efforts in some directions, he takes the thwarting of his plans joyfully, assured that the Lord's will and the Lord's way are the best, and intended to work out a blessing—Z '99, 109 (R 2464).

The objects in nature furnished our Lord with much illustrative matter in teaching His disciples. Our text brings to our attention the Vine, Christ, out of whom His members have grown as branches. Under the care of the Father each of these branches has borne the fruit of Christlikeness. They have needed the continual cleansing and pruning work of the Husbandman, to the end that they would yield rich spiritual fruitage—P '33, 80.

Parallel passages: John 15:3-8; Heb. 12:2-17; 13:20; Eph. 5:23; Luke 1:69; John 14:6; Heb. 6:7, 8; John 13:10; 17:17; Eph. 5:26; 1 Pet. 1:22; Heb. 12:4-14; 2 Pet. 1:2-10; 1 John 1:9.

Hymns: 67, 95, 109, 130, 136, 198, 267.

Poems of Dawn, 173: *Disappointment*.

Tower Reading: Z '05, 121 (R 3544).

Questions: What were the week's pruning experiences? How were they met? In what did they result?

DISAPPOINTMENT

"DISAPPOINTMENT—His appointment,"

Change one letter, then I see
That the thwarting of my purpose
Is God's better choice for me.
His appointment must be blessing,
Tho' it may come in disguise,
For the end from the beginning
Open to His wisdom lies.

"Disappointment—His appointment,"
Whose? The Lord's who loves me best,

Understands and knows me fully,
Who my faith and love would test;
For, like loving earthly parent,
He rejoices when He knows
That his child accepts, *Unquestioned*,
All that from His wisdom flows.

"Disappointment—His appointment,"
"No good thing will He withhold,"
From denials oft we gather
Treasures of His love untold.
Well He knows each broken purpose
Leads to fuller, deeper trust,
And the end of all His dealings
Proves our God is wise and just.

"Disappointment—His appointment,"
Lord, I take it, then, as such.
Like the clay in hands of potter,
Yielding wholly to Thy touch.
All my life's plan is Thy moulding,
Not one single choice be mine;
Let me answer, unrepining—
Father, "Not my will, but Thine."

R3544: THE TRUE VINE AND ITS FRUIT.

—John 15:1-12.—

Golden Text:—"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."—v. 8.

FOLLOWING the institution of the Memorial Supper, the Lord and his disciples, excepting Judas, who had gone to betray him, went forth from the upper room toward the Garden of Gethsemane. It was while the disciples were troubled in heart in respect to various things the Lord had said unto them and his declarations respecting his coming death, and while the Lord, too, had in mind the parting from his disciples and their future experiences, that he gave them the parable of the Vine. Some have inferred that this, like other of the Lord's parables, was an object lesson—that something seen by them all suggested it. Some surmise that the vineyards on the route offered the suggestion, and others that their journey probably led past the golden gate of the Temple, on which there was a large golden vine, which Josephus describes as having had clusters as large as a man: another Jewish writer declares that its "leaves and buds were wrought in gleaming, reddish gold, but its clusters of yellow gold and its grapestones of precious stones." According to Jewish authorities, this vine kept growing by means of offerings of a leaf or a cluster or a branch by the wealthy, just as some to-day present memorial windows to

churches. In any event the Lord and the apostles must frequently have seen this golden vine.

The Lord announced himself as the true Vine and his Father as the true Husbandman who planted the true vine, and his followers as the true branches of that vine. The expression "true vine" suggests a false vine, and this thought is accentuated and elaborated in our Lord's last message to his people in the symbols of Revelation. There he speaks of the gathering of the fruitage of the "vine of the earth," and the casting of the same into the wine-press of the wrath of God at the end of this age. (Rev. 14:19.) There was, therefore, a deeper meaning in our Lord's words, "true vine," than the apostles could have possibly gathered from them. We who are living at a time when both the true vine of the Father's planting and the false vine of the earth, earthly, have developed, have opportunity for noticing the difference between the two vines, and of noticing also that the vine of the earth is a counterfeit of the heavenly vine. In proportion as we see this matter clearly it will assist us not only in the understanding of the Lord's parable, but also in our application of it in our daily lives. We will be in less danger of misunderstanding, misconstruing and being deceived by the false vine, or by the false branches and the false principles represented in connection with its development, for it is not under the divine Husbandman's care.

THE VINE OF THE EARTH

The vine of the earth is the nominal Christian system organized along the lines of earthly wisdom. Its branches are the various sects and parties of Christendom. Its fruitage is cathedrals, temples, tabernacles, chapels, orphanages, hospitals, etc., political power, honor of men, wealth and social standing. It is great and influential in the world, and has the spirit of the world running through its branches and governing all of its affairs, and brings forth a fruitage which is not entirely bad, but which is entirely earthly, and which is relished and appreciated because it is earthly and practical rather than heavenly. This vine has grown wonderfully, has some three hundred branches and claims four hundred million adherents, and through its untold wealth of property and in its adherents it may be said to practically control the wealth of the world.

Great is the vine of the earth, wonderful in the eyes of men. But the harvesting time will show that these nominal systems are not the vine of Jehovah's right-hand planting (Isa. 60:21), and it is, therefore, the system which the Lord declares he will utterly uproot and destroy, and whose destruction is so graphically described in Revelation. In the wine-press of the wrath of God, in the great time of trouble which is nearing—which we believe the Scriptures to teach will be fully upon the world ten years from now—the blood of Babylon's grapes will mean a flood of trouble and anguish to the world. By that time, however, the true vine and its branches will all have been glorified, and the results of their proper fruit-bearing will mean blessings to all the families of the earth.

Let us consider carefully the "true Vine" and our relationship as branches of it, and the character of the fruit which the great Husbandman expects, that this last of our Lord's

parables may greatly profit us, strengthen us, encourage us, assist us as it was intended that it should.

THE TRUE VINE

In the true Vine the branches are not sects, parties, and it is only by delusions of the Adversary that any who are his people recognize these systems of men. As the apostles were not Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, etc., neither should any of the Lord's followers be such, and it is only because we have been blinded by the Adversary's misteachings that any of the true children of God are in such error, and so we understand this parable and other teachings of the Word. The apostles did not join each other, but each Apostle was united in heart, in faith, in hope, in love, in devotion to the Lord himself. And so we should not join the apostles, nor say, I am of Paul, I am of Peter, etc., but each should individually join the Lord as a member, as a branch; each must have the sap of the vine if it would bear fruit. Sectarian sap is of no value in producing the real fruitage which the Lord desires—it is only a hindrance. By this we do not mean that none of the branches of the true Vine are by mistake associated with the nominal Church system, the vine of the earth. We recognize that this is so, and we also recognize the Lord's voice calling—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues"—the great troubles coming upon her, mother and daughters.

As the branches do not represent denominations and sects, but the individuals who are united to the Lord, so the teaching of the parable is that our Lord does not prune sects and denominations but the individual Christians, whoever and wherever they may be—"The Lord knoweth them that are his." Our Lord's word on the subject is, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth [pruneth] it, that it may bear more fruit." Everything in the Scriptures teaches us that our salvation and our relationship to the Lord are individual, personal matters; that we are not saved by congregations and sects and parties and families, but that individually and personally we must be united to the vine if we would have the sap, if we would have the life, if we would be counted members of the Church, which is his body.

MANY ILLUSTRATIONS OF OUR ONENESS

It is remarkable how fully the Lord has covered the whole range of illustration in describing the oneness subsisting between himself and his consecrated followers. He gives us an illustration from the mineral kingdom, saying that we are living stones built together upon him as the foundation and capstone, to be the Temple of our God. From the animal kingdom our Lord drew illustrations of this oneness, likening himself to the good Shepherd and his true followers to the sheep under his care, one with him in fellowship. From the vegetable kingdom he drew the illustration of this lesson—I am the Vine, of which my true disciples are the branches. From the family relationship he drew an illustration of the true husband and true wife, and their complete, thorough union of heart and of every interest. From the family again he drew another illustration representing the Creator as the Father, himself as the elder Son and all of his followers as brethren. From

the human body we have another illustration, Jesus himself being the Head over the Church, which is his body, for, as the Apostle declares, we are members in particular of the body of Christ. In proportion as our faith can grasp these declarations, in proportion as we can realize their truthfulness, in that same proportion we may have strong faith and confidence that he who has begun the good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. Whoever of a loyal, obedient heart can exercise faith has thus provided for himself strength and grace for every time of need, for every hour of trial, for every difficulty and perplexity and for all the affairs of life—the ballast which will give equilibrium and enable us to profit by all of life's experiences, the bitter as well as the sweet.

Our Lord's declaration that where two or three of his disciples are met together in his name they constitute a Church or body of Christ, and he as the head is with them for their blessing in proportion as their hearts are loyal to him and seeking his guidance, leads us to conclude likewise that wherever two or three of his members are there we have a representation of the vine, and they may have all the blessings of branches and all the privileges of fruit bearing. Very evidently, however, the Lord did not wish us to understand that in every little company of those who have named the name of Christ there would be so thorough a purging, so thorough a burning, that only the true branches would remain. His intimation is that he deals with us individually, as well as collectively, and that if we would maintain our personal relationship to him it must be by the receiving of the sap from the vine, the receiving of the holy Spirit, as one of the results of the union and fellowship with him.

So surely as we receive the holy Spirit into good and honest hearts the result will be a tendency to fruit-bearing, but the illustration our Lord gives teaches that some may become true branches in the vine and yet overlook and not possess the fruit-bearing disposition. Sometimes a healthy, strong branch develops from a good stock and root but has no fruit-bearing qualities. The husbandman with a trained eye discerns between buds which would bring forth grape clusters and the buds which would have only leaves. Those which do not have the fruit buds are known as "suckers"—because they merely suck the juices of the vine and bring forth no fruitage such as the husbandman seeks. These are pruned or cut off, so that the strength of the vine may not be wasted in such merely outward splendor, but may be conserved for its purposes of fruit bearing. Evidently a class of true professors resemble these suckers, who selfishly would draw to themselves as much of the righteousness of the Vine as possible, and would make a fair outward show in the world with leaves or professions, but would have no thought of bringing forth the fruitage which the Lord requires and which can only be brought forth through sacrifice.

THE OBJECT OF PRUNING

Aside from the suckers there are branches which, while having fruit buds, would never bring the fruit to a good ripe development if allowed to take their own course and to develop themselves as branches merely, and hence the wise husbandman, noting the bud, is pleased with it, and pinches off the sprout of the vine beyond the bud, not to injure the

branch but to make it more fruitful. So with us who have not only joined the Lord by faith and consecration and been accepted as branches, but who as branches desire to bring forth good fruitage, which the Lord seeks in us—we need the Husbandman's care so that we may bring forth the much fruit, so that the fruit that we bear may be more to his pleasement, large fruit, luscious fruit, good fruit, valuable fruit. The methods of the Lord's prunings should be understood by all the branches, otherwise they may be discouraged and droop and fail to bring forth the proper fruitage.

It would appear that the great Husbandman prunes the branches of the Christ sometimes by taking away earthly wealth or property, or sometimes by hindering cherished schemes and plans. Sometimes he prunes us by permitting persecutions and the loss of name and fame, and sometimes he prunes by permitting the loss of earthly friendships toward which the tendrils of our hearts extended too strongly, and which would have hindered us from bearing the much fruit which he desires. Sometimes he may permit sickness to afflict us as one of these prunings, as the prophet declared, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." Many others of the Lord's dear people have found some of their most valuable lessons on the bed of affliction.

Some have written us how they were too busy, too much absorbed in earthly matters and interests that seemed to press for attention, so that they had not the proper time to give to the study of the Divine Plan of the Ages and the cultivation of their own hearts and the bearing of the fruits of the Spirit, and how the Lord in much mercy had laid them aside for a season, and given them the opportunities which they needed for thought and for Christian development, for growth in knowledge that they might have growth in grace. So far, then, from the true branches esteeming the prunings of the Husbandman to be injuries and wounds, they should conclude that according to the good promises of the Word all things are working together for good to them that love him—to the true fruit-bearing branches of the true Vine. Such prunings, instead of causing discouragements, should be to us, rightly understood, sources of encouragement. We realize that the world is left to itself; that the vine of the earth has not special prunings of the Lord, and that when we have these special prunings it is an evidence that the Father himself loveth us and is caring for our best interests.

"NOW YE ARE CLEAN"

Applying this lesson to his disciples our Lord intimated that the proper pruning work had already been done on them up to date, and in the Lord's providences they had been purged of an unfruitful branch, Judas. He therefore said to them, "Now ye are clean through the word I have spoken unto you"—you are justified and accepted because of your faith, obedience and loyalty. What a joy the eleven must have felt when they heard those words, and what a joy we may properly feel as we realize the truth of the same words applied to ourselves. Praise the Lord for this great gift of his favor through Christ—that we have in him not only the forgiveness of sins and the covering of his robe of righteousness, but that through him we are accepted of the Father as branches of the true Vine, clean through the acceptance of the message or word sent to us. But this is not all, this is merely the beginning. The thing necessary to be remembered is that our

ultimate blessing and acceptance of the Father will depend upon our abiding continually in this blessed close relationship of branches in the Vine.

If we will not bear the fruitage we may not remain in this relationship; if we do bear the fruits, if we have that spirit and disposition, and desire the Lord's grace and strength and assistance, his grace will be sufficient for every time of need and we will come off conquerors and more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. The bearing of the fruit which the Father desires cannot be accomplished, we cannot be pleasing to him, except as we are related to Christ and as his fruit is born in us by our relationship to him and the power of his Spirit and his Word working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. The assurance is that if we abide in him we will bear much fruit and that without him we can do nothing, have no fruit that the Father will accept.

What is the nature of this fruit-bearing? How may we know the fruitage which the Father seeks? We answer that many, under the misguidance and wrong example of the vine of the earth, incline to think of grand earthly temples, orphanages, etc., as being the fruits which the Lord desires to see well developed. We answer, No. If these were the fruits, then Jesus and the apostles bore no fruits: they built no churches or cathedrals or temples, they neither built nor founded orphanages or asylums or hospitals. If these were the fruitage which the Father seeks, then the Lord and the apostles erred totally. But we hold that they did not err, that the error rather has come from another quarter; that the vine of the earth guided by the spirit of the world has taken a utilitarian direction, and is bringing forth the fruitage of the kind which the world approves.

THE WORLD MAKES PROVISION

We are not saying a word against hospitals, asylums, etc.,—we believe them to be very good, very desirable, very proper adjuncts of society and civilization,—but we believe that the world is thoroughly capable of providing for all those things, and that the world is quite ready to provide for them; indeed we find that the world really does make provision as it is. For instance, the various St. Francis, St. James, and St. Agnes hospitals, asylums, etc., Protestant and Catholic, all seek support from the donations of the State for their maintenance and all get them, and the State might just as well, and better in some respects, have full charge of these. And indeed we are not sure but that it does have full charge of them now as fully as possible. Not that we wish to intimate that there are none of the true branches of the true Vine connected with any of these earthly institutions; but we hold that these are not their fruitage according to the Lord's parable, and that if they are members of the body as well as members of Babylon, they must bear the fruit of the Vine of the Father's planting as well as be identified with other good fruits.

The fruits of the Spirit are sometimes taken to be activities in the service of the Truth, as, for instance, the scattering of the Truth, the talking of the Truth, the bringing of some out of darkness into the light and knowledge of the Truth, the expenditure of money for the publishing of the Truth,—all these are sometimes considered the fruits which the Lord expects of the branches. Not so! The fruits are something still nobler and grander

than these things, and are described by the Apostle as the fruits of the Spirit. The Spirit of the Vine must permeate all the branches, and the fruit of the Vine must be in every branch. These fruits of the Spirit are enumerated—meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love; if these things be in us and abound, says the Apostle, they make us to be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior.

These fruits are all one in some particulars: that is to say, the essence of proper Christian patience is love; the essence of hope and faith and joy is love for our Father, and our confidence in his love, as expressed in his promises to us. So the name of all these fruits and graces of the Spirit is expressed in the one word, Love. These are the fruits which must be found in every branch if it would retain its place as a branch and be of the glorified Vine by and by. Let us not deceive ourselves into thinking that other things will do, and that we may pass the divine inspection without these. The other things, the good works, the seeking of the Truth, the distribution of the literature, etc., are only to be acceptable to the Father in proportion as they are the results of this fruitage in our hearts. The Apostle expresses this forcefully when he says, If I should give my body to be burned and all my goods to feed the poor, and have not love, it would profit me nothing.

The same thought is true in regard to service to the Lord: if we should spend every day and every hour in harvest work, if we should give all our money to printing tracts and books, or use ourselves in any other way for the service of the Lord's cause, it would profit nothing unless it were the result of love in our hearts. We see, then, that the thought is that we must cultivate in our hearts the graces of the holy Spirit, meekness, gentleness, patience, etc., love, and that we must have these in abounding measure to be pleasing to the Lord, to bear "much fruit." The expression of these fruits, therefore, undoubtedly will be through various channels, perhaps of giving goods to the poor, perhaps of such faithfulness in the presentation of the Truth as might lead us to martyrdom, that our bodies might be burned. If the burning of the body or the loss of all our goods comes in such a course through our faithfulness to the principles of righteousness, through our love and loyalty to the Lord, then happy are we indeed.

WITHERED BRANCHES BURNED

The declaration that those who will not bear the fruit of the Vine will be cut off from being branches and will wither and ultimately be burned, seems to imply the second death, utter destruction of the class indicated. This is not the worldly class, for they were never united to Christ, never were branches in the Vine and hence never were on trial in this respect. It refers only to those who have gone the lengths of making a full consecration to the Lord, a full union with him, a thorough consecration and begetting of the holy Spirit. These words, then, seem to correspond with the Apostle's declaration, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

The world is not in the hands of the living God, but is at the present time reckoned as dead in Adam, under the Adamic sentence, not being judged by the Lord. The Church only is reckoned as free from Adamic condemnation and placed on trial or judgment, and

these only, therefore, could fall out of the hands of Christ, the Mediator, and into the hands of the Father in the sense here indicated. Being cut off from Christ their case is hopeless; for such we can look forward to nothing better than the second death. Even then we are glad that the theory of eternal torment is not true; that when they die the death of utter extinction they have suffered all that God has pronounced, terrible as that loss will be to those who appreciate everlasting life.

This statement about the branches cut off, withered and burned does not seem to take cognizance at all of the household of faith class, which, though believing in Jesus, never comes to the point of becoming branches or members in the Christ. Nor does it seem to take into consideration the great company. Indeed this class is mentioned in but few Scriptures and then obscurely, the Lord thus indicating, we believe, that none were called to such a company. The Apostle speaks of some as being "saved so as by fire," and a little suggestion in this same line might be taken from the Master's words that, being cut off as branches, they wither and are burned—burned as branches, destroyed as members of the company to which they originally were by covenant attached, but not necessarily destroyed individually to all eternity. The Apostle speaks of this class saying that themselves shall be saved so as by fire, but their works shall suffer loss. Perhaps we should consider these as being included in this manner in the Lord's statement.

FRUITS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE VINE

Our Lord proceeds to tell us what some of the fruits of this union with him will be:—

First, such may ask whatsoever they will and it shall be done unto them. There is only one condition or limitation, namely, that before they are thus prepared to ask they must see to it that they give attention to the Lord's word that they may ascertain what is his will and what they may ask according to his will. Those who abide in Christ must have no will of their own, theirs must be the will of their Head, and their Head has already declared that his will is the Father's will. These, then, are the limitations, that we have the Father's will in our hearts and the Father's promises in our hearts; then our requests will be in conformity to these and the Lord will be pleased to grant all such.

The second fruitage or result will be that the Father will be glorified the more in proportion as our fruit increases, and on these terms our discipleship shall continue, namely, that we shall habitually seek to know and to do the Father's will and to glorify and honor him by lives obedient to his will. Anything short of this would forfeit our discipleship. Not that it would be forfeited instantly, as though the Lord would take occasion to cast us off lightly; but that it is a part of our covenant relationship that we will grow in grace, grow in knowledge, grow in harmony with God, grow in the fruits of the Spirit, and if we turn from this engagement or contract we cannot be considered as retaining our relationship as disciples, members.

The third fruit or evidence of this membership in the Vine and of our continued growth as branches is stated in verse nine, namely, that as the Father loved the Lord Jesus, the Vine, so our Redeemer loves us, his branches or members. What a wonderful

thought this is, that our Master has toward us the same kind of love that the Father has toward him! Could our faith always grasp this thought and maintain this hold, we should indeed have nothing to wish or to fear—our summer would last all the year. The next thought suggested is that having reached, having attained this high position in the Lord's favor, if we are his disciples and truly appreciate what he has done for us in this respect, we will desire to continue in his love. Next in order come the terms and conditions upon which we may continue in that love, namely, that we keep his commandments.

By way of showing us that this is not an unreasonable proposition, our Lord declared that these are the same terms on which the Father deals with him, namely, "Even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." We cannot expect to abide in the Lord's love and be careless of his injunctions. The measure of our faithfulness to him will be indicated by our obedience to him, as the measure of his love for the Father was indicated by his obedience to the Father. The Apostle intimates this same thought and adds a little to it, saying, "For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:3). It is not enough that we keep the commandments, but that we keep them lovingly and loyally, of good pleasure, that we do not consider them grievous but rather are to be glad to be in line, in harmony, with all the Lord's righteous provisions and arrangements. Let us all more and more seek this spirit of full heart-harmony with all the principles of righteousness laid down by our Lord Jesus—his commandments.

Our Lord's commandments are not the ten commandments of Moses, but more or less according to the standpoint of expression. They are less in the sense of requirements on our flesh; they are more as respects the requirements on our hearts. Briefly summed up he tells us that his law is love with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength to the Father and for our neighbor as for ourselves. This is possible to our regenerated hearts though not possible to our imperfect flesh. The Lord's requirement, therefore, is that with our hearts we serve this law of God and with our flesh we shall do to the best of our ability, and we have the assurance that in the resurrection we shall have the new bodies in which we shall be able to serve the Lord thoroughly, completely, satisfactorily.

MY JOY REMAIN, YOUR JOY BE FULL

Our Lord concluded this little lesson, so short and yet so full of meaning and depth, by an illustration of why he gave it, saying, "These things have I spoken unto you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be filled full." This is my commandment that ye love one another even as I have loved you." Wonderful words of life are these that have come down to us through the centuries, that have helped to cheer and encourage so many of the Lord's followers in the narrow way.

Many are the objections that are raised to pure and undefiled religion: Some complain that it is gloomy, joyless, a fetter upon heart and brain; that it drives men from every temple of pleasure with a whip of small cords; that it posts notice, "No trespassing here," in every field of enjoyment. Our answer must be that this is a mistake: that these are the words of those who know not, neither do they understand the things whereof they speak.

Those who have truly made a covenant with the Lord, who have truly accepted him, who have truly laid down their lives at his feet and become his followers in sincerity, are filled with his joy, as he promised; and it is an increasing joy, which day by day and year by year becomes more nearly complete—a joy which will not be complete, however, until that which is perfect shall come and that which is in part shall be done away, until in the resurrected condition we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known and appreciate to the full the joys of our Lord, hearing his welcome invitation, "Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

We enter now into those joys through faith, through anticipation, through rest of heart, but by and by we shall enter upon them in the actual sense. Meantime it is the world, that has not submitted itself to the Lord, that has not appreciation of the joys of the Lord, that is full of selfishness and ambition and strife and envy; it knoweth us not even as it knew him not; it knows not of our joys in the Master's service even as it never appreciated the joys of our Lord in doing the Father's will, even at the sacrifice of his life.

"AS I HAVE LOVED YOU"

It does not astonish us that the Lord directs that we love one another, but we stand amazed with the thought contained in these words, "As I have loved you." How can we love one another with the same love which the Lord has for each of us? is our first inquiry. We reply that this is impossible at first, but as we become more and more filled with the Spirit of the Lord, we approximate more nearly to this standard of perfect love to all that are his, a love that not only would refuse to do injury to another, but a love which would delight to do good to a brother, yea, to do good at the expense of one's own time and convenience. Thus Jesus loved us all and redeemed us with his precious blood, and to whatever extent we grow in grace, knowledge and love of him, in that same proportion we are Christlike and have a Christlike love. This love is the fulfilling of the Law, and whoever has such a love for the brethren will have undoubtedly a full, sympathetic love for the whole groaning creation, and will be glad to do now the little that is possible to be done on their behalf, and doubly glad that the Lord in his own good time and pleasure has a great and wonderful blessing for every member of Adam's race.

Some one has said, "Do not imagine that you have got these things because you know how to get them. As well try to feed upon a cook book." There is a good and an important thought here: it is very important that we should know these things and understand the Lord's plans and appreciate the principles laid down in his Word, but though we had all knowledge it would not benefit us unless we used it. Let us not think of getting the benefit of the Lord's gracious provisions by merely learning how to get them, but let us take the necessary steps—see that we are fully his, see that we live close to him, see that we are fruit bearers, see that we abide in his love, in the Father's love, in the love for one another, which he has enjoined.

JULY 21

To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth—John 18:37.

It was our Lord's faithfulness to the Truth that brought upon Him the opposition of those who were blinded by the Adversary. It was His witness to the Truth that cost Him His life, and it was the giving of His life in defense of the Truth that constituted the redemption price. Similarly all of the Lord's followers are to bear witness to the Truth—the truth in respect to God's character and Plan. It is such witness to the Truth that is to cost all the true followers of Jesus their lives in presenting themselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through Christ Jesus. Let each one who hopes to be a sharer with the Prince of Life in the Kingdom witness to the Truth—a good confession respecting the Kingdom, its foundation and ultimate superstructure in glory—Z '99, 123 (R 2470).

Our Lord had a specific mission in this world. It was to be a witness to the truth, not in all its domains, but in its religious aspects, and faithfully did He carry out the mission entrusted to Him by the Father. He used every opportunity, whether in season or out of season, to carry His mission forward. Neither fear of opposition nor desire for favor could tempt Him from His course of faithfulness—P '32, 95.

Parallel passages: Isa. 55:4; 1 Tim. 6:13; Rev. 1:5; 3:14; Rom. 15:8-12; Matt. 7:21-23; 10:32, 33; John 1:15-18; 9:22-38; 12:42, 43; Rom. 10:8-10.

Hymns: 44, 116, 210, 164, 260, 272, 275.

Poems of Dawn, 46: *The Narrow Way*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 201 (R 5720).

Questions: Have I this week witnessed to the Truth? How? Why? With what results?

THE NARROW WAY

MATT. 7:14.

"DEAR Lord, the way seems very *dark*,
I cannot see."

"Yes, child, I know, but I will be thy Light—
Come, follow Me!"

"Dear Lord, so *lonely* is this way—
Where are my friends?"

"My child, dost thou forget how far from Me
Their pathway tends?"

"Dear Master, I am growing *weak*,

I scarce can stand."
"O, foolish child, trust not in thine own strength,
Come, take My hand;

"For *I* have trod this way before,
So dark to thee.
I know each step, its weariness and pain,
Wilt trust in Me?"

"Yea, Lord, though *friendless, lonely, dark,*
This way may be,
I will be strong. Beloved Guide, lead on,
I follow Thee!"

R5720: HOW TO PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

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

THE Truth is always to be spoken humbly, but fearlessly. The Christian is not at liberty to speak anything but the Truth. If he is a professed minister of the Gospel when the Truth reaches him, he is not to continue to preach error just because the congregation employing him do not want the Truth. A worldling in the pulpit would have no qualms of conscience. He would reason, "I am giving these people the very things they want. They are paying my salary, and this is purely a business proposition." The worldling calling himself a minister of Christ would take this position because he had never received the Spirit, the disposition, of the Truth—the Holy Spirit of begetting.

But one who receives the Truth in the love of it, who imbibes its spirit, would say, "I now see that many of the things I have been preaching for years are injurious, dishonoring to God, misrepresenting His character, and to some extent, at least, turning people away from the Truth. This is the very opposite of what I wish to do. I cannot longer dispense error. I am not an ambassador of a denomination or a congregation, I am an ambassador for God. I am not the servant of this congregation, but the servant of the Lord. If I should still preach error when I have come to see the Truth, I would be guilty before God."

THE HONOR OF OUR AMBASSADORSHIP

Such a faithful servant of God would by his uncompromising attitude lose his standing and his honor amongst men. But all this is not to be considered; for he would gain instead the favor and blessing of the Lord. The great Apostle declared that he counted all things but loss and dross, that he might win Christ and "be found *in Him*"—that he might gain a place in the everlasting Kingdom of Messiah. Those who succeed in so doing will win the "pearl of great price." So, then, the speaking of the Truth is absolutely essential to the life

of the Christian. The Truth of God's Word is to be enshrined above all else in the heart of the child of God, and he should esteem it a blessed privilege to speak it.

Our power of speech, of communicating our thoughts to others, is the greatest power we possess—the most far-reaching. It is a potent factor for either good or evil, for either Truth or error. The opportunity to speak the Truth, to confess Christ before men, either publicly or privately, is a great privilege. In order to be a servant pleasing to the Lord, one who can be effectively used of Him, one must speak the Truth *in love*. When one has just entered the family of God, less might be reasonably expected of him than after he had been for some time in the family. We, as God's dear children are to grow in the likeness of our dear Elder Brother, our Pattern, our Head. We are to "grow up into Him in all things." We are to recognize that He is the Head of the Church; and that if we are to be members of His Body in glory, we must be developed. We are to bear the fruitage of the Holy Spirit, that we may be qualified to share in the future that glorious Kingdom which is to bless the world.

"EXPRESSION DEEPENS IMPRESSION"

We are to exercise our function of ambassadorship—we are to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of the darkness into His marvelous light. And in telling the Message of His Grace we shall grow spiritually. "He that watereth shall himself also be watered." As we proclaim the Truth from an honest, earnest, loving heart we shall become more and more filled with it ourselves. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth and it tendeth to poverty"—to leanness of soul. As we give out to others, our own store of blessing is increased. We are to develop day by day this quality of *love*. Why is this? Because it will make us like God, and that is the one thing to be desired—the one thing necessary.

Our God has other glorious attributes besides Love, but this attribute is the especially predominating, overruling quality of His character. God's Justice co-operates with His Love. And His Wisdom would not attempt to carry out any plans that His Love would not approve. So as we grow, this quality of Love should be more and more manifest. We are to see that our words are loving, kind, gentle. We are to curb any tendency to self-glorification or show in telling of God's great Plan to others. Let us keep self out of sight, that the beauty of the Truth may be seen. Our manner of presenting the Message to others has much to do with its effectiveness. Speaking the Truth in love, we shall not only be accomplishing much more for others, but the Message will also be more impressed upon our own mind.

Whoever appreciates these things of God and then speaks forth in love and sincerity will receive a blessing in his own heart and mind, and the Truth will become clearer and sweeter. In helping others he will be helping himself. Thus the various features of the Plan of God become more firmly engraved upon his mind.

NATURAL QUALITIES THAT NEED RESTRAINT

In the cases of the stronger characters which come into Christ, we see a special need for watchfulness in the proclamation of the Truth. Those naturally lacking in combativeness would not be inclined to bring strong pressure to bear upon others in connection with their presentation of Truth. If their Message did not seem to be favorably received, they would be likely to feel, They do not like to hear what I have to say; so I will not talk any more on the subject. They might be too easily discouraged. But those who have more force, or combativeness, are liable to manifest this disposition in the way they present the Truth. They are inclined to be *too* forceful—to present the matter as an *obligation*.

But we are to remember that this is not a compulsory matter now. It is now an invitation, and is designed only for the meek, the teachable. By and by force will be needed, and used. Those who now have the hearing ear need only the word of instruction and counsel. Those who require force are not the ones the Lord is now seeking. If any of the Lord's ambassadors endeavor to crowd the Message upon others, it will arouse antagonism and lose its power. Thus our King would not be so well served, and hence would not be so well pleased.

Others of the Lord's people may have great approbateness. They may have pride and may wish to show off their ability in language, or their skill in handling the Scriptures. They might give out the Message with the idea of arousing in others the thought, "See how much he knows—he is a master at handling the Bible!" Approbateness seems to present quite a subtle temptation to many. This tendency of the flesh must be very carefully watched and subdued, or it will ruin the usefulness of the Christian and greatly hinder his own growth. Some naturally like to be in the lime-light, while others are just as anxious to keep out of it. The one might have to force himself in order to speak the Truth in public as an ambassador, while the other would need to curb himself somewhat. The only way for the latter to do is to learn to speak the Truth in love and in humility—to speak it out of love to God and love to the brethren. The Plan of the Ages is God's Plan. We have nothing whereof to boast. Therefore we should present that Plan in meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness and love.

JULY 22

The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all—Psa. 34:18, 19.

A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again—Prov. 24:16.

If at any time we find we have taken a wrong course which is irretrievable, we may expect it to bring the disappointments, as the Lord has foretold; but He may permit it to bring, as well, some blessings in the way of contrition of heart, and humility toward the Lord, and greater zeal, watchfulness and faithfulness for the future. Thus even some of the blunders of life may become stepping-stones to higher planes of grace and truth—Z '03, 217 (R 3222).

Failures should never be permitted to discourage us. While they give evidence of weakness, against which we must be on our guard, they also bring us instruction and correction highly useful to us. In spite of them the Lord gives comfort to our hearts, assuring us of His sympathy, His forgiveness and His help in every time of need. We should rise from them as quickly as possible, and, undaunted, go forward in the Lord's name—P '26, 95.

Parallel passages: Deut. 4:29-31; Job 22:29; Psa. 51:17; 95:7, 8; 147:3; Prov. 1:23; 28:13, 14; Isa. 57:15; 61:1-3; Hos. 14:1, 2; Jonah 2:4-9; Mic. 7:19; Luke 18:10-14; John 6:37; 15:7, 17-24; Jas. 4:8; 1 John 1:9.

Hymns: 104, 103, 101, 231, 233, 293, 305.

Poems of Dawn, 140: *Stumbling Stones or Stepping Stones*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 115 (R 5217).

Questions: Have I stumbled and failed this week? What has my heart's attitude been amid such experiences? How did the Lord manifest His corrections, sympathy and help?

STUMBLING STONES OR STEPPING STONES?

I HAVE been sorely tried, dear Lord, been sorely
tried today,
The sun hath veiled his brightness, and a cloud hangs
o'er my way;
Why is my heart so heavy, and the daylight cold
and gray?
I've tried to please Thee, I have striven to faithful be
and true,
I've sought for heavenly wisdom in the thing that I
should do;
Yet I've been "put to grief"; and oh, can I have

grieved Thee, too?
A fellow-pilgrim on the road a wound hath given
to me,
Its sting and smart I keenly feel—its need I can-
not see.
Stumbling stone or stepping stone, O Lord, which
shall it be?

A sorrow came to me today—a grief so dense and
deep,
The shades of deepest darkness about my heartstrings
creep;
The tears have flowed unceasing, till no power is left
to weep.
I bow beneath my weight of woe, speechless and
stunned; my heart
Sinks down like lead within my breast; its bitter ache
and smart
Seem almost more than I can bear. A sharp and
cruel dart
Hath pierced me, and I prostrate lie. O Father,
speak to me!
Thy hand lies hard upon me; can this trial come from
Thee?
Stepping stone or stumbling stone, which shall this
sorrow be?

* * *

A blessing came this day to me, a joy surpassing
sweet,
A glad way opens up to me, wherein my willing
feet
Turn joyfully; how blest I am within this dear
retreat!
My way had dark and lonely been for many a weary
year;
My Lord hath brought this gift to me when all was
sad and drear;
Now, where my path was bleak, the flowers of love
and bliss appear.
And, yet, dear Lord, this blessing which Thy love
hath given to me
May fill my heart too fully, and may wean my soul
from Thee—
Then, stepping stone or stumbling stone, my God,
which shall it be?

Momentous question! on its answer my eternal joy
Hangs trembling; shall I be refined as gold without
alloy?
These woes and blessings potent are to save or to
destroy.
The time flies on! the "harvest" wanes, the glorious
end is near!
O Master, shall I lose e'en now the "prize" I hold
so dear?
Shall woes or joys of life have power to dull my lis-
tening ear?
Shall I be lured by siren song, while strains of heaven
break
On ears attuned? Oh, guide me, Lord, and keep me
still awake.
May I rejoice to walk with Thee, and suffer for Thy
sake!

But I am weak; O Master, dear, do thou my spirit
thrill,
Grant me thy grace, and strength impart to do Thy
perfect will,
And in affliction or in joy obey and love Thee still.
Almighty Lord, to thee I fly—no other help I know;
Oh, aid me in my need, I pray, and make my heart
to glow
With holy fire, and on me, Lord, Thy precious love
bestow.
I hear Thee speak, I will obey, I stretch my hands
to Thee,
In every providence of Thine, Thy changeless love
I see,
And stepping stones to heavenly heights each pain
And joy shall be.

R5217: GOD'S SYMPATHY FOR HIS PEOPLE

"Thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."—Isaiah 57:15.

JEHOVAH is the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity. Before the mountains were brought forth, or the hills, before the First-born was created, He is God. To Moses at

the burning bush, He said, "I AM THAT I AM." (Exodus 3:14.) Our God is very great, very wise, very high. Nevertheless, the Scriptures show us that He is also very sympathetic. He is a God of Mercy and of Love.

The passage from which our text is taken informs us that if God were to contend with humanity, the end of the strife would be that mankind would be blotted out of existence. But He remembers that we are dust, and has compassion upon us. In this respect He is different from the gods of the heathen, who are domineering, apparently bent on wreaking vengeance upon those in their power.

Besides being very great and lofty, our God is particularly sympathetic towards those who are of a broken and contrite heart, whose spirit is humble, who realize that they are imperfect, who desire to be in accord with Him, and to dwell in holiness. To such He is ever near—to revive the spirit of the humble, to give them strength. He will not trample them into the dust, as many an *earthly* potentate has done to his subjects, but will assist them in the right way, and revive the heart of the contrite. These are to know that our God is a God of sympathy, compassion and love, who takes pleasure in reviving their hearts and in bringing them back into harmony with Him, if they are willing to be led.

DISCOURAGEMENT WITH SELF A FAVORABLE CONDITION

There is a difference between a broken and a contrite heart. A heart is broken when it is bowed down with grief and sorrow; a heart is contrite when it has a quiet, deep, continual sorrow for acts not in harmony with righteousness. A broken *will* is not necessarily the same; for there are those whose wills are broken, but who are not submissive to the Divine will.

To be repentant is to be thoroughly submissive to the Divine will, and implies a change of mental attitude toward sin. This humble, discouraged condition becomes a very favorable one if the person will seek Divine assistance, if he will become submissive to the Lord and ready to do the Divine will. Such will surely receive the blessing of God; for the Lord is very nigh to every one who is broken-hearted. The way to full consecration would be very short to him.

If such as be of contrite heart will be submissive to the Lord, He will save them from their difficulties and bring them into a large place, as the Prophet David states. (Psalm 18:19.) This does not necessarily mean that He will deliver them from financial troubles, but that He will give them peace and rest, which are better than money. If they have family troubles, they will find in Him a superior Friend, who is able and willing to administer superior consolation and refreshment.

Come, ye disconsolate! where'er ye languish,
Come to the mercy-seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts; here tell your anguish;
Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.

Joy of the desolate, light of the straying,
Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure!
Here speaks the Comforter, tenderly saying,
Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot cure.

THE LORD'S METHOD OF DELIVERANCE

The Scriptures assure us that, "There is none righteous, no, not one." There is *relative* righteousness, however, which God can approve. Those who are seeking to be in harmony with Him to the best of their ability, who are walking in the ways of righteousness, and at the same time are trusting in the precious blood of our Redeemer—such are spoken of as righteous. Of these it is said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matthew 5:6.

This class, however, shall have afflictions. The Scriptures tell us that all who will live godly lives shall suffer. (Acts 14:22; 2 Timothy 3:12; Romans 5:3-5.) The reason why this is true is that the world is traveling in the opposite direction to righteousness—in the way of selfishness and gratification of the flesh. We read, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15.) This is especially true of this Gospel Age, when some are following in the footsteps of the Master. It was also true of the Jewish Age, when some were seeking to walk in the way of righteousness. The Lord delivered them out of their afflictions, not in the sense of shielding them from trials, but in that of not permitting them to be overcome by their difficulties.

The Ancient Worthies fully appreciated the Divine favor exercised in their behalf, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, in order that they might have the continuance of that favor and larger blessings by and by. God delivered them out of their trials and difficulties by not permitting these to overcome them. This was also true of our Lord, and is true of the Church as well. The Lord delivers us out of our trials and difficulties, so that mentally we are not oppressed by them in the same way as are others. He will sustain and support us in our experiences and will eventually deliver us by giving us a share in the First Resurrection.

The sons of God by adoption are, during this Gospel Age, especially beset by trials and difficulties. If they should fall, however, the fact that they have stumbled will not make them feel like going back into sin, if their hearts are of the right stamp. On the contrary, they will feel like St. Peter, who, when others were stumbling, said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." (John 6:68.) The true people of God have no desire to go to any one but Him. If they stumble, they recover themselves, avail themselves of His arrangements for forgiveness and press on. By these stumblings they learn of their own weaknesses, and then fortify themselves so that they may be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.—Ephesians 6:10.

A just man will not fall into sin. The very most that could happen to him would be to stumble. There are various causes for stumbling. But if the heart is right, the man will rise again; for the Lord will show him that he has made a mistake and will point out the way

to him by which he may recover himself. If he is a lover of righteousness, he will desire to press on toward that which is right, just, approved of the Lord, even if he should stumble many times.—Psalm 37:23, 24; Prov. 24:16.

THE EVIDENCE OF FAVOR WITH GOD

So far as our humanity is concerned, we are undone by reason of the fall. It behooves us, then, to be very humble, to feel our own littleness, our own fallen condition. It becomes us to be very contrite, very much in opposition to sin, to feel that sin is the great blight upon the whole race, and that God will not be in harmony with anything except that which is righteous and holy.

All, therefore, who would be in harmony with God must be repentant in respect to their own shortcomings and must be appreciative of His lofty standards—His holy standards. He, in turn, informs these that they have His sympathy, and that they shall have His succor. He appreciates the attitude of mind in which they are; and therefore, as our text tells us, He is ready to revive the spirit of the humble and contrite ones. To such He will show His salvation; to others He will not.

Only the humble-minded can really appreciate their own condition. God not only will revive their spirit, but is willing to lift them up and to make them again sons of God, with all that this implies of blessing. He has this attitude toward the humble and contrite in the present time, and He has *always* had this spirit toward the humble and contrite ones. Throughout Christ's reign this humble class will have His favor and blessing. Only the humble and contrite ones have the opportunity of becoming joint-heirs with our Lord.

God resists the proud. To the humble He gives grace, and opens the eyes of their understanding. They become His children because they are in the attitude to receive His blessings and to be guided by His instruction. The text applies not only in the present time, but will have an application in the next Age. "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." (Isaiah 62:10.) These words are all intended to indicate the preparations for the incoming Age. There is no provision for the proud, none for the haughty, none for the self-conscious—but all for the humble-minded.

If God has these blessings in store for the humble only, and if the humble are few in number at the present time, what of the others of humanity? God is allowing now a humiliating influence to work with people, which should teach them humility and lead them to be contrite of heart. But much more will this be the case in the next Age. "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9.) All the blessings will be upon the contrite and humble. And this will be so markedly before the attention of the people that all will know a change has taken place.

Now the humble and contrite are trodden down in the street. Now the proud are happy. "Now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, even they that tempt God are delivered." (Malachi 3:15.) But in the new Kingdom every one that

exalteth himself shall be *abased*, and the *humble* shall be *exalted*. (Luke 14:11.) God has provided a thousand years for the education of all. A thousand years may seem a short period for this work when we know that for six thousand years things have been going wrong. But we must recollect that during the six thousand years, many of the people have lived but a short time—many dying in infancy.

In the new order of things this will be changed, and each will live longer. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." (Isaiah 65:20.) "Judgment [*justice*] also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place."—Isaiah 28:17.

And then it will not be necessary for one to say to another, "Know the Lord; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 31:34.) The high standard that God has for His people will be recognized. Then all who have humility and the right condition of heart will come into harmony with God. All who refuse to come into harmony with God will get the wages of sin—the Second Death.

THE TIME, MY SOUL, IS SHORT!

No time to linger by the way,
No time for ease, no time for play;
No time for earthly loves or joys,
No time for worldly cares or toys—
The time, my soul, is short!

No time to murmur or complain,
No time to heed the heart's dull pain;
No time for tears or mournful song,
No time to ask, How far? How long?—
The time, my soul, is short!

Ah, yes! 'tis short—yet time enough
To run thy course, so steep and rough;
Just time to reap "the fields," so white,
Before the coming of "the night"—
Just time, my soul, just time!

Just time to make thy heart more pure,
Just time to make thy "calling sure,"
Just time to enter through "the door,"
To reign with Christ for evermore—
Just time, my soul, just time!
GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

JULY 23

If any provide not for his own ... he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever—1 Tim. 5:8.

"The faith" includes thoughts of love, sympathy, interest and care for others, especially for them of the household of faith. How it gives us an insight into our Lord's sympathetic nature, to find Him thinking in the interest of others at the very time when He Himself is overwhelmed in trouble! His own agony did not hinder Him from thinking of His mother, and making provision for her comfort. ... We note the choice of John: it was doubtless because of, first of all, his loving, tender disposition; secondly, his zeal for the Lord and the Truth; and thirdly, his courage in pressing near to be with his dying Master in His closing hours, at the risk of his own life. Let us note these characteristics, as being those which the Lord approves, that noting them we may cultivate them in ourselves, and thus be granted special opportunities for service by this same Master—Z '99, 127 (R 2473).

Upon each one in this life some responsibility is placed, varying in nature according to his position. Those who are placed in families have special responsibilities incumbent upon them, according to their place therein. The head of a family is duty-bound to provide for his dependents. A refusal to recognize and discharge this responsibility is a repudiation of the faith. Such a one is worse than an infidel—P '36, 95.

Parallel passages: Gen. 18:19; 30:30; Prov. 13:22; Isa. 58:7; Rom. 12:17; 2 Cor. 8:21; 12:14; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 6:4; Matt. 18:17; Titus 2:4, 5.

Hymns: 196, 343, 94, 99, 121, 129, 186.

Poems of Dawn, 93: *Bearing God's Burdens*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 218: (R 4854).

Questions: Did I this week provide for my own? Why? How? With what results?

BEARING GOD'S BURDENS

I LONG had borne a weary load
Along life's rough and thorny road,
And oftentimes had wondered why
My friend walked burdenless, while I
Was forced to carry day by day
The cross which on my shoulders lay.
When, lo, one day the Master laid
Another cross on me! Dismayed
And faint, and trembling and distressed,
I cried, "Oh, I have longed for rest
These many days. I cannot bear
This other heavy load of care.

I pray Thee, Lord, behold *this one*—
Shall I bear both while he hath none?"
No answer came. The cross was laid
On my poor back, and I was weighed
Down to the earth. And as I went
Toiling along and almost spent,
Again I cried, "Lord, have I been
Untrue to Thee? Is it for sin
That I have done, that I must still
Carry this cross against my will?"
"My child," the Master's voice returned,
"Hast thou not yet the lesson learned?
The burden thou hast borne so long
Hath only made thee grow more strong,
And fitted thee to bear for Me
This other load I lay on thee.
Thy brother is too weak as yet
To have a cross upon him set.
God's burdens rest upon the strong—
They stronger grow who bear them long,
And each new burden is a sign
That greater power to bear is thine."
So now no longer I repine,
Because a heavy cross is mine,
But struggle onward with the prayer,
Make me more worthy, Lord, to bear!

R4854: PROVIDING FOR ONE'S NATURAL HOUSEHOLD

"If any provide not for his own, and especially those of his own house [margin, kindred], he hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."—1 Tim. 5:8.

THIS PASSAGE may be properly paraphrased thus: He who provides not for those dependent upon him, especially those *of his own household*, hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

This relates primarily to a Christian *husband* and his duty *toward his wife and his children*. If the husband should cease to provide for the wife, cease to cherish her and, on the contrary, should desert her, either in heart, in affection, or actually, it would imply that he had seriously departed from the Lord, from the guidance of the Spirit, and from "The wisdom that cometh from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits."

Under these circumstances we could not consider such an one approved of the Lord as an "*overcomer*," until after reformation. Then, too, every parent owes it to his child to

give him more of a start in life than merely the imperfect, dying little body born into the world. Having brought children into the world, it becomes the duty of parents to see to their *reasonable establishment in it*. This includes not only the dispensing of *food* and *raiment* during childhood and youth, but also the provision of *intellectual* and *moral* instructions, to which we have more than once referred; and all this means laying up, aside from personal consumption, in the interest of the children.

Seeing the uncertainties of life, it would not be an unreasonable application of the Scriptural injunction for the parent to have something laid up for the necessities of his family in the event of his death before they had reached maturity. It is not our thought that the Apostle meant that parents should seek to lay up fortunes for their children to quarrel over and be injured by. The child fairly well born and who receives a reasonable education and guidance to maturity *is well off* and has a rich legacy in himself; and the parent who has made such provision for his children has every reason to feel that he has been ruled in the matter by a sound mind, the Holy Spirit, the disposition approved by the Lord, even though he leave no property to his family, or not more than a shelter or home. Such a man has discharged his stewardship; and such children will be sure in the end to appreciate his faithfulness.

We should manifest an interest in those related to us by *ties of blood* more than in mankind in general. If the Spirit of the Lord leads us to be kind and gracious toward humanity in general, it would imply that our sentiments toward our *relatives* should be *especially considered* by us and be, to the extent of our opportunities, helpful. Nevertheless, it would not be wise, according to our judgment, nor in harmony with the instructions of the Scriptures, nor in accord with the examples which they set before us of our Lord's conduct and the conduct of the Apostles, for us to extend a very special fellowship to our earthly relatives; or to receive them and treat them better than, or even as well as, we would treat the household of faith.

We here make an exception of such close relationships as would have a demand upon us in accord with the Apostle's words, "He that provideth not for *his own*, ... hath *denied the faith*." In general—outside of the exceptions above—we are to apply the Apostle's words, "As we have opportunity let us do good unto all men, especially unto those who are of the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10.) Next to the household of faith should come our more distant relatives.

Of course, from the standpoint of the New Creation, the new relationship, the members of the Body of Christ would be members of our own household, and their temporalities would be *in some measure* our responsibility. We are, however, living in a time not the same as that in which our Lord lived; now, there are public charities; for this reason this passage would not apply with the same force as when the Apostle spoke these words. One would be making proper provisions, sometimes, when he paid his share of the taxes toward the general weal; and it might, perhaps, be necessary to avail *himself* of a share in those benefits, either on his own account later, or on account of some of his own friends—members of his family.

BUILDING ONE ANOTHER UP IN THE HOLY FAITH

Christ is the Head of His own household. He does not intend that His people shall be unnecessarily burdensome to each other, but each should feel a responsibility in respect to others and gladly lend a helping hand to strengthen, encourage and bless, "building each other up in the most holy faith." It evidently was the intention of our Lord to draw together His followers as a *new family*, a *new household*, the "*household of faith*." Hence, we find the repeated injunction and encouragement for mutual fellowship, mutual helpfulness and regular association, with the promise that where two or three meet in the Lord's name He will be specially present with them to grant a blessing; and that His people should not forget the assembling of themselves together.

Returning to our text we note that the Apostle says that one neglecting his obligations to *his own family* would be *denying the faith*. The faith that we profess is not merely a faith in certain things that we are getting, but it affects also *matters of propriety*, our *character*, all of life's affairs in general. We profess to love God more than others love Him. We profess to love our neighbor as ourselves. We profess to take this as our standard. If a man's responsibility to his neighbor is that he love him as himself, then this would bear in with *double force* as to his *own family*. If one is derelict *there*, he is *misrepresenting the doctrines of Christ which he professes*. To live contrary to the doctrines one professes would be to *deny his faith*. And so one who would live in violation of these recognized standards of life would be living below the world instead of above the world.

As for denying *the faith*, the thought is that there would be a lack of love, of sympathy, regarding the interests of the ones neglected and, therefore, a denying of the faith to that extent. What a perfect example of unselfishness we have in our Master, who, when in the greatest of trouble and anguish, was thinking sympathetically of others! We notice His provision for the welfare of His mother, whom He consigned to the care of the loving John, thus showing our Lord's approval of the noble characteristics displayed by John in pressing near to his Master in this trying hour!

JULY 24

The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much—Jas. 5:16.

Communion with the Lord in prayer brings increased confidence in the Lord's supervision of our affairs; increased faith in all the exceeding great and precious promises of His Word; increased realization of His leadings, past and present; increased love for all the brethren of Christ; and increased solicitude for their welfare and spiritual progress. Prayer is thus closely and actively identified with progress in spiritual things, progress in the fruits of the Spirit, toward God, the brethren and all men—Z '00, 268 (R 2692).

A righteous man is one who is both justified and consecrated. As such he has access in Christ by one Spirit unto the Father, fully assured that his prayers offered up in the name and merit of Christ will be answered. Accordingly his prayers are effectual in securing the Divine response. So also are his prayers fervent, flowing as they do from ardent desires for things that will glorify God in Christ—P '30, 79.

Parallel passages: Deut. 9:18-20; Josh. 10:12; 1 Sam. 12:18; 2 Kings 20:2-5; Psa. 10:17; 34:15; 145:18; Prov. 15:29; 28:9; John 9:31; 1 John 3:22.

Hymns: 1, 35, 50, 218, 323, 239, 274.

Poems of Dawn, 61: *Trust Him More*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 243 (R 5744).

Questions: For what did I effectually pray this week? How did I overcome hindrances thereto?

TRUST HIM MORE

SINCE the Father's arm sustains thee,
Peaceful be;
When a chastening hand restrains thee,
It is He.
Know His love in full completeness
Fills the measure of thy weakness;
If He wounds thy spirit sore,
Trust Him more.

Without measure, uncomplaining,
In His hand
Lay whatever things thou canst not
Understand.
Though the world thy folly spurneth,
From thy faith in pity turneth,
Peace thine inmost soul shall fill,

Lying still.

Like an infant, if thou thinkest
Thou canst stand,
Child-like, proudly pushing back
The proffered hand,
Courage soon is changed to fear,
Strength doth feebleness appear;
In His love if thou abide,
He will guide.

Therefore, whatso'er betideth,
Night or day,
Know His love for thee provideth
Good alway.
Crown of sorrow gladly take,
Grateful wear it for His sake,
Sweetly bending to His will,
Lying still.

To His own the Savior giveth
Daily strength;
To each troubled soul that striveth,
Peace at length.
Weakest lambs have largest share
Of this tender Shepherd's care.
Ask Him not, then, When? or How?
Only bow!

R5744: PRIVILEGES OF THE THRONE OF GRACE

"Let us therefore come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."—Hebrews 4:16.

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

implication is that we shall *need* all of these if we stand all the assaults to be expected in the evil day.

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

But with all the preparation the earnest Christian may make, he should see to it that there is a direct and continual communication between his heart and his Lord. In the Bible God has given us His Message, His promises, His instruction, in advance. Elsewhere St. Paul has declared that this Word "is sufficient, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." We appreciate this assurance and also realize our own unworthiness, our littleness and our imperfections. But despite all these our Lord has assured us that we may approach with courage the Throne of Heavenly Grace and there obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need—and forgiveness of sins.

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

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

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

will need, with all his armor, to cultivate and to use the privilege of prayer.—Ephesians 6:18.

THE MANNER OF ACCEPTABLE PRAYER

The foregoing reference tells us how prayer should be offered—"praying always *with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.*" We should lay emphasis on the words "*in the Spirit.*" Contrast this sort of prayer with others which are not "in the Spirit," but merely formalistic. We know that the heathen have great formalities in their prayers. The Chinese, for instance, have a wheel on which certain prayers are inscribed, and they think that the more times the wheel is turned around the more times the prayer goes up to their god. These are vain repetitions. But the Chinese are heathen—they have not learned of the true God. Others approach the true God, using vain repetitions, not knowing what they want or what is best for them or what is God's will. Some Christians use printed forms of petition which are not really their own sentiment or spirit, but which as worshipers they offer to the Lord in a more or less perfunctory manner. Some prayers are represented by beads. These are used by our Roman Catholic friends. Each bead represents a prayer, and the repetition is supposed to help the worshiper. He counts these beads over and over, repeating his prayer over each bead.

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

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

SELFISH PETITIONS UNJUSTIFIED

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

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

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

THE CHRISTIAN'S VITAL BREATH

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

The Lord's people are encouraged to take part in the prayer meeting, and individually they are to approach daily the Throne of Grace. Our Lord has declared that where two or three are met together in His name He will be in their midst. When a petition is made having something of general interest, we are to unite our hearts that the blessing may be spread abroad and extend to many hearts. The suggestion is that the Lord's people should do considerable of their praying in fellowship, in cooperation. But this would not hinder our private praying to the Lord, hourly if need be, telling him of our realization of our faults and our weaknesses and asking for the application of the precious merit of our Savior's sacrifice to remove every spot and every wrinkle from our garments. Such prayer is the very essence of the Christian's life, his "vital breath."

We find that the encroachments of the Adversary and of the world and of the flesh are liable to discourage us or to entangle us with the things of the present life. But the Lord has made it so possible for us to approach Him that we can go to Him with *any* trial, *any* difficulty, and be sure that our petition has Divine attention and will have Divine aid. We have spoken of our fleshly weaknesses as sometimes hindering us from prayer. There is a disposition on the part of many Christians, after having done something that has wounded the conscience, to avoid going to the Lord in prayer for awhile, to dread to go, to feel ashamed to go—thinking that they will feel better about it afterwards. This course is fraught with great danger; for it is likely to hinder our spiritual growth. Therefore it should not be permitted. We should realize that there is all the greater need of our going then to the Throne of Heavenly Grace. The Lord has known of our weaknesses in advance. He knew beforehand of our failure, and wished us to profit by the experience, that we might, in harmony with our prayers, become stronger against sin, against everything displeasing to Him.

ONE OF SATAN'S CHIEF METHODS OF ATTACK

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

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

We need not go to this extreme of thought, that Satan really does so tremble; but we may know that he realizes something of the power of prayer in the life of the child of God, and one of his chief lines of attack is to seek to cut off our communication with the Lord. Just as in warfare a skilful general seeks to cut off the enemy from its communication with headquarters, with its base of supplies, so with Satan. If he could succeed in cutting off our communication with the Heavenly Courts, we would be so much more liable to fall under his mischievous and wicked assaults. Then we would indeed be helpless, without Divine direction.

Is it asked, What could Satan do to cut off our communication? We reply that there are various ways of intruding upon the human mind—thoughts may enter the mind while the child of God is at prayer or at other times—thoughts of business, of pleasure, of sin, of

worldly interests and projects, etc. We do not know how much power the Adversary is given in connection with the Lord's people. We *do know* that he is powerless to interfere with their *will*. But he has power to stimulate certain organs of our minds, so that unless we are very alert we might be cut off from proper fellowship with the Lord, and our Christian courage might become more or less weakened. Thus we would be proportionately less able to resist the world, the flesh and the Adversary.

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

JULY 25

There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another?—Jas. 4:12.

It is in harmony with this thought that the Apostle Paul declares in one place that neither the world nor the brethren were capable of judging him—that only the Lord, who could read the heart and know all the conditions and testings and weaknesses to be striven against, could properly judge. He even declares, "Yea, I judge not mine own self" (1 Cor. 4:3). It is an excellent plan neither to condemn others who claim to be walking conscientiously as children of the Lord, nor even to condemn ourselves under similar circumstances. We should simply press along day by day, doing the best we can to cultivate the heavenly graces and to serve our Master, leaving all the results with the Lord—Z '99, 139 (R 2479).

God is the Lawgiver in the sense that the laws governing all His free moral agents originate from His heart and mind, and have been written by Him in their hearts and minds. Accordingly, by right is He the law enforcer, dispensing life to those who remain in harmony with His law, and death to those who violate His law. This office precludes any, apart from His appointment, from occupying His judgment seat—P '35, 102.

Parallel passages: Eph. 4:31; Luke 6:37; Rom. 2:1; 9:20; 14:4, 13; 1 Cor. 4:5; Ex. 20:16; Matt. 10:28; Isa. 8:12, 13; Luke 12:4, 5; 1 Pet. 3:14, 15; Heb. 7:25.

Hymns: 11, 45, 46, 83, 227, 23, 95.

Poems of Dawn, 144: *Judge Not by Outward Appearance.*

Tower Reading: Z '11, 120 (R 4798).

Questions: Have I this week felt and acted in harmony with God's judgeship? What experiences were helpful or hindering therein? What were the results?

JUDGE NOT BY OUTWARD APPEARANCE

JUDGE not; the workings of the brain
And of the heart thou canst not see;
What looks to thy dim eye a stain,
In God's pure light may only be
A scar, brought from some well-won field,
Where thou wouldst only faint and yield.

The look, the air, that frets thy sight,
May be a token that below
The soul hath closed in deadly fight
With some internal, fiery foe,
Whose glance would scorch thy smiling grace,
And cast thee, shuddering, on thy face.

The fall thou darest to despise;
May be the angel's slackened hand
Hath suffered it that he may rise
And take a firmer, truer stand;
Or, trusting less to earthly things,
May henceforth learn to use his wings.

And judge none lost; but wait and see,
With hopeful pity, not disdain;
The depth of the abyss may be
The measure of the height of pain
And love and glory that may raise
This soul to God in after days.

R4798: "UNTIL THE LORD COME"

"Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God."—1 Cor. 4:5.

THE TEACHING of the Apostle here is parallel to that of our Lord in his parable of the wheat and the tares. (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43.) When the zealous servant in the parable inquired, "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them [the tares] up?" the Lord answered, "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together *until the Harvest*; and in the time of Harvest I will say to the reapers,* Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

* "The reapers are the messengers" who bear the Truth, the indirect influence of which binds the tares. See SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. III., Chap. VI.

All through the Gospel Age the wheat and tares have grown together, and only the Lord, who could read the hearts, could distinguish between them with unerring precision. But both the Lord and the Apostle, in the above Scriptures, indicate a difference in the time of Harvest, and show that it will then be possible for the faithful saints to judge also. With this thought in view, they are told to "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come."

THE DAY OF THE LORD HAS COME

And now the day of the Lord has come: we are now living in the days of the *parousia* (presence) of the Son of Man—"the Lord of the Harvest," "having on his head a golden

crown [Divine authority] and in his hand [in his power] a sharp sickle"—the sickle of "present truth," the clear unfolding of the "Word of God [which] is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword ... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12; Matt. 9:38; Rev. 14:14.) And he is sending forth such "laborers," "angels" or "messengers" into this harvest as he sent forth into the harvest of the Jewish Age, viz., his consecrated and faithful disciples, bearing the Harvest message—the now fully revealed Plan of God and its appointed times and seasons.

The Truth thus sent forth is doing its appointed work. Like a magnet, it gathers to itself all who have an affinity for it. Thrust it in wherever you will, it will invariably accomplish its work of finding the loyal and faithful. And we can readily judge, from this affinity for the magnet, who are at heart true and loyal and faithful to the Lord. "My sheep hear my voice," said the Master, "and I know them, and they follow me; ... for they *know* my voice [they are able to recognize his voice of Truth]; and a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:27, 4, 5.) Again he says, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; *the Word that I have spoken*, the same shall judge him *in the last day*."—John 12:48.

THE TRUTH IS DOING ITS SEPARATING WORK

Thus, in this last day, the Harvest of the Age, this day of the Lord's invisible presence in the world, the Truth concerning the Divine Plan, which he has been revealing since 1874, and which is now being widely testified for the sealing of the elect, is doing its separating work; and the saints, who understand the present situation and watch with interest the progress of the harvest work, can see clearly where the lines of judgment are drawn between the faithful and the unfaithful. And often with astonishment they mark the divisions which the Truth makes when some prominent church-member, whom they had always judged to be faithful and true, manifests no affinity for the Truth, but turns from it and hugs the error more tightly than ever; or, when some other one, touched by the power of the Truth, awakes to earnest self-sacrifice in its service.

"Judge nothing before the time." How could we have judged before this time as to whose hearts were loyal and true? But now, in this day of the Lord's presence, when the magnet of Divine Truth makes manifest those who have and those who have not an affinity for it—those who refuse to recognize the voice of the "Good Shepherd," and will not follow his leading, and who flee not from the voice of strangers, but hearken to and follow them—it becomes our duty, as well as our privilege, to judge who is on the Lord's side and who is against him; for, says the Master, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."—Matt. 12:30.

"JUDGE NOTHING UNTIL THE LORD COME"

"Judge nothing *before* the time, until the Lord come"; but then let your spiritual senses be exercised in observing and marking the heretofore hidden things which the Truth, in its effects, is bringing to light. See how it is bringing to light the hitherto covered

deformities of the various creeds. Where is the intelligent Calvinist today who would not like to bury his creed sea deep, and forever hush this wrangle that has been exposing its deformity for a few years past? And where is the intelligent Arminian that is not trembling lest his turn may come next?

Everything is being dragged to the light, whether men are willing or not; for every hidden thing must be revealed. And not only the hidden things of creeds and systems of error and iniquity, but also the hidden things of individual character; "for there is *nothing* covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known. Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."—Luke 12:2, 3.

Ah! it is the day of reckoning with the Church, and "the Lord hath a controversy with his people." And this controversy, this reckoning, is not merely with the Church-nominal in its great sectarian branches; but in a special sense it is with those who have escaped from the bondage of error and sectarianism, and who, because faithful to their consciences and the truths brought to their attention, have been served by the Master with "present truth" as "meat in due season" (Luke 12:37), and who have been permitted to enter into some of the "deep things" of God's Plan.

THE CHURCH'S JUDGMENT NOW—THE WORLD'S NOT YET HERE

The world has not yet come into its judgment; its reckoning is yet future; but ours is now upon us. We, to whom the testimony of Divine Truth has been borne, before whose mental vision the whole Plan of God with all its specifications has been spread out and carefully explained, now stand on trial, yea, under the final tests of that trial, which is either to prove or disprove our worthiness to enter into the promised reward of the faithful. Many, as predicted (Psa. 91:7), are proving unworthy, and some still stand.

And among those whom we fellowship and bid Godspeed as faithful brethren in Christ, it is our duty to judge as to whether they are still faithful when the magnet of Truth makes their judgment so manifest in this day of the Lord; for it is written (2 John 10, 11), "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Here is a responsibility with reference to our endorsement of another which we cannot ignore and still be faithful; and except we judge of one's course by his fidelity or infidelity to the Truth, we shall be endorsing error quite as often as Truth. It is our privilege to know the Truth and to hold it firmly and to be faithful to it to the end, and if we so abide and walk in the light we will quickly know when one has turned away from the light into darkness, and will be able to render wholesome counsel and warning to such, and to help those who still retain enough of the spirit of meekness to accept the proffered assistance.

But, if such a one still pursue the path of darkness and call it light, thus deceiving himself and others, we cannot further endorse him and be guiltless. To do so is to add our influence in some measure, at least, to the error and in opposition to the Truth, and thus we become partaker of his evil deeds.

"IN THE LAST DAYS PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME"

The necessity for this careful discrimination and jealous guarding of the Truth in these last days is very manifest, both from the warnings of the Scriptures and from observation of their fulfilment. "In the last days," says the Apostle, "perilous times shall come." (2 Tim. 3:1.) Why? Because the Prince of darkness will make every possible effort to retain his power and dominion; and ignorance, error and superstition are his strongholds. He first used all his power to keep men in ignorance and to foster superstition. But now God's due time has come for knowledge to be increased (Dan. 12:4), and the Millennial dawn is breaking; and not only the Church but the world is now waking up and beginning to think.

So the policy of Satan at present is to devise plausible counterfeits of the Truth, whereby to entrap and mislead those who have been making progress in the knowledge of the Divine Plan. As, in the beginning of our Lord's ministry at his first advent, Satan's efforts were concentrated upon the one object of causing him to stumble, thereby to nip the Divine Plan in the bud; and as during the Gospel Age the consecrated members of the Body of Christ have been specially opposed and beset by him, so now his efforts are concentrated specially upon the last members of that Body, "the Feet of him," who are running the race for the prize of the high calling. It is for this cause that so many new and plausible forms of error have been brought forward within this Harvest period.

SATAN USING EVERY EFFORT TO STUMBLE THE FEET OF HIM THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE

Satan is using every effort to thwart God's Plan and to stumble the Feet. And God even more than permits this: he encourages it by *sending* these strong delusions of Satan among his professed followers—at the same time assuring all who at heart are faithful to his Word and to their covenant of self-sacrifice that they need fear no evil, for he will be with them and uphold them though a thousand fall at their side.

Ever since the Plan of God has been made manifest to the saints, the delusions of error have been rapidly multiplying. This was foretold by the Apostle who, referring to our Lord's second coming, said, "And then shall that wicked [the Man of Sin] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the bright-shining of his presence,* whose *parousia* [Christ's presence] is with+ [or accompanied by] the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they might all be condemned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."++—2 Thess. 2:8-12.

* The words, "Even him," here supplied by the translators, and not in the original text, as indicated by the italics, tend to obscure the sense of this passage.

+ The Greek word "*kata*," rendered "after" in the common version, should here be rendered "with," as the same word is rendered in Mark 1:27; 1 Cor. 2:1; Eph. 6:6.

++ Greek *adikia* should here be rendered *untruth* or *error* because contrasted with *truth*.

One after another the deluded ones who have fallen into the various snares set for their feet have become active advocates of the several causes they have espoused since they departed from the Truth, and are advanced by the Adversary as teachers, angels or messengers of new light. They never seem to realize that they have gone into darkness, but imagine they have made great strides of progress in the light. This is because they have been overcome by the strong delusions of this evil day. They verily mistake the darkness for the light, the error for the Truth. But, though they be cast thus into the outer darkness of the world and of the nominal professor, thank God, we can now see that by and by the shining forth of the Sun of Righteousness in the Millennial morning shall open all the error-blinded eyes to the full and glorious Truth, though too late to assist any to win the great prize of joint-heirship in the Kingdom.

THE STRONG DELUSIONS SHALL CAUSE THE UNWORTHY TO BELIEVE THE UNTRUTH

However, none are ever permitted to be thus overcome who have not in some way been unfaithful to the Truth and hence unworthy of it. Upon all such God has said he would send the strong delusion, so that they shall believe a lie. The Truth being designed for those only who are worthy of it—the elect—all others are bound to lose it. But it is impossible to deceive the "very elect." God will keep them by his mighty power because of their faithfulness and loyalty to him.

The Lord distinguishes between the nominally elect and the finally elect, and so should we. Not all who have accepted of the Redeemer's favor of justification from guilt, and have heard and accepted the high calling to joint-heirship with Christ in his Kingdom and glory, will attain that great prize. All such have entered the race as now the nominally elect, and all such are eligible to membership in the glorified Church as the finally elect; but in order to gain that prize they must fulfil the conditions specified when they entered the race—when they in Christ's name and merit made a covenant with God, to sacrifice themselves in his service. In no other way can they make their calling and *election* sure.

**"LET HIM THAT THINKETH HE STANDETH TAKE HEED
LEST HE FALL"**

It is this nominally elect class that is being tried now; and God is now making manifest the secret counsels of the hearts of his people. He puts us all on guard, too, saying, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"; and telling us to take heed that no man take our crown.

How great is the responsibility of our present position before God, the great Judge of all hearts! He has shown us special favor in revealing to us the wonders of his Plan and in setting before us the grand prize of our high calling. Thus far we were counted worthy of those favors and eligible to the prize of joint-heirship with Christ. How worthy have we proved ourselves since receiving this knowledge? Have we received it with meekness and humility and with a gratitude which manifests itself in active service of the Truth—in proclaiming it to others and in defending it and standing by it nobly in the midst of all the reproaches hurled against it? Have we refused to compromise the Truth to any extent to avoid its otherwise inevitable reproach?

If we are not thus jealous for the Truth we are not worthy of it, and one of the deceptions of this "evil day" will surely number us among its victims; for it is in this time of the Lord's presence that Satan is to work so mightily, with great power to deceive, with signs of success and with lying wonders of error. His various schemes will have great success, in comparison with which the success of the Truth will seem small; for with these, as with Gideon's band, it will be a time of sifting, and "who shall be able to stand?"

But let those who stand girt about with Divine Truth fear nothing; the Lord is permitting these delusions that they may serve his own wise and benevolent purposes in the separating of the worthy from the unworthy, and for the manifestation of those who are at heart loyal to him and to his Truth.

JULY 26

To him that overcometh will I give ... a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it—Rev. 2:17.

The overcomers must all be proven to be such as would sacrifice every other thing for the Lord; such as would sacrifice the love and fellowship and approval, if necessary, of every other being, in order to retain the love and favor of the Lord. We believe that this test is coming daily closer and closer to the Lord's consecrated people, and it behooves every one of us to remember that this is one of the elements of our trial, and to set our affections on the spiritual things accordingly, and to mortify or deaden all such affections toward earthly beings and things as would bring these into competition with our Lord in our affections, service, *etc.*—Z '99, 140 (R 2479).

The overcomer is one who conquers sin, error, selfishness and worldliness. These are arrayed against him by Satan, the world and the flesh. Such indeed will be made living stones in the temple of God, and will receive the Divine nature, a nature so grand that none but its recipients can fully understand or appreciate it—P '34, 95.

Parallel passages: Psa. 73:24; Hos. 12:6; Matt. 24:13; John 8:31; 10:28; Acts 11:23; Rom. 2:6, 7; 8:30-39; 1 Cor. 16:13; Gal. 6:9; Col. 1:10, 22, 23; Heb. 2:1; 3:6, 14; 10:23, 35, 36; 12:1-15; Jas. 1:4, 12; 1 Pet. 1:4-8; 2 Pet. 1:10, 11; Rev. 2:7, 10, 11, 25-28; 3:5, 11.

Hymns: 272, 21, 27, 32, 58, 72, 78.

Poems of Dawn, 298: *How Will You Die?*

Tower Reading: Z '12, 315 (R 5113).

Questions: Have I been overcoming this week? How? In what respects? With what results?

HOW WILL YOU DIE?

WILL you tackle that trouble that came your way
With a stalwart heart and cheerful?
Or hide your face from the light of day
With a craven heart and fearful?
O, a trouble's a ton, or a trouble's an ounce,
Or a trouble is what you make it,
And it isn't the fact that you're hurt that counts,
But only, How will you take it?

You're beaten to earth? Well, what of that?
Come up with a smiling face;
It's nothing against you that you fell down flat,
But to lie there—that's disgrace.

The harder you're thrown, the higher you bounce,
Your Physician will make you whole.
You fell seven times? That's not what counts—
Press on to your promised goal!

The battle is hard, severe the cross?
And others cry, "Turn back"?
Ah, soldier true, count all else loss,
And nothing you will lack.
And as your courage higher mounts
Your foes from you will fly;
You'll die, of course—that's not what counts,
But only, How will you die?

R5113: THE WHITE STONE GIVEN THE OVERCOMERS

"To him that overcometh will I give ... a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it."—Rev. 2:17.

IN ANCIENT TIMES the Greeks and the Romans had a custom of noting and perpetuating friendship by means of a *white stone*. This stone was divided into halves, and each person inscribed his name on the flat surface, after which the parts of the stone were exchanged. The production of either half was sufficient to insure friendly aid, even from the descendants of those who first divided the stone. A similar custom was sometimes observed by a king, who would break a white stone into two parts, one of which he would retain and the other part give to a special ambassador. That part could be sent to the king at any time and would insure aid. Thus the divided stone became a mark of identification.

Rev. 2:17 seems to refer to this ancient custom. The white stone signifies a precious token of the Lord's love, and the new name written in the stone suggests the Bridegroom's name. The statement indicates a special acquaintance with the great King of kings, secret between Himself and the individual. The overcomers are not to be recognized merely as a class—the Bride class—but each will have the personal favor of the Lord. Of this no one will know save himself and the King. There is an individual and personal relationship between the Lord and the overcomers, who may be said to receive the mark of identification—the antitypical white stone—*now*, in this life.

This mark is the sealing of the Holy Spirit by which the Lord identifies the overcomers. While this is said to be a part of the *final* reward of the Church, yet from the very beginning of our experience we have this personal acquaintance with the Lord. The full seal of the Holy Spirit will be given in the Resurrection, when we receive the new body. Then we shall have the complete knowledge of the name by which we shall be known to the Lord and He to us forever.

"THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH"

I came and saw, and hoped to conquer,
As the great Roman once had done;
His was the one hour's torrent shock of battle,
My field was harder to be won.

I came and saw, but did not conquer,
The foes were fierce, their weapons strong;
I came and saw, but yet I did not conquer,
For me the fight was sore and long.

They said the war was brief and easy,
A word, a look, would crush the throng;
To some it may have been a moment's conflict,
To me it has been sore and long.

They said the threats were coward bluster,
To brave men they could work no wrong;
So some may boast of swift and easy battle,
To me it has been sore and long.

And yet I know that I shall conquer,
Though sore and hard the fight may be;
I know, I know I shall be more than victor
Through Him who won the fight for me.

I fight, not fearful of the issue,
My victory is sure and near;
Yet not the less with hand and eye all watchful,
Grasp I my buckler and my spear.

For I must fight, if I would conquer,
'Tis not by flight that fields are won;
And I must conquer, if I would inherit
The victor's joy and crown and throne.

HORATIUS BONAR.

JULY 27

We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God—Dan. 6:5.

All are not leading spirits, as was Daniel, nor are all given to visions and revelations and interpretations, as was he; but all will have the same spirit of devotion to principles of righteousness, which devotion will be tested under Divine providence, step by step, through the narrow way, as they seek to walk in the footsteps of Him who set us an example—our Daniel, our Leader, our Lord Jesus. Let all, then, who have named the name of Christ depart from iniquity; let all such be faithful: "Dare to be a Daniel"—Z '99, 167 (R 2492).

Daniel's character is worthy of our imitation. Like him we should seek to be so careful in physical, mental, moral and religious respects that no faults can be justly charged against us by the natural man. Inevitably he will stumble over our religious activity, if it be in harmony with the Truth. Gladly would the enemies of the Truth charge us with delinquencies along other lines. We should give them no occasion for this, even as Daniel did not—P '33, 80.

Parallel passages: Gen. 49:23; Job 12:4; Psa. 11:2; 38:20; 44:15-18, 22; Isa. 29:20, 21; Matt. 5:10-12, 44; 10:16-18, 21-23, 28; 24:9, 10; Luke 6:22, 23; 21:12-19; John 15:18, 19; 16:1, 2; 17:14; Acts 4:16-20; 5:40-42; Rom. 8:17, 35-37; 2 Cor. 11:23-27; Heb. 12:3, 4.

Hymns: 200, 13, 134, 259, 307, 299, 325.
Poems of Dawn, 186: "*Think It Not Strange!*"
Tower Reading: Z '11, 347 (R 4874).

Questions: Have I been persecuted this week for righteousness? How did I endure it? With what results?

"THINK IT NOT STRANGE!"

1 PET. 4:12.

THINK it not strange, beloved,
When fiercely burns the fiery flame!
Think it not strange, but praise His name,
Who counts thee worthy to partake
Of painful sufferings for His sake.
Nor think it strange
When loved ones scornful from thee turn,
The Truth reject, the message spurn;
Consider Him who thus endured,
And Immortality secured!

Think it not strange, beloved,
If sometimes every door seem closed,
And all thine efforts be opposed,
But calmly wait in patience till
The master shall reveal His will.
Nor think it strange
When darker grown the "narrow way,"—
Press on, thy Master soon shall say,
"Enough, My child, thou hast well done,
Come, enter in, the Prize is won!

R4874: IN A DEN OF LIONS

—Daniel 6.—

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."—Psa. 34:7.

AT THE TIME of this study Daniel was an old man. He had been long in service, wise and faithful in his administration of the government entrusted to him. He had seen the Babylonian Dynasty perish. In its place came the empire of the Medes and Persians. By these also Daniel's grand character was recognized—his loyalty to principle, his faithfulness as a public servant, his obedience to God and the principles of righteousness. The new Universal Empire was divided into one hundred and twenty provinces with one hundred and twenty governors. Over these were three presidents. Over these presidents was King Darius, above whom, as chief emperor, was Cyrus. Daniel was one of the three presidents, made such because of his recognized integrity and ability.

What a compliment was thus paid to this noble, consecrated Jew, and how the recognition of his ability marks the breadth of mind of some of the rulers of the past! Their desire to have such a man in high repute and authority seems to evidence their good intentions in respect to the governing of the world. Indeed, we believe that this is true also of many noble minded, modern monarchs—that they give to their subjects the best government of which they are capable, according to their own imperfect judgments.

That which will specially mark Messiah's Kingdom will be that it will not only have perfect ideals in respect to human government, but that it will be backed by Divine power, before which every knee shall bow and every tongue shall eventually confess.—Phil. 2:10, 11.

ENVIIOUS OF DANIEL

From all that we know of the governments of the Orient, present and past, they have been full of dishonesty, of what in our day is designated "graft." As an illustration: it is

said that in the China-Japan war, contracts for cannon and other war materials were given to manufacturers closely allied to government officials, and that the most shame-faced dishonesty was practiced—for instance, that wooden cannon were delivered and mounted upon fortifications, while the contract money, which was paid for the genuine article, went to the thieves. A man like Daniel, in so important a place as that which he occupied as one of the three presidents or supervisors of a great empire, was sure to be in the way of grafters—a hinderer of their schemes. Realizing that he could not be deposed, the first step was to find some fault with him which would secure his removal; but the man's integrity and uprightness in general gave no hope in this direction.

Finally a scheme was concerted. They knew that Daniel's religion lay at the foundation of his entire course in life. They must involve him along the line of his devotion to his God or not at all. King Darius, like every other man, was approachable through flattery. It was a custom of the East to closely associate the king with religion. He was supposedly a favorite with his god, else he would not enjoy so high a station.

Working upon this theory, the conspirators, high in office, approached the king with a project which they assured him would help to make strong and united the various parts of his empire. It was this: that the king should be recognized for a month as the only channel of mediation or access between his subjects and their god or gods. The claim was that such a recognition would elevate the dignity of the throne in the minds of the people. King Darius of course felt flattered and at once agreed to the arrangement and issued an order to that effect—never for a moment thinking of what might be the result in the case of Daniel; and never for a moment suspecting that his counselors were seeking to entrap him and to legally accomplish the death of his most trusted officer.

PRAYED THREE TIMES DAILY

Daniel heard of the decree, but altered not his usual custom of praying three times every day before a window of his house which looked out toward Jerusalem. Morning, noon and night he remembered his God and remembered his vows of faithfulness to Him and called to mind the gracious promises respecting the Holy Land, that it would yet be the center of the whole earth and of God's holy people; that eventually, through these, Divine blessings would be extended to every nation, people, kindred and tongue.

Some one has remarked that, as the sharpening of scythes in harvest time does not mean lost time or energy, so also time spent in prayer is not lost as respects the affairs of life. Unquestionably the best men and women in the world are those who pray, and pray regularly, who bow the knee, as did Daniel. Unquestionably the moments thus taken from earthly affairs are well spent and bring more than commensurate blessings upon the worshiper and all with which he has to do. Unquestionably it is impossible to live a consecrated life in neglect of prayer. What would Daniel have been without his praying time! How would his faith in God have persisted in that heathen land? How would his loyalty to principle have maintained itself in the midst of corruption had it not been for his communion with his Maker? To the Christian this privilege is still further enhanced by a realization that "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous,"

in whose all-prevailing Name we may approach with courage the throne of heavenly grace, and obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.—Heb. 4:16.

JEHOVAH SENT HIS ANGEL

The conspirators were on the lookout for Daniel. They had witnesses ready to testify, not that they had seen Daniel do anything wrong, but that he had violated the edict which the king had been entrapped into making and signing. The matter was laid before the king and he was reminded that it was one of the principles of the empire that even the king himself could not change or alter an edict once sent forth. King Darius felt himself bound hand and foot and ensnared—trapped. All day he sought means whereby he could avert the consequences of his royal mandate, but he found none. He explained the matter to Daniel, assuring him that he believed that his God was able to deliver him. What a beautiful testimony to the uprightness of Daniel's life!

Daniel was cast into the lion's den and the door was secured with thongs, the knots of which were sealed with the king's signet, a safeguard against its being tampered with. That night, we are told, was one of great distress to the king. He could think only of his faithful officer, the noble man so unrighteously treated. He was ashamed of the part which he felt compelled to take in the matter. He was abroad early in the morning, after a sleepless night, to call to Daniel, to learn whether or not he were still alive. His joy of heart was great when he learned that he was still safe, that his God had sent His angel to stop the lions' mouths. Daniel was soon lifted from the pit! Daniel was vindicated! His God was vindicated! And the king now made another decree—that those counselors who had thus sought the life of a faithful man should themselves be put to the test by being cast into the same den of lions; and this in their case meant destruction, as the result proved.

Oh, that every Christian could and would live as high above the world's standards as did Daniel, so that their enemies might see clearly that they have no ground for charges except those to their credit; that their God whom they serve is indeed the true God.

JULY 28

If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye—1 Pet. 3:14.

It is only when we are hated because of our loyalty to the Truth (directly or indirectly) that we are to take satisfaction therein, or to think that we are suffering for righteousness' sake. As the Apostle points out, some suffer as evil-doers and as busybodies in other men's matters, or because of ungentleness, uncouthness, or lack of the wisdom of moderation, which the Lord's Word counsels.

It is our duty not only to study the Lord's will but also to consider well the circumstances and the conditions which surround us, and to seek to adopt such a moderate course in life as would first of all have Divine approval, and secondly, cause as little trouble, inconvenience and displeasure to others as possible, and then to rely confidently upon the Lord's supervising wisdom and providence—Z '99, 166, 167 (R 2492).

To suffer for righteousness' sake implies bringing evil upon ourselves by our zeal in being dead to self and the world and alive to God in watching, praying, in studying and spreading God's Word and in developing a character in harmony with it. Happy indeed are they who so do; for theirs is the fellowship of the Father, the Son and the saints, the possession of God's Spirit, Word and providence and the glorious hope of sharing in the Kingdom with Christ; yes, all things are theirs!—P '32, 95, 96.

Parallel passages: Matt. 5:10-12; Jas. 1:2, 12; 5:10; 1 Pet. 2:19-21; 4:12-19; Acts 9:16; Rom. 8:17, 18, 23; 1 Cor. 4:12, 13; 2 Cor. 1:5-7; 4:16-18; Phil. 1:29; 3:10; Col. 1:24; 2 Thes. 1:4, 5; 2 Tim. 2:12.

Hymns: 326, 325, 93, 272, 299, 322, 179.

Poems of Dawn, 196: *Sometime We'll Understand.*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 291 (R 5544).

Questions: Have I suffered for righteousness? How? What helped or hindered? With what results?

SOMETIME WE'LL UNDERSTAND

PERHAPS 'twill be in coming years,
It may be in the better land,
We'll read the meaning of our tears,
And thus, sometime, we'll understand.

We'll catch the broken threads again,
And finish what we here began;
Heav'n will the mysteries explain,
And then, ah! then, we'll understand.

We'll know why clouds instead of sun
Were over many a cherished plan;
Why song hath ceased when scarce begun.
Ah, yes! sometime, we'll understand.

Why what we longed for most of all,
Eludes so oft our eager hand;
Why hopes are crushed and castles fall—
Some day, sometime, we'll understand.

God knows the way, He holds the key,
He guides us with unerring hand;
Sometime with tearless eyes we'll see;
Yes, there, beyond, we'll understand.

Then trust in God, thro' all thy days,
Fear not, for He doth hold thy hand;
Tho' dark thy way, still sing and praise;
Sometime, sometime, we'll understand.

R5544: REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you."—Matthew 5:11, 12.

THESE words of our Lord are addressed to His disciples—not merely His Apostles, who were chosen to be His special messengers, but all His followers throughout this Age. A disciple is a pupil—one who is being taught by another. All who are Jesus' disciples are to take the message of our text to themselves. "Blessed are ye," signifies that *persecution* is a favor from God. Consider it as a favor from the Father when men shall revile you—not because of the reviling, but because they shall say these things of you *falsely*, for Christ's sake.

No one would choose naturally to be persecuted or to have evil spoken against him. The Scriptures say that a good name is more to be esteemed than great riches. But if it is for Christ's sake that we suffer, we may know that the Lord will recompense us. In the Lord's arrangement there is to be a time of "evening up" for all we suffer here. Thus we lay up treasure in Heaven. All that we suffer now is storing up for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if borne for Him.

From this standpoint we should really desire persecution. We are not to strive for it, not to endeavor to bring it upon ourselves unnecessarily; but realizing that if we lack persecution we lack one of the evidences of being true disciples of the Lord, we rejoice

when in the providence of God it is our portion. Some, it is true, might be reviled for something evil or unwise that they had done. There would be no blessing in such an experience. The blessing comes when the accusation against us is false and is for the Truth's sake.

"All who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution." Hence we should investigate our lives to see whether we have this evidence that we are living godly. The Lord is the "True Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We are the lesser lights. In letting our lights shine faithfully, we shall bring upon ourselves persecution. Let us not imagine that escape from persecution in our own case is the result of superior wisdom or tact on our part. "*All* who will live godly shall suffer persecution," is the promise, the assurance of Scripture. We should not court it, but should desire this evidence of our faithfulness, and should wish to be one of the "blessed" ones, of whom the Master speaks in our text. Then let us ask ourselves, Do I have persecution for Christ's sake? We should make a prayerful examination of our hearts to see whether we are fully loyal to God, to see whether we are letting our light shine out properly. If we lack this proof of sonship, we should inquire, What is the reason?

PERSECUTION A SURE RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS

A sister once said to the Editor, "I have no persecution, no opposition. Everything seems to be going favorably with me." She seemed troubled. We asked the sister to study her own heart to see whether or not she was as faithful as she knew how to be. Upon her reply we said, "Probably you take your persecutions with such grace that you are happy under them." The sister replied that she *would* be happy if she thought that was the case. Then we told her that the only other explanation we could think of was that the Lord was allowing her time to gain strength in order that she might bear what would come to her later. We told her to pray about it. A year or two after we again saw the sister. We recalled the circumstance, and asked her if she had yet had any persecution. She answered, "Oh, yes. I have had plenty of persecution, but I am happy and rejoicing in it!"

It is impossible to rejoice in persecution until we get the right focus on the subject. We cannot do this of ourselves, and need, therefore, to take the matter to the Lord and confer with Him. After we have had "a little talk with Jesus," our faith takes hold on Him. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to be exceeding glad and joyful in persecution and affliction for Christ. The Apostle Peter also declares, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as ... an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters; yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him glorify God on this behalf."—1 Peter 4:14, 15.

The Master was not surprised at the attitude of the chief priests and religious leaders of His day. He knew from the beginning that he would have their opposition and hostility, and He warned His disciples not to expect otherwise. As to the reason why there should be persecution against the Lord and those who faithfully follow in His footsteps, He himself tells us, saying, "The darkness hateth the light." Darkness stands for Satan, for

sin, for everything contrary to righteousness. God is represented as the great light, "and in Him is no darkness at all." Light is healing, beneficial, health-giving.

They who are of the darkness hate those who are of the light, because the light reproves the darkness, and the darkness does not like to be reproved. Wherever righteousness is, it is a rebuke to that which is sinful, dark. Our Lord stood for the light. He represented the Truth, the Heavenly Father. And those who were in darkness were in opposition to Him in proportion to their darkness—some of these knowingly, others in more or less of ignorance. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all them which believe not." Satan has been skilful in putting darkness for light and light for darkness.

IN GOOD CONSCIENCE MANY HAVE OPPOSED LIGHT

The fact that many of the world are in opposition to God and righteousness is not because as a rule they are evil of heart, but because Satan has succeeded in making the darkness seem desirable and the light undesirable. It was thus in the religious systems of Jesus' day, and we believe that it is the same in the religious systems of today. Saul of Tarsus was for a time one of those blinded by Satan. In persecuting the followers of Jesus he verily believed that he was doing God service. But when he was apprehended by the Lord and the light was revealed to him, he proved himself loyal to God.

And so we trust it is with some who today oppose the light and truth now being proclaimed. They are deluded; but if their hearts are fully loyal to the Lord, if they are true to their consecration vows, the Truth will be revealed to them before "the door is shut"; for "ye, brethren, are not in darkness; ye are the children of light." "The wise shall understand." Soon the knowledge of the Truth will come to the "foolish virgins," and they will wash their soiled robes in the blood of Christ—during the great tribulation shortly to come to the whole world. And soon, too, the light of the knowledge of God is to fill the whole earth. But so long as Satan is "the Prince of this world," and there are those in the world who have his spirit, and those who are followers of the Lord and have His spirit, just so long must there be conflict.

The opposition of the darkness to the light may be manifested in different ways. In the days of our Lord and the Apostles there were persecutions of Christians by Jews. Later, during the long centuries in which the Word of God was neglected and the Truth was obscured by gross errors, there were persecutions of Protestants by Catholics and of Catholics by Protestants and of Jews by both—all because of failure to study the Word of God and to follow its teachings. But very few in these dark times had access to the Word.

Some of the opposition to our Lord was open, and some of it was hidden. Many of the Apostles, like their Master, suffered death by violence; and many of the faithful down through the Gospel Age have suffered violent deaths. At the present time, outward persecution is not sanctioned by law, nor is it tolerated to any great extent.

PRESENT METHODS OF PERSECUTION

Persecutors have all along used the weapon of reviling, slander, saying all manner of evil falsely against those who are God's true people. As the Bible declares, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Today slanderous charges are made and villainous, opprobrious expressions indulged in by opponents of the Truth, and this is the chief weapon, because the defamers have not the power at present to use open, personal violence. Public sentiment and law would not permit it. But the persecution is of the same brand, the same spirit—merely governed by circumstances and conditions. Those who would say all manner of evil falsely, knowing the charges are false, are the very kind who would crucify or burn at the stake, had they the power. Not being permitted to use personal violence by the present laws and the general sentiment, these are forced to content themselves with bringing all sorts of false charges—seeking to assassinate the reputation and destroy the influence of those who are proclaiming the Truth, the Word of God.

The right attitude of the persecuted ones is indicated in our text. Instead of feeling downcast and discouraged by these experiences, and thinking them strange, evidences that God is against us, we should conclude the very reverse. We should say to ourselves, "This is the same kind of experience that the Lord had, and that His people of the past have had." So, "Marvel not if the world [especially the religious world—the world that hated Him] hate you. Ye know that it hated Me before it hated you," forewarned our Master. So far from being discouraged, we are to rejoice—not that any could rejoice in the persecution for its own sake, for persecution is grievous; but we are to rejoice because "great is your reward in Heaven." What we do not get here of prosperity, we shall get *there*—in the Kingdom.

The Socialists say that they intend to have some of the good things *now!* They have not sufficient faith in the future blessings to be willing to wait. But the class addressed in our text are those who have faith in God and His promises, those who are associated with Christ, who understand that the experiences of this time are working out for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and they are content to await God's time. These are rejoicing in their hearts, realizing that they are enduring for righteousness' sake, that they are on the side of God, the side of right, the side of Truth, and realizing that these afflictions are only momentary, as it were; for the present life is but a mere span compared with the eternal life, the glorious immortality, so near at hand, in which we shall receive the blessings promised—joy forever with the Lord.

"FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED"

The Master gave all His followers fair warning that they were not to expect the world to appreciate their attitude. One might well reason that if one gave up sin and adopted a righteous course, the world would esteem him; that all would see the worthiness of his character and would show him special deference. But we must not expect this under the present reign of Sin. It would be a very broad way into the Kingdom, and a great many then might take this course for the favor of man, for the prosperity which it would bring

them. The Lord could never demonstrate our fitness for the Kingdom honors under such conditions.

If our great Master was called Beelzebub, we cannot expect that the members of His Household will be treated any better. If He who was perfect was held up to scorn as the Prince of Devils, we may expect similar treatment to be meted out to His followers by those whom the Adversary has blinded; for we are less able to uphold the standard of righteousness than was He. When His enemies attempted to make His character appear vile in the sight of others, He did not retaliate. Jesus did on proper occasions point out the wrong-doing, the wrong character, of those who were the religious leaders and teachers; but He did not do this in a retaliatory sense. On various occasions He accused them of being untrue, unholy, hypocritical; but He said nothing with a view to injuring them, but with the desire to show them their improper condition of heart, that they might profit by His instruction. He endeavored to help others to see the real condition of these blind leaders of the blind, in order to prevent them from falling into the ditch toward which their leaders were hastening.

THE MASTER'S CRUCIAL TEST

When the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law tried to trump up charges against the Master and to put evil constructions upon what He said, He was patient under all these trying conditions. He submitted to the treatment. It might be asked, Why did God permit His Holy Son to suffer such revilings? Why did He not smite down those who did so wickedly? The answer is that the Father wished to demonstrate the kind of character that was pleasing to Him, and He wished to test the loyalty of Jesus Himself. Would He be submissive and obedient or would He resent these affronts? Would He say, "I will have none of this! I did not come into the world to bear such indignities"? His painful experiences were thus tests of His loyalty to the Father.

Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that He should submit Himself, even unto death, and He had agreed to do this. Now the crucial test was: Would He continue loyal to the Father and carry out His purposes? If so, He would be worthy to be the Messiah, worthy to be the Divine Son of God throughout eternity. Our Lord's experiences had all been foretold in prophecy. In order to fulfil these prophecies it must be that He receive revilings, and He must accept them properly. The Apostle Peter shows that in this He was a worthy Example to all of His followers. As He who was holy, harmless, undefiled, did not seek to have the Father bring upon the revilers some punishment for their misdoings, so this is an example for us; so we should walk in His steps.

SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION STILL HERE

We realize that in our case there is none righteous, not one who is perfect. So we see that our enemies might have some cause to revile us. They might see some of our imperfections and have something that they could pick at and exaggerate. The Apostle Peter says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." As they said all manner of evil against our Lord

falsely, we may be sure that they will say all manner of evil falsely against us. And as He bore it patiently, so are we to take patiently everything that comes to us, and to recognize that nothing can possibly happen to us except what the Father will foreknow and permit for our good and for His glory. Our Master left us a portion of His cup that the Father poured for Him. After the cup has all been drained, then will come the glory and the honor—but not now.

We might naturally expect under the changed conditions of the present day, that those who are loyal to God and His Truth would not be maltreated and persecuted as in Jesus' day. But we believe there is another way of viewing the matter. We believe that Jesus, if He were here in the flesh today, would be persecuted and maligned by the worldly-minded, especially in the nominal Church systems. Now, instead of crucifying Him literally, or roasting Him at the stake, they would "roast" Him before the public—a more refined form of persecution—for the spirit of persecution is still here.

In proportion as the followers of Jesus are faithful to the teachings of the Master, in that same proportion they will be out of harmony with everything opposed to the spirit of Christ, and in that same proportion they will be misrepresented and persecuted. In Jesus' day there were plenty of people who did reverence to the Doctors of the Law, who made broad their phylacteries and were very exact as to the letter of the Law, the paying of tithes, etc. Jesus did not seek honor and high position. But He appealed to the people to turn from sin, to walk in His steps, to stand for the Truth as against all unrighteousness and untruth. This appeal touched no responsive chord in the hearts of the worldly-minded.

For this reason, we say that the world has not changed, that the world is still in opposition to the Word and its spirit—particularly the religious world. It is still true, however, as in the days of our Lord in the flesh, that the common people are inclined to hear the Gospel gladly, if not blinded by the religious leaders. But today, as in Jesus' time, many are influenced by the false representations of those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual shepherds. If then the world should come to be in sympathy with us as a people, and should speak well of us, and we should become popular, we should come under the condemnation expressed in the Master's words, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you; for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

THINK IT NOT STRANGE

If, on the contrary, we find that in spite of our best endeavors we are beset by opposition, and are viewed with suspicion, if unworthy constructions are placed upon our unselfish efforts to do good and to carry to others the glorious light which has so blessed our own hearts, let us not be surprised or feel aggrieved; for undoubtedly it is for the same reason that Jesus was opposed.

The spirit of light is the spirit of Christ. The spirit of darkness is of the world. All who have sympathy for that which is evil, or have been so blinded that light appears as darkness, will oppose the light. There has been so much of selfishness in the world, and

the people have been so often taken advantage of and duped, that we cannot wonder that they are slow to believe that there are any who can be actuated solely by the motive of blessing their fellows.

It will be to the interest of some to promote priestcraft, and they will, therefore, seek to break down whatever is inimical to their interests. They say, "You are opposing us." We reply that we are only holding up the light. But they feel that the light that is reaching the people is undermining their influence. We believe that this is the secret of much of the strong opposition to the Truth that is prevailing in some quarters. There is a large number, we believe, who in many respects are good men, but who are fighting the light. We may suppose that they do not realize what they are doing—that unwittingly they are holding on to the ignorance of error, in bondage to Sin and Satan. For this reason they are in antagonism to those who are lifting the veil from before the Lord's people and showing them the character of God, that He is Love. Hence the conflict which is going on.

Another phase of opposition is in respect to financial matters. When we claim that what is given to the Lord should not be obtained by cajoling the people, should not be pulled out of them, worked out of them, extorted from them, but that whatever is given should be a free will, voluntary offering, we are running counter to the custom of centuries. As one Baptist minister said to two of our brethren, "Think of Pastor Russell's advertising 'Seats free and no collections!' Where would *we* be if we did not have collections, or if the people got the thought that it is not the proper thing to pass the collection baskets?"

THE REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE SOON TO VANISH

As our Master was hated *without a cause*, so let this be our experience, as far as possible. Let us see to it that the hatred, the malice, the envy and spirit of murder which is heaped upon us is entirely undeserved. Let it be our earnest endeavor that our lives, as fully as we are able, shall reflect the light of the Truth, shall be as noble and upright as possible in all things; that our words and actions shall glorify the Lord whom we serve, and be eloquent of our love for all mankind, especially for the Household of Faith, whether enlightened by Present Truth as yet or not.

In a very little while, we believe, we shall be glorified with our Lord, if faithful. Then a new Dispensation will be inaugurated; and those who hate us now, chiefly because blinded and misled by the Adversary, will bow their hearts before us as the Anointed of the Lord, and we shall have the blessed privilege of uplifting them, of enlightening and forgiving them, of helping them to attain the perfect image and likeness of our God.

HOW FAR ARE OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED?

The question might arise with some, To what extent does God supervise the experiences of His children? The Master said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" Then how would it be with our cup? Is God not also our Father? Are not we members of Christ? Who, then, but the Father pours our cup? But we know

that God is not a participator in any evil thing: how, then, has He anything to do with the evils that come to His people?

We answer, There are all manner of evil forces and influences surrounding us. These evil influences are of Satan and the fallen angels. "Our Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and the fallen angels also go about seeking how they may assault the children of the Lord. But they can have *no power whatever* against us except as the Father shall permit it. He will permit no evil influence to touch us to our injury as New Creatures, if we keep close to Him. And He will prevent harm or injury to our persons, unless he sees it will outwork good to us, if we are rightly exercised by it.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR OUR GOOD

We have also the opposition of the world. But Satan, the Prince of this world, succeeds in blinding the minds of men, putting error for Truth, and darkness for light, in order to make the way of righteousness and obedience to God appear foolish and undesirable and extreme. Those who have more or less of the spirit of the world bring against the Lord's children in a perfectly natural way, aside from the direct influence of the Evil One and his cohorts, a certain amount of opposition. For instance, our Lord, as the time of His death drew near, was speaking to the Apostles about the great climax of His experiences—that He would go up to Jerusalem, that men would crucify Him, etc. Then Peter said, Lord, Lord, do not allow your mind to run in this channel! You have come to earth to be the great King! Do not let the thought get into your mind that you are to be crucified! And the Lord turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind Me, adversary!" He was the Lord's adversary for the time.

So the world often become adversaries of the children of God in their zeal for what they think the more honorable and advantageous course for us. They urge, Do not take such an extreme view of things, and you will get along better. This is opposition to our consecration vow; and when we resist their well-meant efforts, they seek to thwart us and to bring us back to their views and ideas. The ideal of the world for us as Christians would be, Do good, and work for social uplift, for civic reform; build hospitals, establish orphanages, etc.; but do not spend so much time studying that old Bible, or they will call you an extremist or a heretic. So the world tries sympathetically to influence us. And our Father permits these influences to be brought to bear upon us for our proving. We may be sure that the Lord so supervises our experiences that nothing can come to us in any way whatsoever but what will work for our spiritual good so long as we keep ourselves in His love—so long as we wholly abide in Him. And death itself is powerless to touch us until God's time for us shall have come.

Our flesh is our constant, ever-present adversary. It tries to say, No, no! Do not carry this thing so far! Our flesh is inclined to be in harmony with the world. But our New Creature replies, Jesus walked the way of sacrifice and suffering—and St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John. Then the flesh suggests that *they* were *special* persons. But we know that

the Bible teaches us that the same course is to be followed by all of the Lord's faithful people, and that *all* these will receive persecution.—2 Timothy 3:12.

All will not be crucified, nor will all be thrust in a caldron of boiling oil or be sawn asunder or beheaded. We shall probably not have any of these experiences; but we *must suffer*. So we bid our flesh be silent, and we rejoice in the experiences that we do have; for "if we suffer [with Him], we shall reign with Him." (2 Timothy 2:12.) Of course we rejoice! And the *world* says that we are going *insane!*

THE PRECIOUS PROMISES OUR STRENGTH

We are to remember, dear brethren—and this is to be a parting thought with us—that nothing can by any means harm us, aside from our Father's will. We are promised that not one hair of our heads shall be hurt—figuratively. And we have the guarantee from the Lord that "all things shall work together for good to those that love God," who put *their trust* in Him. Whatever would not be a blessing to us will not be permitted. Our trials and tribulations, rightly received, are to work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

As we look back, we can see that all who have walked in the narrow way have received persecution. Whoever has been in accord with God has been out of accord with the course of this world. There were the Baptists, and then the Methodists, who in the early days had persecution because they had more light than others. The Presbyterians also for a time, because they had greater light than others, received persecution.

THE NIGHT ALMOST OVER

And we must expect the same today. Persecution will come to those who have the courage of their convictions. The Lord tells us that the anointing that we have received of Him is for the very purpose that we may show forth His praises. (1 Peter 2:9.) We must examine ourselves to see if to any extent we have kept our light under a bushel. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews, St. Paul recounts the sufferings of the Prophets and worthies of old. Some of them were stoned to death, some sawn asunder; they were killed and persecuted in a variety of ways. These godly men endured much for righteousness' sake. "And *all* who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer* persecution."

But the night is almost over. Soon the Lord will rise up. He will stretch forth His hands—His Power—and His children shall be delivered. Soon will come the glorious Reign of Messiah. Then all who will live righteously shall have peace. Altogether, dear friends, our text is very precious—one that should encourage our hearts and help to guide us on our way, and bring us comfort and rejoicing in these closing days of our pilgrimage.

"Our God is love; He loves to hear our voices;
In Christ we share the riches of His grace;
He loves to fold His arms of comfort round us,

And let us nestle in the children's place.

"He loves to answer prayer, though not it may be
In just the way that we should think the best;
But in His own prospective, perfect judgment
He gives the blessings and withholds the rest."

JULY 29

Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us—Dan. 3:17.

The Lord's providences vary, and it is not for His people to decide when shall come remarkable deliverances, and when they shall apparently be left entirely to the will of their enemies without any manifestation of Divine favor on their behalf. Sometimes, the Lord's people who are bound, restrained of liberty to proclaim the Truth, find, as did the three Hebrews, that the fire burns the cords and sets them free, and really gives them larger opportunities to testify to the glory of our God than they could have had by any other course. It is not, therefore, for us to predetermine what shall be the Divine providence in respect to ourselves; we are to note the point of right and duty and to follow it regardless of consequences, trusting implicitly to the Lord—Z '99, 171 (R 2494).

These Hebrews had such faith in God's delivering power as armed them with unflinching courage and obedience, despite the threat and danger of the fiery furnace. Small wonder that they were honored by the presence of the Son of Man, who quenched the deadliness of the fire. Similarly, as we, the children of God, are threatened with and enter the antitypical fiery furnace for not bowing down to Militarism, Romanism or Federationism, we may exercise the faith that will be honored with the Son of Man's presence, who will make the fiery furnace the means of freeing us, uninjured by the experience, from the cords of this earth—P '26, 96.

Parallel passages: Gen. 49:22-26; Ezra 8:31; Psa. 23; 34:7, 9, 10; Matt. 5:10-12; Acts 5:29, 40-42; Rom. 8:17, 35-37; Heb. 11:33-38; Rev. 20:4.

Hymns: 93, 25, 179, 200, 216, 222, 293.

Poems of Dawn, 183: *Your Father Knoweth What Things Ye Have Need Of.*

Tower Reading: Z '15, 55 (R 5633).

Questions: In what experiences of the week did I gain deliverance? How? What helped or hindered? In what did it result?

"YOUR FATHER KNOWETH WHAT THINGS
YE HAVE NEED OF"

MATT. 6:8.

OUR Father knows what things we need
Each step along the way,
His eye of love doth never sleep,—
He watches night and day.

He knows sometimes, like ripening grain,
We need the sunshine bright,

Again He sends the peace that comes
With shadows of the night.

Sometimes our pride would fain unfurl
Ambition's flaunting sail,—
Ah! then He knows we need to walk
Humiliation's vale.

Sometimes He takes our eager hands
And folds them on our breast,
He gently lays our work aside,—
He knows we need to rest.

Sometimes we need companionship,
Sometimes, "the wilderness,"—
How sweet to feel He'll know and give
The state that most will bless!

Then let us leave it all with Him.
Assured that, come what may,
Our father knows *just what we need*.
Upon our pilgrim-way.

R5633: THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."—Psalm 34:7.

THERE is more or less difficulty associated with all attempts to think about the great Jehovah, His character and His power. The Scriptures seem to indicate that God has used various ways of manifesting His power to His people—to the Jews during the Jewish Age and to the Christian Church during the Gospel Age. We think it would not be an improper thought that the word *angel* may stand for any agency or power, whether animate or inanimate, that God would be pleased to use in connection with service. God could make the wind or the flaming fire His messenger. He could make the great Archangel or an inferior angel His messenger. He could use as His messenger whatever or whomsoever He might choose to invest with the requisite power; just as a representative of these United States, going to another country, would be recognized, regardless of his own personal ability or standing.

The details of how the Almighty has knowledge of our prayers, our thoughts, our words, our needs, are not furnished us in the Scriptures; and evidently it is not necessary, therefore, that we should understand these in every particular. We do not think that any finite mind could comprehend God. He is too great for our comprehension, far too mighty for us to understand fully all His powers, His ability. Nevertheless we can apprehend

some things respecting God, and are therefore invited in the Scriptures to study Him along the lines of His Revelation. To assume that God is in every place, in every niche of space throughout the Universe, seems to us an absurdity, not taught in the Bible; and to assume that God knows about every little tadpole, pollywog, microbe, or that He even takes knowledge of every act of each one of the human family, when there are millions upon millions of these, is beyond our understanding.

If we should limit God's attention to the Church, still there are thousands of these; and the capacity to understand and deal with ten or twenty thousand people in an instant seems to us to be an impossibility. Nor would such an arrangement be what we would expect God to have. Any human being who would attempt to deal with even a hundred people and to know everything going on would be thought to be very unwise. Rather he would have various agencies through which his will would be done by those hundred people by which he would know what was being done, and by which they would know his purpose respecting the work. His general knowledge of matters would not imply that he would be in every room in the house at one instant nor take notice of every person at the same instant.

In our present text, however, we are inclined to think that the word "angel" used by the Psalmist refers to spirit beings. Our reason for thinking so is that the revelations of the Lord in olden times previous to Pentecost were nearly all by spirit beings. These materialized and then dematerialized, vanishing from sight. In general the Scriptures seem to indicate that God's dealing with His people in those earlier times was through angels. As respects this Gospel Age, just closing, we have confidence that God has shown as great care in His dealings with Spiritual Israel as He did with Natural Israel; for Spiritual Israel comes nearer to Him as His House of Sons than did Natural Israel as a House of Servants. But God expects the House of Sons to walk by faith and not by sight, a much higher walk. Hence His manifestations to these are not such as appeal to the natural senses. They are, nevertheless, just as real.

THE EYES OF THE LORD

We read that "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him"; also, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." But this does not give us the thought that God personally beholds every individual act of every person on earth, but that He takes cognizance of matters throughout the world by means of His power, His agencies. These "eyes" referred to are the Lord's influence, His power of *knowing*, whatever the means. Whether His power is exercised and His will executed through angels or through other forces and agencies, it makes no difference—no more than it would with us in carrying out our wishes. If we wished to know about certain matters in Philadelphia, there would be various methods by which we could learn. One effective method would be to telephone and get into direct communication with the individual, provided he is supplied with a telephone. Or through the telegraph we could send a message; or we could send a messenger directly to the party, by foot or by train or some other conveyance.

Now if mankind have these various ways of accomplishing their designs, we can appreciate our Heavenly Father more by thinking of Him as having full ability to come into communication with His children, and as having various agents of communication. God has means, no doubt, far superior to any of ours. He has not revealed the matter clearly to us except to tell us that He is informed respecting all that concerns us, as well as respecting all the affairs of the world. He does tell us that angels are His ministers, and that these have a charge over His people. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" They do not minister in the sense of directly providing bread for us, nor in the sense of cooking our food, nor of building our houses—in none of these ways do they minister. How, then, do they serve us? We have no way of knowing positively how they serve except from the words of our Lord Jesus, that the angels of God's "little ones" always behold the face of the Father, always have access to Him.

The fact that these angels represent the Lord's "little ones" would imply that they would have immediate access to God and have immediate attention. What would be the use of the Father's receiving the angels into His presence unless there was something to be communicated? Our understanding is that God's knowledge of our affairs and interests is gained by methods with which we are not acquainted. We may assume, however, that the mediums used are largely the angelic messengers. The head of every business house and banking institution has certain laws, certain regulations, governing all the operations of the business. Just so God has certain laws governing nature. It is not necessary that we pray to God that the earth may turn around upon its axis and that tomorrow may come. We may be sure that the Almighty, the One who represents exact Justice and infinite Wisdom, has laws that govern His entire Universe; that the angels have insight into these laws; and that they are Jehovah's deputies, just as an earthly court might deputize some one to sit in chancery and to take information.

OUR LORD JESUS THE CHIEF MESSENGER

If in connection with our text we also have in mind our Lord's words before His ascension, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the Age," we shall understand that the Lord Jesus is the Chief Messenger, or Angel, of Jehovah. He has surely been the Chief Messenger to the Gospel Church. Our thought, then, is that through the angels and other agencies God is governing the world, and especially caring for His people, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of all the Divine spiritual powers and has charge of all Jehovah's affairs. We have been brought into the School of Christ. He is our Teacher. When we go to the Father in prayer, we do not ignore this Teacher, but we go in His name; and we are not to suppose that the Father would ignore Him. He would be the Father's Representative in dealing with us. But we are not to suppose that the Lord Jesus has every detail of the affairs of the world under His personal supervision; but rather that those angels report to Him whatever is necessary, and that thus there are certain principles operating. This seems to us to be the reasonable and logical arrangement of Divine operations. We are not insisting upon this for other minds, but merely saying that this appeals to our own mind.

In view of the fact that the Church has been put under the special guidance of the Lord Jesus, it would not be a far-fetched thought that Jehovah encampeth round about His people through Jesus, and that the angels are under His direction. If Satan is the chief of his band of angels, so our Lord would have angels under His control, and He would be their Prince. We read of what Alexander the Great accomplished, and of what Napoleon Bonaparte did, regardless of the fact that they had many thousands under them to carry out their will. So we think of all the spirit beings as under the direction and guidance of Jesus Christ. Into His hands God has committed all power in Heaven and on earth. All the angels of God were made subject to Him; and through these, under the control of our Lord, all the interests of God's people are supervised. This is our thought, and we like to think so.

DELIVERANCE IN VARIOUS WAYS

Our text proceeds to say that the angel that encamps around the people of the Lord "delivereth them." In olden times the Lord's children were sometimes delivered miraculously. Some were delivered from prison; others were not. Some were delivered from the sword; others were not. We should accept the will of God, whatever it may be. But in order to be able to do this, for our spiritual good, our ultimate good, we must realize that the terms and conditions under which we accepted of Him were that we would give ourselves unreservedly into His hands. A proper fear, or reverence, for the Lord, would surely lead us to place ourselves fully in His keeping and under His guidance and control. Our experiences in life have shown us how unable we are to direct ourselves aright. The Lord will deliver each of us in the way that will bring us the largest measure of blessing.

In the days of the Apostles, St. Peter was delivered from prison by an angel of the Lord, who appeared to him as a man. This was in the interest, not only of the Apostle, but of the entire Church, showing them that the Lord was able to fully care for His people, giving them valuable lessons. And although these outward manifestations are not given to us of the present time, we have other blessings that more than compensate for these outward tokens that are not at present for the good of the Church. We are able to say with the Apostle that all things are working together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to His purpose. We should be full of confidence in Him—that we are subjects of His choicest care at all times.

EACH SAINT HAS HIS MINISTERING ANGEL

While we may not be too positive in our interpretation on this subject, we understand that each one of the Lord's people, in proportion as he is one of God's true children, has a ministering spirit, a person, an angel, who has charge of his affairs. This angel makes his report to the Lord, whether monthly, weekly or hourly we do not know. If God sees this to be the wise, proper course, we have every confidence in His Wisdom. Whatever God has arranged is fully satisfactory to us in this matter, and we are sure that it is quite right and fully in harmony with the Divine character.

We think that this principle is illustrated in the Book of the Prophet Daniel. Daniel had been praying and after some little time his prayer was answered. The angel Gabriel, who was the Lord's messenger to Daniel, explained to him certain things. At the beginning of his supplications the Lord had purposed to send him an answer. Gabriel had been sent especially to inform him, but had been detained by certain other duties. The fact of his detention should not give us the thought that Daniel or any of the Lord's people would ever be neglected; but that while minor affairs of Daniel were under the guidance of some lower angel, there were important matters that were entrusted to Gabriel as the plenipotentiary, as it were, in regard to Daniel's interest and other matters. There was a delay, and Gabriel mentioned what the delay was; the prince of Persia had withstood him for twenty-one days.

We have heretofore pointed out that this Gospel Age has been different from the Jewish Age and preceding ages; that after the Gospel Dispensation was ushered in, outward demonstrations, such as the gifts of the Holy Spirit—the gift of healing, the gift of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and discerning of spirits—and angelic visitations passed away; and that during the Gospel Age it has been God's will that the Spiritual House of Israel should walk by faith and not by sight, and that therefore it would be inappropriate after the Church was fully established to expect angels to appear, to manifest themselves outwardly.

But the angels of the Lord, nevertheless, have a charge more particularly over us of the Gospel Church than over any other of the Lord's people at any previous time in the world's history. The Lord is especially interested in Spiritual Israel. These angels, then, care for us, supervise our affairs, and are God's agencies or channels of communication to us as to His will; that is, communication in the sense of providences for us, causing *this* providence or the *other* providence.

HOLY ANGELS NOT MANIFEST TO OUR SENSES

We would not give the thought of the angels whispering into our ears. We think that the angels which now whisper in the ear are the same ones that give table-tippings, planchette communications, communications through the hand by writing, and various other communications to the ear and the eye of spirit-mediums; namely, evil spirits, fallen angels. Our understanding is that the holy angels do nothing of the kind. The Lord's people of the present Age are to find their instruction in His Word. There is no need of a book on Mormonism or Spiritism or New Thought or of clairvoyant or clairaudient power for the Lord's children. These are all snares of the Adversary and his demons.

The followers of Christ have the Bible and the invisible ministries of the holy angels to provide for their interests and to providentially guard and guide their affairs. This, to us, is very real and of great comfort. If we had the thought that God was doing all this personally, we would think that He had certainly forgotten *us*. But having the assurance of His Word that not a hair of our heads can fall to the ground without our Father's

attention, our mind can rest in the fact that He accomplishes His purposes in Christ for His children through the ministrations of the holy angels.

JULY 30

Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines—Song of Solomon 2:15.

Many deal slackly with themselves in respect to little violations of their consecration vow, saying, "What's the use of such carefulness and so different a life from that of the world in general?" Ah! there is great use in it; for victories in little things prepare for greater things and make them possible; and on the contrary, surrender to the will of the flesh in the little things means sure defeat in the warfare as a whole. We who have become footstep followers of Jesus Christ know that we are to be tested (if our testing has not already commenced), and should realize that only as we practice self-denials in the little things of life, and mortify (deaden) the natural cravings of our flesh in respect to food, clothing, conduct, *etc.*, shall we become strong spiritually and be able to "overcome"—Z '99, 172 (R 2494).

Our faults, great and small, injure our spiritual fruitage. This thought should prompt us to wage unceasing warfare against them, not by beating the air, but by intelligent effort. We can overcome them by detaching our affections from, abhorring, avoiding and opposing them. In opposing them we are to attack them as well as to repel their attacks. We attack them by displacement with opposite graces, and by restraint through other than opposite graces. We repel them by diversion of attention from, and by presentation of impenetrable hearts and minds to them, and all this by the Lord's Spirit—P '36, 95.

Parallel passages: 2 Chron. 12:14; Prov. 4:23; Eccles. 5:6; Isa. 1:18; 44:20; Jer. 17:9; Ezek. 20:16; Matt. 12:31, 33-35; 15:2-20; 1 Cor. 5:6; Eph. 2:1-5; Heb. 3:13; 12:5; Jas. 1:14, 15; 2:10, 11; 4:1-3, 17; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:4-15; 5:17.

Hymns: 78, 272, 130, 136, 1, 145, 183.

Poems of Dawn, 169: *The Time is Short*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 118 (R 5886).

Questions: What have I done this week with my faults? How? Why? What helped or hindered therein? What were the results?

THE TIME IS SHORT

UP, up, my soul, the long-spent time redeeming;
Sow thou the seeds of better deed and thought;
Light other lamps, while yet the light is beaming;
The time, the time is short.

Think of the eyes that often weep in sadness,
Seeing not the truth that God to thee hath taught;
O bear to them this light and joy and gladness;
The time, the time is short.

Think of the feet that stray from misdirection,
And into snares of error's doctrine brought:
Bear then to them these tidings of salvation;
The time, the time is short.

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

R5886: "THE LITTLE FOXES"

"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes."—Canticles 2:15.

IN THE above text the word "take" is used in the sense of *catch*—help us to catch the foxes, especially the *little foxes*. The fox is known as a very cunning, but docile little animal, not capable of ferocity and viciousness, but nevertheless the cause of much harm. Its very appearance of harmlessness makes it the more dangerous. The young fox, like all the young of the dog family, is very destructive in its character; and the fox is particularly cunning and crafty when bent on mischief, hence less likely to arouse suspicion of its evil intentions. It has a peculiar simplicity of manner; it attracts by its apparent innocence, and is all the more apt to deceive.

In our text King Solomon seems to be picturing the depravities of our fallen nature which are not so extreme, not so gross, as some, but which are none the less very harmful; indeed they are especially deceitful and likely to elude our attention, and for this reason need more careful and constant watching. The words seem to be the language of the Bridegroom to His espoused. He emphasizes the expression, "the little foxes," and intimates that they would be very destructive.

If we apply the term to sins, we find that there are little sins which are really more dangerous than grosser sins, because we are less likely to be on our guard against these than against the greater sins. Every one would be instinctively on guard against lions, bears, serpents, etc.; but little foxes are so attractive-looking and seem so artless in disposition that unless one has had bitter experience with them he would have little or no fear. But these little animals are much given to scratching and generally destroying everything with which they come in contact.

GUARD CAREFULLY THE "TENDER GRAPES"

In this illustration of the wise man the grape-vine is spoken of, as though these foxes have a special predilection for grapes—the grapes representing the fruits of the Holy Spirit. As these little foxes delight to tear the vine with their sharp claws and to gnaw the roots with their teeth, so small sins tear the branches and gnaw at the roots of the spiritual

vine, thus endangering its very life. They destroy or devour the precious grapes, which are very tender. Grapes during the formative period and while very small are exceedingly tender and the stems very brittle and easily snapped off the vine and destroyed. So the Spirit's fruitage in the hearts and lives of immature Christians may be easily ruined, either by their own lack of care and watchfulness or by the example of the brethren. How careful should those be who have been longer in the Heavenly way to guard their words and conduct in the presence of the younger, less mature ones, the lambs of the flock! Unloving criticism of the brethren before beginners, or others, may do untold harm and is a manifestation of a lack of love and Christian maturity.

Every child of God should be especially on guard against the little things—the things that seem like jokes, which sometimes do more harm in the Church than things which appear great; the little insinuations, that often leave a sting; the jesting about sacred matters, turning Scriptural passages into jests; the little acts of selfishness, etc. These things and many others which by careful thought each one may note really do much damage, injuring the branches and destroying the precious fruits of the Lord's Vine. Then let us, dear brethren, strive to be more and more watchful to catch these "little foxes." Let us each, individually, watch and pray that we do not by thought or word or act of ours hinder or lessen our own fruit-bearing or that of another.

It is difficult for us to realize how potent is our influence for either good or evil in matters which, unless carefully scrutinized, seem trifling. Ah, these little foxes! Careless words, spoken with scarcely a thought or in a moment of impatience, little grumblings, a sarcastic word or laugh or look or shrug—oh, how these things count in our daily lives either for or against our own spiritual development, and often the development of others! How earnestly we should each seek to upbuild our own character and the characters of the brethren! Our Lord is marking all these things. Remember, "He that is faithful in that which is least, will be faithful also in much."

JULY 31

Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire—1 Cor. 3:13.

The Apostle speaks of this time of fiery trial, and, likening the faith and works of a zealous Christian to a house built of gold, silver and precious stones, he declares that the fire of this day, in the end of this Age, shall try every man's work of what sort it is, and shall consume all but genuine faith and character structures. But we are to remember that such loyal characters grow not suddenly, in a few hours or days—mushroom-like—but are progressive developments, fine-grained and strong like the olive tree—Z '99, 171 (R 2494).

The text refers to the consecrated only. Its day in a general way includes the Gospel Age, but particularly refers to its close—now here. At this time the Lord has been pleased to permit fiery trials to come upon all His people. Among these are losses, disappointments, delays, restraints, shelvings, ours and others' faults, chastisements, hardships, necessities, oppositions, contradictions, weariness, sickness, pain, sorrow, persecution, error and temptations. These will infallibly reveal whether one is wholly, partly or not at all the Lord's. Happy are we, if we have as our work the "gold and silver" of Divine Truth and the "precious stones" of a Christlike character, which stand the tests—P '30, 79.

Parallel passages: Eccles. 12:14; Mal. 3:2, 3; Matt. 7:22-27; 12:36, 37; Mark 4:22; Luke 2:35; 12:2, 3; 1 Cor. 3:12, 14, 15; 4:5; 1 Pet. 1:7; 4:12.

Hymns: 119, 93, 230, 63, 228, 305, 67.

Poems of Dawn, 180: *Tempted and Tried*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 195 (R 5916).

Questions: What special trial did I have this week? Did it manifest gold, silver and precious stones, or wood, hay and stubble? How was I exercised thereby?

TEMPTED AND TRIED

TEMPTED and tried, oh! the terrible tide
May be raging and deep, may be wrathful and wide;
Yet its fury is vain for the Lord will sustain,
And forever and ever Jehovah shall reign.
Tempted and tried, yet the Lord at thy side
Will guide thee, and keep thee, tho' tempted and tried.
Tempted and tried, there is One at thy side
And never in vain shall God's children confide.
He will save and defend, for He loves to the end,
Adorable Master, and glorious Friend.
Tempted and tried, whatever betide,

In His secret pavilion His children shall hide.
'Neath the shadowing wing of eternity's King,
His children may trust, yea, His children may sing.
Tempted and tried, yet the Lord will abide,
Thy faithful Redeemer, and keeper, and guide,
Thy shield and thy sword, thine exceeding reward;
Then enough for the servant to be as his Lord.
Tempted and tried, the Savior who died
Hath called thee to suffer—then reign by His side.
If His cross thou wilt bear, His crown thou shalt wear,
And forever and ever His glory shalt share.

R5916: SIGNS OF THE PRESENCE OF THE KING

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

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

The Scriptures call this Day "the Day of the Lord," "the Day of Jehovah," "the Day of God," "the Day of Christ," "the Day of Vengeance," "that great and notable Day," etc. It is the Day in which the Old Order is to perish and the glorious New Order is to be ushered in. In foretelling this Day, both the Prophets and the Apostles speak of the class which will *stand* in this Day when all others shall fall. St. Paul says that everything which can be shaken down will be; and that only the Kingdom which will then be set up, and which cannot be shaken, will remain. (Hebrews 12:25-29.) The present order of society—the nominal church systems, financial institutions, political institutions—*all*—will go down.

During the Gospel Age many who have not been Christians have associated themselves with the Church. The civilized world of today call themselves "Christians," in contradistinction to the nations which they call "heathen," though from the Scriptural standpoint they are all heathen—Gentiles. Among all these various nations we find many

religions, whose devotees claim that they have consecrated themselves to God. But the touch-stone by which these claims may be tested is the Word of God. See Galatians 1:6-9. To the true Church of Christ alone will God give the Messianic Kingdom. Some who really have Christ and His work of sacrifice as their foundation will be saved, but at the expense of all their works, their character-structure, which the "fire" of this Day will consume. The tare class in the nominal churches will be bundled and "burned," not as *individuals*, but as *professed Christians*; that is to say, their professions will be seen to be without foundation. They will come to see how grossly in error they were—how far removed from the Truth.

"SAVED AS THROUGH FIRE"

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

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

The Apostle Paul in his writings lays special emphasis upon the fundamental importance of correct doctrinal teaching. It made no difference whether Paul or Apollos or even an angel from Heaven taught anything, it must be in harmony with the foundation doctrines which had been given them by the Lord. (Galatians 1:6-12.) He assured the Church that what he had taught them was from God; and that even if an angel should bring them another Gospel, it would be a proof that such angel had deflected from loyalty to the Lord. That Jesus Christ died to secure the Redemption-price for Adam and his race is the foundation doctrine of the Church, which was received from Jesus Himself and from His faithful mouthpieces and which was shown in the Divinely given types of the Law. Whoever taught this fundamental truth faithfully was a real help to the people of God. Yet even such a teacher might help them to build, even on this *proper foundation*, a faith and character structure which would not stand the tests of the great Day of the Lord;

for the fire of that Day would surely prove the nature of this structure. Consequently, both teacher and pupil would suffer loss and be saved only "as through fire."

INVULNERABILITY OF THE TRUTH

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

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

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE KING

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

Nevertheless, both the King and the Kingdom are not only *coming*, *but* are *here*; and the present troubles and shakings in church and state, and the general awakening of the people are the results of influences emanating from that King and Kingdom. Though men know it not, it is the smiting of the Kingdom of God that is even now preparing for the wreck of all the kingdoms of the earth, that the way may be opened for the establishment of righteousness in the world, that men's hearts may be humbled and prepared for the righteous Government which is to take control of earth. Worldly men cannot realize this; for this Kingdom cometh not with outward observation—with outward show and display. Therefore they cannot say, "Lo, here," or "Lo, there."

In spite of the awful war now raging, growing fiercer and more deadly every day, these continue to hope for peace, trying to convince themselves and others that the trouble must soon be brought to an end, and that matters will then go on as formerly. They blind themselves to the true conditions and refuse to believe that God has

determined to permit this trouble to spread and involve the entire world and to bring about the utter overthrow of the Present Order of things. Selfishness, pride and love of money have closed their eyes. We give here an extract from a poem written some years ago by a Christian minister, which forcefully describes present conditions and the judgment of God which is now to be visited upon the world for their lasting good:

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

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

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

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

LIFT UP TRUTH'S GLORIOUS BANNER!

It is written that the Day of the Lord would come as a thief and a snare upon the whole world, and that only God's fully consecrated Church would be in the light and not be taken unawares. Many of the consecrated have been deceived by looking for the Heavenly King to come again in the flesh. They forgot that the only reason for His coming in the flesh at His First Advent was "for the suffering of death" as man's corresponding-price; and that now He is highly exalted, a glorious spirit Being. "He was put to death in flesh, but made alive in spirit." (1 Peter 3:18.) They forgot that the Apostle Paul also said, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we Him [so] no more." (2 Corinthians 5:16.) The true children of God are coming more and more to see *how* the Master comes at His Second Advent, and are not expecting to see Him in the flesh and with their natural eyes.

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

AUGUST 1

Death and life are in the power of the tongue—Prov. 18:21.

The tongue's influence exceeds that of all our other members combined; and to control it, therefore, in the Lord's service, is the most important work of the Lord's people in respect to their mortal bodies and the service of these rendered to the Lord. A few words of love, kindness, helpfulness—how often have such changed the entire course of a human life! yes, how much they have had to do with molding the destiny of nations! And how often have evil words, unkind words, slanderous words, done gross injustice, assassinated reputations, *etc.*, or, as the Apostle declares, "set on fire the course of nature," awakening passions, strifes, enmities, at first unthought of! No wonder he declares such tongues are "set on fire of Gehenna," the Second Death!—Z '99, 75 (R 2442).

Scripturally, the tongue symbolizes knowledge—true or false—expressed in language. Therefore, the thought of the text, that life is in the power of the tongue, agrees with James' exhortation, "Receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls." Its thought that death is in the power of the tongue agrees with St. Paul's statement on false teachers, that their word does eat as a cancer. Surely we ought to guard our thoughts and utterances, since they bring life or death to us and our hearers. The world's present woes and future bliss lie closely related to speech, good and true, or evil and false—P '35, 116.

Parallel passages: Psa. 12:3; 34:11-13; 140:3; Matt. 12:36, 37; 15:18, 19; Jas. 3:2-13; 1:26; Prov. 10:20, 21, 31; 11:30; 16:27; 18:4-8; 2 Tim. 2:23-25; Rom. 10:14, 15; 2 Cor. 2:16; Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:6.

Hymns: 116, 70, 164, 200, 210, 154, 315.

Poems of Dawn, 261: *Clear the Way*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 245 (R 5517).

Questions: What kind of a power has my tongue exerted this week? What were the circumstances and results?

CLEAR THE WAY

MEN of thought, be up and stirring
Night and day.
Sow the seed, withdraw the curtain,
Clear the way.
Men of action, aid and cheer them
As you may.
There's a fount about to stream;
There's a light about to beam;
There's a warmth about to glow;

There's a flower about to blow;
There's a midnight blackness changing
 Into gray.
Men of thought, and men of action,
 Clear the way!
Once the welcome light hath broken,
 Who shall say
 What the unimagined glories
 Of the day?
 What the evil that shall perish
 In its ray?
Aid the dawning, tongue and pen;
 Aid it, hopes of honest men;
 Aid it, paper; aid it, type;
 Aid it, for the hour is ripe;
And our earnest must not slacken
 Into play.
Men of thought, and men of action,
 Clear the way!

Lo! a cloud's about to vanish
 From the day;
Lo! the right's about to conquer—
 Clear the way!
Many a brazen wrong to crumble
 Into clay.
With that right shall many more
 Enter smiling at the door;
With the giant wrong shall fall
 Many others, great and small,
 That for ages long have held us
 For their prey.
Men of thought, and men of action,
 Clear the way!

R5517: CONTROL OF THE TONGUE A NECESSITY

"I say unto you, that every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment."—Matthew 12:36.

OUR LORD was addressing some of the Scribes and Pharisees who were trying to "catch Him in His words"—to take advantage of technicalities of language. In their endeavor to oppose Him, those Scribes and Pharisees were doing everything they could to discomfit or vanquish Him in His reasoning, even going to the extent of using arguments which they did not really believe. This is a very dangerous procedure. No

matter how just we think our cause to be as a whole, we are not to resort to any misuse of language to uphold what we believe to be the Truth.

Possibly those Pharisees might have said amongst themselves, "We must use strong arguments to keep ahead of that Nazarene. He uses strong language Himself. We must hold up our end of the controversy, and not show the white feather." But this position did not justify their conduct. Since Justice is the foundation of the Throne of God, any attempt to take advantage of another in any manner whatever will surely bring its own punishment.

From our Lord's comments at various times on the subject of the *tongue* we realize that in His day there must have been some seriously wrong condition prevailing amongst those with whom He came in contact. The Scribes and Pharisees attributed evil power to Him, and declared that He was the tool of Satan—that Satan was speaking through Him, etc. At first our Lord told them in a general way that they deceived themselves. Later, He reproved them severely and showed the fallacy of their arguments. In connection with our text He declared that by their words they should be condemned—be dealt with, corrected in righteousness and brought to true reformation, or else perish in the Second Death.

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

Human beings are the only earthly creatures that can talk—whether orally or in writing or otherwise. More and more the people of God realize the wisdom of the Apostle James' statement that although the tongue is a little member, yet it is the most dangerous of all, because it has the widest influence. If a man sin not with his tongue, he is a perfect man. (James 3:2.) We cannot estimate the possible results of our words. This influence may reach even to the ends of the earth. Therefore we are to consider carefully what we may say, in order to determine whether our words will glorify God or whether they will dishonor Him—whether they will stir up good thoughts and impulses in the minds of others or whether they will stir up that which is evil.

In His Wisdom God has seen fit so to create us that our conduct of today has much to do with our character of tomorrow. Thus we are either making or breaking character continually. It is well that all should know this fact. Not only worldly people, but Christians also, should understand this principle; for Christians are now on trial for glory, honor and immortality. Therefore by neglecting to weigh carefully their words they might lose the great prize for which they are striving.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

By way of emphasis our Lord declared that every idle word—every unprofitable utterance—must be accounted for in a day of reckoning. With the Church, we understand the Scriptures to teach that this day of reckoning is this Gospel Age. Daily are we to go to our Heavenly Father and say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us." Not only must we render up our account daily, but at the end of our course there will be a general summing up. By this we do not understand that at the end of our

race course we shall be lined up and questioned about every word of our experience, but that each one who comes into contact with the Truth is either building up character or else breaking it down, and that his character at the end of his probation will determine his reward. As a pupil daily learns his lessons and prepares himself for the final examinations at the end of the year, when there is a general testing of his knowledge, so with the pupils in the School of Christ. Day by day our Master deals with us; but at the end of our course there is to be a summing up.

Doubtless there are in every one of us some things that are disapproved of the Lord; for we all have the treasure of the New Mind in earthen vessels and therefore cannot do as we would. But we have pledged ourselves to serve the Lord and to be loyal in doing His will. Therefore He is dealing with us *now*. In so doing, He warns us that the tongue is a very important member of our body, and that we are to be careful how we use it; for it will have a bearing upon the final decision in the end of this Gospel Age, when the returns are brought in. Then it will be determined whether we are worthy of the highest honor—joint-heirship with our Savior—or whether we shall be servants to that class or whether we shall be unworthy of life upon any plane of existence.

OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF SLANDER

But there is also a reckoning with us now. Our Lord declares that the tongue is so important a member that it represents our hearts more accurately than does anything else. The hand might do a good deed, yet the heart might be very different from the hand. In fact, the hand might not express the real sentiment of the heart at all. But the tongue is sure to give utterance to what is really in the heart. Therefore by our words we are daily either building up or tearing down character.

There is a spirit which shoots out bitter words. From the standpoint of the Lord, this is MURDER. Thus at the end of the Jewish Age the Scribes and Pharisees criticised and slandered our Lord. Although from their knowledge of the Law they knew that they would be accountable for their actions, yet they did not appreciate the fact that they would be judged by their words.

So will it be in the world's Judgment Day—the Millennium. Mankind will be held responsible for the work of their tongues. But they will have a more favorable opportunity than if judged now; forces will then be at work which will give them a more prompt judgment; and therefore they will learn their lessons quickly. They will have a responsibility for their words. Those that "knew not will be beaten with few stripes"; but those who "knew and did not" act according to their knowledge, "will be beaten with many stripes."

SPECIAL BRIDLES FOR THE TONGUE

Under stress of sudden temptation the Lord's people, who are now on judgment, might impulsively say that which is not pleasing to the Master. But we must *learn* not to speak thoughtlessly; we must learn to weigh our utterances. Since we are servants of God, we

should ever take heed to our ways, in order to render the best possible service. We are not merely to have a good will to do that which is right; we are to seek to bridle our tongues. Whatever vows or resolutions or restraints we may seek to put upon our tongues may be considered as bridles, by which we are determined to bring ourselves into full subjection to the will of God.

So long as Satan and his demon host are at large, the Lord's people will do well to take heed to their ways, that they sin not with their tongue. Satan and his angels are seeking to subvert those who have given themselves to the Lord and to catch them in their words. So while we are in their presence we must be especially on guard, that they may not entrap us. As the Psalmist says, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked [One] is before me."

AN IMPORTANT LESSON FOR ALL

Although our Lord declared that men should give account for every pernicious word, yet He referred to the thoughts behind the words. It was the attitude of heart that distressed Him. He knew the attitude of heart displayed by the Scribes and the Pharisees would bring injury upon them.

Amongst the Lord's people there is nothing more important than that they should learn to be very just. While it is right to be loving, kind, generous, yet *justice* is the very foundation of character. All love and kindness not based upon justice are neither satisfactory nor pleasing to the Lord. In dealing with others, a child of God will not think, What will my fellow-men let me take from them? but, What are the rights of others, and what would my Heavenly Father have me do?

It is very natural for one to recognize his own rights in any matter, but the fallen nature does not so quickly perceive the rights of others. Therefore one of the most important lessons for the Lord's people to learn is to do unto others as they would have others do unto them—simple justice.

We fear that many of the Lord's dear people have not fully realized that obedience to the rules which govern the New Nature means absolutely the "Golden Rule" on their part toward all others. They must not do to others what they would not have others do to them. It is the duty of the New Creature to bring the body into such subjection that justice shall rule in every act and word, and so far as possible in every thought. One must be just in his thoughts before he can properly be just in his dealings. Whoever thinks unjustly will act unjustly in spite of endeavors to the contrary.

THE TREASURE STORED IN OUR HEARTS

As we reflect that the Church is standing before the Bar of Divine Judgment, under the personal inspection of our Lord, and that in His estimation our words are a criterion of judgment, we cannot weigh too carefully the underlying principles upon which His decision will be made. Our Lord's words, as recorded in Matthew 12:34-36, indicate that

both the heart and the mouth are under special scrutiny. How necessary therefore is a right condition of heart, in order that the words of our mouth may be acceptable to our Lord and Redeemer!

In our Lord's statement, the heart is *representative* of the character, and the mouth is the *index* of that character. The word *heart* is sometimes used in Scripture with the force of the word *mind*. Out of the abundance of the mind the mouth speaks. A good man brings forth good things out of the treasure of his mind. But all mankind are by nature sinners; therefore all are by nature evil to some extent. God does not approve of any who are under the sentence of death. Nevertheless there are those of the condemned race of Adam who are relatively good—those who, despite the imperfections under which they were born, the blemishes of their fallen nature, are desirous of being in harmony with the One who is all-good.

We find nothing in Scripture to support the doctrine of total depravity—to imply that there is nothing whatever of good in humanity. Even though no one is perfect, nevertheless, there are some who have at least a good will, good intentions. Such superior characters of past Ages were represented in the Ancient Worthies—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the Prophets of Israel, etc., who fully demonstrated their obedience to God and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness.

THE CLASS APPROVED OF GOD

During this Gospel Age also there are some who are good. Amongst the heathen, as well as in Christian lands, there are those who are well-meaning, well-intentioned, those who are not malicious, not striving to do wrong, but endeavoring to do right. In order to have the Divine approval in this Age, however, one must be of those who come unto the Father through Jesus; for none others are accepted of God. The Father will not receive any one whose heart is not sincere, who does not have good intentions, who does not manifest loyalty to Him and to the principles of righteousness.

Therefore any whom we have reason to believe are accepted of God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, are no longer to be counted as "children of wrath, even as others," but as of the Household of Faith. Despite the frailties of their flesh, they are good at heart; else God would not accept them. With these there is a constant conflict between the New Will and the desires of the flesh.

When we come to consider those who are good at heart, we find that all of them have imperfect bodies—some more so than others. Shall we give up the struggle for the prize because we cannot do perfectly? No! The Lord assures us that He looks at the heart, not at the flesh; that He has made a very gracious arrangement through our Lord Jesus by which the imperfections are cleansed away. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Therefore all His children may come with courage to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, there to obtain mercy and help in every time of need.

CHIPS OR APPLES—WHICH?

The good things brought forth from the treasure of a good man's heart will be those things which he has stored up from time to time. As the Psalmist says of the godly man, "His delight is in the Law of the Lord; and in His Law doth he meditate day and night." And of himself he declares, "Mine eyes prevent [anticipate] the night watches, that I may meditate in Thy Word," Law, precepts—the spirit, the purpose of that Law, not merely the outward form. So should we meditate upon the spirit of the Law of God. The sentiment of our heart should be the desire to get the Divine Mind as nearly as possible on every subject. All who are eager to be in harmony with God and to attain His character-likeness will think upon things that are good, pure, holy.—Psalm 1:2; 119:148; Philippians 4:8.

As one thinks upon things that are good, the mind becomes stored with good. Wherever there is a mouth disposed to speak upon things that are evil, there is an evil disposition—a mind in which evil has been stored. Whatever one has stored up in the mind will be *topmost* and sure to be spoken. An evil treasure will show itself, despite all endeavors to hide it; and likewise a good treasure will manifest itself; for the mind can hold only a certain amount.—Luke 6:45.

A father saw his son reading a novel. He knew that his son was in the habit of reading along this line. Calling the boy, he said, "John, I wish you to empty the apples out of that basket, and then take the basket to the woodshed and fill it with chips." The son did as he was directed. When he returned the father said, "Now put in the apples." The son replied that he could not do this, because there was not room enough in the basket for both chips and apples. Then the father said, "That is just what you are about to do with your mind. You have been filling your mind with chips; and when you try to put in apples, there will be no room." Thus it is with all of us. If we fill our minds with jokes, foolish sayings, etc., we shall not be able to fill them with the things of the Holy Spirit.—Ephesians 5:1-7.

Many of the Lord's people find that, while their hearts are good, there is in their flesh a tendency for certain things that are not good. Thus there is a continual struggle between the flesh and the spirit as to whether the treasure stored up shall be chips or apples, so to speak. It is for each New Creature to decide which shall fill his mind—what kind of society he will choose, where he will go, what he will read, what kind of influences he will come under, what kind he will resist, etc. If in the past he has to any extent treasured up evil things, he should now try to rid himself of them. If his mind has been filled with jokes and levity, things not proper to the child of God, he should seek to put these away.

HOW CHARACTER IS BUILT

Finally, there is a relationship between this laying up of a good treasure in our minds and that of which our Lord spoke when He said, "Lay up for yourselves treasure in Heaven." In laying up treasure in our minds and hearts, we are building character. Whoever goes into a man's house and sees what he has gathered in the way of treasures can easily perceive the direction in which that man's mind is bent. His preferences

demonstrate his character. Thus it is with us all; the things which we cultivate are an index to our character.

When we come to render up our account as New Creatures, character will decide whether we shall be esteemed worthy to be of the Lord's elect Little Flock. Only those who have laid up the treasure of a character like that of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Pattern, will be fit for an inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. Our eternal destiny therefore will be decided by the way in which we now use our minds and the thoughts which we now accumulate. Whoever cultivates good thoughts will receive a blessing, not only in the present life, but throughout the future.

Our first concern, then, must be for the heart—that its affections and dispositions may be wholly under the control of Grace Divine; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, meekness, self-control, faith, brotherly-kindness, love, supreme reverence for God and for Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles are established in the heart, we shall have no difficulty in controlling our tongue; for out of the good treasure of our heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace.

AUGUST 2

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker—
Psa. 95:6.

Our judgment is that it is impossible for any Christian to maintain a proper, consistent walk in life, and to build up such a character and faith structure as are represented by the Apostle as composed of "gold, silver and precious stones," without prayer; more than this, without regularity in prayer, we would almost be inclined to say, without *kneeling* in prayer; and we believe that the experiences and testimonies of the truest and best of the Lord's people who have ever lived will corroborate this—Z '99, 184 (R 2501).

The only reasonable attitude for us, who as God's creatures are so dependent upon His bounty and so blessed by His goodness, is worship. Worship not only implies prayer in its elements of invocation, praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, communion and assurance, but also a wholehearted deadness to self and the world, and aliveness to God. The heart of worship is entire consecration made and kept. We should render this complete devotion in grateful and appreciative faith, hope, love and obedience as our reasonable sacrificial service, and invite one another to join us in so doing—P '34, 109, 110.

Parallel passages: Ex. 20:3; 34:8; Psa. 22:22; 26:6-8; 29:2; 66:4, 13, 14; 100; 116:12-14, 17; 119:108; Isa. 38:20; 56:6, 7; Jer. 31:12; Matt. 4:10; John 4:23, 24; Phil. 3:3; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 14:7.

Hymns: 160, 11, 45, 55, 219, 8, 277.

Poems of Dawn, 103: *Prayer of the Consecrated*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 154 (R 5692).

Questions: Have I this week served God? How? Why? With what results?

PRAYER OF THE CONSECRATED

WE seek not, Lord, for tongues of flame,
Or healing virtue's mystic aid;
But power thy Gospel to proclaim—
The balm for wounds that sin hath made.

Breathe on us, Lord; Thy radiance pour
On all the wonders of the page
Where hidden lies the heavenly lore
That blessed our youth and guides our age.

Grant skill each sacred theme to trace,
With loving voice and glowing tongue,

As when upon Thy words of grace
The wondering crowds enraptured hung.

Grant faith, that treads the stormy deep,
If but Thy voice shall bid it come;
And zeal, that climbs the mountain steep,
To seek and bring the wanderer home.

Give strength, blest Savior, in Thy might;
Illuminate our hearts, and we,
Transformed into Thine image bright,
Shall teach, and love, and live, like Thee!

R5692: PRAYERS THAT ARE HEARD

—Psalm 141.—

MANY MAY WORSHIP, FEW MAY PRAY—ONLY THE SANCTIFIED IN CHRIST JESUS—THEIR FREQUENT NEEDS—"GOD'S EAR OPEN"—THEIR PRAYERS ARISE AS INCENSE TO HIM—LEARNING TO PRAY—WHAT TO PRAY FOR—WATCHING FOR ANSWERS—THE BREATH OF LIFE SPIRITUAL.

"Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me."—V. 9.

WHEN we think of the greatness of the Creator, Maker of Heaven and earth and all therein, and when we think of our own littleness, our weaknesses and imperfections, we are amazed that our God has made any provision whereby even the best of His creatures might hold communion with Him in prayer. We should not fail to note the difference between worship and praise, which anybody may render to the Lord, and prayers and supplications, which are acceptable only from the Lord's consecrated people and their children while still minors.

To illustrate: It is one thing that the populace may cheer a governor or a king, may remove their hats or bow their heads, but it is quite another thing for that same conglomeration of people to be received by the king or the governor into association as his friends or to have communion with him, to tell him about their matters, to have his counsel and guidance. So, while God has an interest in the whole world of mankind, a deep interest, it is not the same interest that He has in His Church. And by His Church we mean, not any sect or party or denomination, but those individuals who, regardless of sectarian lines, have entered into a heart covenant with the Lord, renouncing their own wills and accepting, instead, the will of God in Christ. These are the Bible Church, whose names are written in Heaven. (Hebrews 12:23.) These are the ones addressed in the Bible as the saints of God, and respecting whom it is declared, "All things are yours; ... and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—1 Corinthians 3:21-23.

This Church of God, in all the world, is not numerically strong. As the Bible says, it contains not many rich, not many wise, not many learned, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom. (1 Corinthians 1:26; James 2:5.) Their reigning, their power and their control in the world's affairs will not come until they shall have experienced the resurrection change, and Messiah's Kingdom shall be fully inaugurated. Then these shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years.—Revelation 20:4.

WHO MAY PRAY

Strangely enough, many seem to have gotten the thought that anybody, at any time, may rush into the presence of the Almighty God with his requests. The intimation even seems to be that God is unhappy because people do not come to Him thus. Such views of prayer indicate a lack of Bible study, Bible information. The Bible teaches that prayer is a great privilege.

Jesus declared, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." Furthermore, He indicated the restrictions upon those who would approach the Father through Him—they must be His disciples; and to become His disciples, they must take upon themselves certain obligations or vows. They must renounce their own wills, and accept the will of Jesus. They must lay all upon the altar; otherwise they cannot be accepted, cannot be presented to the Father, cannot be begotten of the Holy Spirit, cannot be styled or treated as sons of God, cannot be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ in His coming Kingdom—cannot have the privilege of sons of God in the present life either—the privilege of prayer and of Divine fellowship, communion, instruction.

All these special blessings the Bible reserves for those who become especially, peculiarly, the sons of God. Even in respect to these who have become sons of God, Jesus intimates a danger of their losing the privilege of prayer. He says, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye may ask what ye will"—not otherwise.—John 15:7.

We believe that misinformation on this subject of prayer has worked disadvantageously to many. The majority, holding intercourse with evil, only occasionally flee to the Lord in some trouble, and that without entering into any covenant with Him or receiving any recognition as sons, and without desiring this. If they were rightly informed, the effect upon their minds at first would be to stun them. They would awake suddenly to the realization that they are without God in the world; that their affairs are not subject to His supervision; but that as part of the world, they are under the general curse, or sentence of death.

The highest qualities of the human mind, which lie at the very top of our craniums, are the organs of worship, reverence, veneration, spirituality. Even the wicked, at times, feel that they will please God by praying to Him and asking Him for some favors. They have not learned that God has addressed them, saying, "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, to take My Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castest My words behind thee?"—Psalm 50:16, 17.

It is high time that the difference between the Church and the world shall be more distinctly discerned, and that the privileges of the Church shall be appreciated. The effect would be to awaken in others a sense of their need for God. Then, in their hours of distress, realizing that they have no God, would they not be the more likely to seek Him earnestly in His appointed way, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through a full consecration—the only terms upon which Jesus would accept them and be their Advocate with the Father, and secure for them the title and privilege of sons of God, valuable both for the present life and for that which is to come?

INCENSE, PRAYER, BEFORE GOD

The Prophet David, in this lesson, pictures the Christian in his distress coming to God in His appointed way: "O Lord, I cry unto Thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto Thee. Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense." This is the same thought elsewhere expressed in the Bible—that the prayers of God's people rise up before Him as a sweet perfume. (Revelation 5:8.) And, by the way, we remember that the incense of old, which typified the prayers of the saints, was composed of a rare mixture of spices, giving forth a peculiarly sweet odor; and that nobody was allowed to make that incense except the priests who were to offer it. (Exo. 30:34-38; 37:29.) Thus again the Lord shows us that the privilege of prayer, of approaching Him in an acceptable manner, is confined to the antitypical priests, called by St. Peter the Royal Priesthood.—1 Peter 2:9.

Only those of the Lord's people who have consecrated their lives to Him, even unto death, are thus represented as members of the sacrificing Priesthood, to whom the Apostle wrote, saying, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, and your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1.) The Lord has pledged to this particular class that He will hear them, yea, that He will answer them—not necessarily according to their natural preferences, but He will heed the spirit of their cry and give to them, according to His Wisdom, the experiences and blessings most helpful.

WHAT WE SHOULD PRAY FOR

Our prayers should be in harmony with our endeavors. Thus in our lesson the Church of Christ are represented as praying the Lord to set a guard over their lips. The thought is that they are striving to keep their lips, their mouths, from utterances that would be injurious to others; and that, on the contrary, they may be helpful to humanity and honoring to God. Also, because they are striving for heart purity and to avoid practising wicked works with evil doers, therefore they pray in harmony, "Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity; and let me not eat of their dainties"—assist me in my determination of opposition to all these things.

How appropriate that the Lord's consecrated people should scrutinize their lives when they come to their Father in prayer! How appropriate for them to note to what extent their

blessings, luxuries and dainties have come to them contrary to the principles of justice and love—contrary to the Golden Rule! Whoever intelligently thus prays will surely be examining his life to rectify his business relations, so that he may not eat of the dainties which would come from injustice or oppression, but, on the contrary, rejoice in the commonest things of life if they be the best procurable in harmony with the principles of righteousness, the principles of love.

"LET THE RIGHTEOUS SMITE"

The class that are thus in fellowship with God, through prayer and through seeking to be obedient to His arrangements and laws, are so fully engaged that they are able to say, as in this Psalm, that they will take no offense if reproved by the righteous—rather the reproofs of such will be to them like an excellent oil, such as a guest received from his host in ancient times. The true Christians, the class who have the fellowship with God through prayer, have the qualities of heart which the Apostle describes as the fruits of the Holy Spirit; namely, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. (Galatians 5:22, 23; 2 Peter 1:5-8.) And because possessing these, they are not easily offended, but indeed are glad to have such experiences and lessons as the Lord's providences may direct to them—especially if these come through the brethren, and particularly if the brethren who use these administer their rebukes in a Christian manner—in meekness, remembering themselves, lest they also be tempted.—Galatians 6:1.

In such cases, the reproof will be a blessing from the Lord—if given in that spirit and received in that spirit. Neither their heads nor their hearts are broken by such Scriptural reproofs; and they themselves learn to administer admonitions to others in similar manner, so as not to injure, but to help. Their prayers are for each other in what seem to be calamities; and in harmony with the Lord's promise, these seeming calamities and all the affairs of life shall operate together for good to those who love Him, to the called ones according to His purpose.

The American Revision gives the wording here differently: "As oil upon the head; let not my head refuse it: for even in their wickedness shall my prayer continue."

In hyperbole the Prophet declares the distress of the Church as affecting them even to death. "Our bones are scattered at the mouth of Sheol (the grave), as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth"—like the fragments made by the wood-cutter, who considers the chips not worthy to be gathered. But while this may be the estimation of God's saints from the worldly viewpoint, not so is it with God, as the following verse implies: "But mine eyes are unto Thee, O God the Lord: for in Thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute."

But whatever affliction God's consecrated people may have in the present life, whatever rejection may be their experience at the hands of the great or the wise of this world, they have God's promise of glory, honor, immortality, in the future. In Him they trust, and He will not leave them desolate. He has declared, "The gates of Hell (Sheol,

Hades) shall not prevail against them"; that is to say, the power of the grave shall not prevail against the Lord's Anointed, Christ and the Church—they shall come forth from the power of the tomb glorious in the First Resurrection majesty to reign a thousand years.—Revelation 20:6.

"KEEP ME FROM THE SNARES"

Satan is represented as a fowler, a hunter, who is seeking after the Lord's people even as earthly hunters are prone to hunt after speckled birds. Before the invention of powder, the hunters more particularly entrapped their prey with snares and pitfalls. While Satan is represented as being the great Arch-enemy, he also is accredited with using agents. Chief amongst his agents, according to the Bible, are those fallen angels of whom he is the prince—"the prince of devils." But he has amongst men many workers of iniquity. These are his servants whether they realize it or not.

As Jesus declared, "His servants ye are to whom ye render service." In consequence of this rule, we understand that many are professedly servants of God who are deceiving themselves, who are really the servants of the Wicked One; for his works they do, as Jesus said. They colabor for the upbuilding of unrighteousness, iniquity, injustice, and in holding down the Truth and in misleading the people.

The Lord will help His people, He will deliver them from the various snares of the Adversary; and eventually Satan and all his cohorts will fall into their own snares. Thus, in ancient times, when the Egyptians thought to capture the Israelites at the Red Sea, the Lord opened the way for the Israelites and they escaped; while their enemies pursued after them, and were themselves entrapped and overwhelmed.

Similarly, in the great Time of Trouble that is approaching, apparently Satan and his servants will be overwhelmed in that trouble in a manner not expected by them. The Church will escape those things coming upon the world and will stand before the Son of Man, changed in the power of the First Resurrection and called to be with Him as His Kingdom class. But the world will be ensnared in that great Time of Trouble. Yet, thank God, it will be for their advantage as they learn the ways of the Lord more fully, and great will be the blessings of the Almighty coming to them!

AUGUST 3

Separate yourselves from the people of the land—Ezra 10:11.

Someone has well said, "The Christian in the world is like a ship in the ocean. The ship is safe in the ocean so long as the ocean is not in the ship." One of the great difficulties with Christianity today is that it has admitted the strangers, the "people of the land," and recognized them as Christians. It does injury, not only to the Christians, by lowering their standards (for the *average* will be considered the standard), but it also injures the "strangers," by causing many of them to believe themselves thoroughly safe and needing no conversion, because they are outwardly respectable, and perhaps frequently attendants at public worship—Z '99, 203 (R 2510).

God's people are a holy nation, severed from all others unto God's service. Their faith, spirit, hopes and aims differ from those of the natural man. So dissimilar are these two classes that the attempt to fellowship one another would prove painful and disastrous. Especially would God's people be disadvantaged by such association. For the welfare of both classes separation from each other is necessary. Hence the exhortation, "Come out of her, my people." And when this separation is made, the faithful enter into closer fellowship with the Lord and with one another—P '33, 110, 111.

Parallel passages: Num. 16:21, 26; Ezra 6:21; Prov. 9:6; Isa. 48:20; 52:11; Jer. 51:9; Acts 2:40; 2 Cor. 6:17—7:1; Rev. 18:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:25-27; 1 Thes. 4:3, 4; 2 Tim 2:21; 2 Pet. 1:4.

Hymns: 130, 78, 48, 71, 13, 196, 312.

Poems of Dawn, 224: *The Rose*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 370 (R 5138).

Questions: Have I this week cleansed myself from evil persons and things? How? Why? With what results?

THE ROSE

WITHIN my hand I gently hold the Garden's
Queen, a rose,—
The softly-sighing summer wind about it faintly blows,
And wafts its wondrous fragrance out upon the
evening air.
And as I gaze upon the rose, so perfect and so fair,
In memory's halls there wakes, the while, a legend,
quaint and old,
How once upon a time, one day, a sage picked up,
we're told,
A lump of common clay, so redolent with perfume

rare,
He marveled, and the question wondering asked,
"Whence dost thou bear
Such fragrance, O, thou lump of clay?" In tones
of deep repose
There came the sweet reply, "I have been dwelling
with *the rose*."

The while the legend stirs my soul, within my hand
still lie
The petals of the rose, and from my heart of hearts
I cry,
"Thou lovely *Rose of Sharon*, may I ever dwell with
Thee,
So closely that the fragrance of Thy love shall cling
to me!
Oh, fill me with the spirit of Thy sweet humility,
Then all shall see and know, dear Lord, that I have
learned of thee;
And let mine earthly pilgrimage, until its blessed close,
Each day and hour bear witness, *I've been dwelling
with the Rose!*

R5138: LOVE NOT THE WORLD

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."—1 John 2:15.

IN THE TEXT, "Love not the world," we do not understand the term "world" to mean either the human race or the planet on which we live. The thought of the text seems to be more particularly the present order of things, for the Greek word here translated world is *kosmos*, signifying arrangement. We are to appreciate the beauties of nature. We are to love the human family, whom God also loves, though not in the sense in which He loves the Church of Christ. We read, "God so loved *the world* that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

St. John cannot therefore be understood to refer to the world of mankind, when he says, "Love not the world." For them we should have sympathy similar to that which the Heavenly Father has for the fallen race. The Scriptures inform us that the present order, or arrangement, of things on earth is entirely out of harmony with God's will, or purpose; for the world is ruled by selfishness. The Divine arrangement is that love shall be the rule among God's creatures. "God is Love ... He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God."—I John 4:8, 16.

The world operates along lines different from those of love. Each one strives selfishly to heap together treasure for himself, even if meantime his neighbor goes destitute. Many live in luxury, while realizing that there are others who lack the necessities of life. Many seek for power to control men, not with the thought of their uplift, but with a view to using them for selfish ends and motives. This spirit of selfishness belongs to the present order of things. We see it in operation everywhere.

The spirit of the world lays hold of all the forces of nature and seeks to control these, to adapt them to its own selfish interests. It is true that much good has resulted indirectly from this spirit of selfishness. For instance, a man with a great amount of the vain-glorious spirit may for his own selfish purposes benefit others. A general might have so much pride in his service that in order to win praise for himself he would care for his soldiers and have them well dressed. Some of our great captains of industry have done the world good service, and incidentally have blessed many, while carrying out their own designs.

SELFISHNESS THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD

If all of the great worldly enterprises were undertaken with a view to the betterment of mankind, the spirit of these would not be selfish. We know, indeed, that much is done to help those who are needy, and that where there is a motive of this kind, it is often misinterpreted and misjudged to be selfish. But "the Lord looketh on the heart." (I Sam. 16:7.) Those who have the selfish heart, the selfish intentions, will continue to love the things of the world. In proportion as such may be shown that there is a new order of affairs coming, in that proportion the selfish-minded will not be in sympathy with the change of dispensation.

If a man conducts a large enterprise for the benefit of those who would have opportunity to share such blessings, that man would rejoice that there is a better time coming. A man who would truly rejoice to have a better arrangement of affairs, would not have the spirit that dominates in the present order of things. He would have the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Love, the spirit that will dominate the New Order of things, that will control during the thousand years of Christ's reign.

Many are in the attitude of mind which would say, "My employer is rich. Whenever I get the opportunity to help myself to some of his money, I will do so and get as much as possible." Such people love the present order of things, whether they be rich or poor. A great many poor love the things of this world, and hope some day to get their share.

There are people who say, "Oh, I do not love the world and its selfish spirit! From the crown of my head to the soles of my feet I am opposed to it. Sometimes I say to my husband, 'This is a very selfish world, John.' Then he replies, 'Yes, Mary, it is. Everywhere people are seeking for everything that will gratify self and selfish desires. But while you condemn the ways of the world, yet you delight in the good things of life provided by my industry—the automobile, the pleasant home, etc.' And I must

acknowledge that he is right. I fear that I could not be happy without them." Such a person certainly loves the things of the world, even while making good use of them.

It seems to be a serious charge to say that any one who is in that attitude of mind which loves the world and the things belonging to it, has not the love of the Father in him. We do not understand, however, that such a one has *no* love for the Father or that the Father has no love for him. The Apostle seems to be addressing this message to the Church. Those who have been adopted into God's family must continue to love Him or they would not be counted as members of that class.

What, then, is the full import of this expression—"The Love of the Father is not in him"? To us it would mean that the Love of the Father had not gotten full control of his heart, and this would mean that ultimately—unless he should gain a victory over his selfish disposition—he would not be accepted as a son.

Everywhere about us is this spirit of selfishness. Every child of God should be on guard against it and against willingness to participate in the things of this world. We should strive to be in that condition which is pleasing to the Father. We are to try to rid ourselves of the spirit of the world and to be filled with the Spirit of the Father. This would not mean that we are not to appreciate beautiful things, or that we are not to like to see others striving to benefit the world; but that we should not be satisfied with any of these things, so far as we are concerned.

TWO KINDS OF MOTIVES

Whatever talents we possess we should use for the good of humanity in any kind of work that would be for the glory of God. Even a good work could be engaged in from the spirit of the world rather than from the Spirit of God; that is, it might be done for what we could get from others in the way of money, honor or influence; or, on the other hand, it might be for the good we desired to do for others.

The highest of all services is that of the ministry of the Word of God. Even this noble service might be pursued from either of two motives—the Love of the Father or the love of self. Apparently there are some engaged in the ministry purely for the sake of the loaves and fishes, for the honorable position it gives them in the world, or because they do not know of anything that would serve them better.

Again, there are those, no doubt, who have entered the ministry, not for selfish reasons, but because they desire to serve God, to serve the Truth, to serve His people. The Lord alone knows what has induced any one to enter the ministry. But since we are living in the day that will try every man's work, God will prove what sort it is—will show what motive is behind the deed.

Those who are serving merely from the worldly spirit will be vexed with everything that is making for Truth; and in proportion as their earthly interests suffer, they will be angry. Those who are of the right spirit, however, will rejoice in everything that will be

helpful to humanity, in everything that is to the glory of God, in everything that will make the Bible more easily understood.

In fact, we may suppose that the real testing, so far as the Church is concerned, is the making manifest whether we love the world—the things of the present time—or whether we love God supremely. As time goes on, it will be even more impossible to harmonize the spirit of love and the spirit of selfishness. Those who love God will be fully out of harmony with the spirit of the present evil world.

"Love not the world!
He in whose heart the love
Of vanity has found a place, shuts out
The enduring world above.

"Love not the world!
However fair it seem;
Who loveth this vain world—the love of God
Abideth not in him."

AUGUST 4

The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves—2 Tim. 2:24, 25.

Some of the Lord's dear people have greatly injured their influence in the Truth by display of too large a degree of self-confidence, *self-assurance*, in speaking of the Divine Plan to others especially to the learned. Meekness is a jewel wherever found, and is especially desirable as an adjunct and sling for the Truth. Let the Truth be shot forth with all the force it can carry, but always with meekness and humility; and the question form of suggesting Truth will often be found the most forceful—Z '00, 14 (R 2558).

The qualities enumerated in this text are such as will enable the servant of the Truth to realize the object of his office: efficiency for the Lord and His cause and His people. The lack of these qualities unfits one for the service of the Truth, and makes one an injurer of the brethren and others instead of a helper, however great his natural talents may be. Well-balanced people resent in a religious teacher the marks of priestcraft but readily respond to the spirit of the Master, whose manner and spirit of teaching are well expressed in the Apostle's words in this text—P '32, 112.

Parallel passages: Gen. 13:8; Prov. 15:2; 16:13; Jude 3; Titus 3:2; 1 Tim. 3:2, 3; 6:11; Rom. 12:18; 14:19; 1 Cor. 4:21; 10:31, 32; Phil. 2:3, 14; Col. 3:12; Jas. 1:19; 2 Thes. 3:15; 2 Tim. 2:25.

Hymns: 44, 95, 125, 145, 198, 116, 210.

Poems of Dawn, 107: *O Use Me, Lord*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 166 (R 5698).

Questions: Have I this week ministered the Word to others? Under what circumstances? How? Why? With what results?

O, USE ME, LORD!

LORD, *speak to me*, that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thine erring children, lost and lone.

O, *lead me*, Lord, that I may lead
The wandering and the wavering feet;
O, *feed me*, Lord, that I may feed
Thy hungering ones with manna sweet.

O, *strengthen me*, that while I stand
Firm on the Rock, and strong in Thee,

I may stretch out a helping hand
To wrestlers in the troubled sea.

O, *teach me*, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart;
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.

O, *give* Thine own sweet *rest* to me,
That I may speak with soothing power
A word in season, as from Thee,
To weary ones in needful hour.

O, *fill* me with Thy *fulness*, Lord,
Until my very heart o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word,
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show,

O, *use me*, Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where;
Until Thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share!

R5698: GENTLENESS A CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CHRIST

"The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."—2 Timothy 2:24, 25.

THE words of our text were addressed by the Apostle Paul to Timothy, an Elder of the Church. The Lord's people, all who belong to the Body of Christ, are sons of God; nevertheless, they are all servants—bond-servants of Jesus Christ. Every true son would desire to serve the interests of his father, especially a just, loving father; and every faithful servant would wish to serve the interests of his master or his employer, particularly a noble, worthy employer or master. Our Lord Jesus, who was the special Son of the Heavenly Father, made Himself Servant of all, in order that He might serve the Father's interests, accomplish His will.

Our text is applicable to any servant of God, any member of the Church of Christ, whether he holds office among the brethren or not. It is an injunction which applies to all of the Church. Every spirit-begotten child of God is to teach according to his opportunity and ability, under the limitations of sex, etc., given in the Scriptures. "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; because the LORD hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." (Isaiah 61:1.) These words of the Prophet apply to every member of The Christ, Head and Body.

PROPER MANNER OF PRESENTING THE TRUTH

But the Message of the Good Tidings that the Lord has given us to proclaim is not one to be forced upon people. To be proper servants of the Lord, and in harmony with His arrangements, we must not strive, must not argue or quarrel. In meekness we are to instruct, not with an air of superiority, or a desire to show how much we know. Our Message is for those who have "an ear to hear." We are not to force ourselves upon people, not to intrude upon them, in order to make them hear. While we are to be ready to sacrifice *our own* interests to proclaim the Message of our faith, yet in so doing we are not to be strifeful, malicious or contentious.

We would not say of those who are inclined to be contentious in presenting the Truth that they are not members of Christ, but evidently they have not learned the better way. They have not sufficiently developed the quality of love; they are lacking in Heavenly wisdom in this respect. On one occasion two of our Lord's disciples came from a city of Samaria, the inhabitants of which would not sell them food, and indignantly asked of Jesus whether they should call fire down from Heaven to destroy them. In reply our Lord said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man came not to *destroy* men's lives, but to *save* them." (Luke 9:55, 56.) So there are some today who are ready to quarrel on every occasion. Although this tendency does not prove that they are not children of the Lord, nevertheless, it demonstrates that they are not in the right attitude, that improvement is necessary.

The things pleasing to God are inculcated in the Scriptures. The Lord's followers are to be gentle to all men—not only to the brethren in the Church, but to all others. They are not to be strife-breeders, not always getting into a wrangle, but long-suffering, considerate of the opinions and preferences of others. There may be times when a Christian is put into a position where he will be forced to defend himself; but it is one thing to defend one's self in a reasonable way, and quite another to be strifeful and aggressive.

In endeavoring to carry the Truth to others, we should remember that our faith is not to be presented to everybody. "Cast not your pearls before swine." They will not appreciate your pearls. They will wish to do you injury because of not appreciating them. But while not strifeful, we are to be on the alert to hold forth the Word of Life. If the Truth is attacked and honest souls are in danger of being stumbled, we must, as the Apostle enjoined, "contend *earnestly* for the faith once delivered to the saints." (Jude 3.) This does not mean, however, that we are to be quarrelsome, or to be disputatious, in the ordinarily accepted use of those terms. We are to be ever ready to proclaim the Truth on every suitable occasion—with moderation, meekness and humility, but with earnestness and zeal; for this is our business. If those to whom we present the Message of Truth are in the proper attitude, they will desire it. It is right, therefore, for us to be ready to lay down our lives in defense of the Truth and its interests.

The more cool, calm and self-possessed we are when opposed, the better we can defend and recommend the Message we bear. The greater the contrast between our spirit and that of our opposer, the stronger will be our argument for the Truth in the minds of others who may hear; and the more likely shall we be to disarm prejudice in the mind of the opposing one, if he be sincere and honest of heart. One who loses his self-control and becomes combative and disputatious defeats his own cause. One should never lose his head. He will be sure to say things that were better left unsaid and to manifest by tone and manner that he is not actuated by the Spirit of the Master. More harm than good might result from such a mistake. We are always to present the Message gently, kindly, forcefully. It may be necessary to be positive in our statements, but the spirit of the presentation is to be gentle, whether in private or in public.

QUALIFICATION OF A TRUE TEACHER

The Apostle says that the servant of the Lord should be "apt to teach." (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:24.) St. Paul was here especially addressing an Elder in the Ecclesia. To be apt to teach is to have the teaching ability. Not all have the ability, the gift, of making things plain to others. There are some people who the more they say the less they are understood. If there are some who find themselves in this condition, they should use printed matter and then try to learn how to present the Message in a way that will be assimilable to the minds of others—making it clear, plain and logical. In the presentation of the Message to others patience is necessary. Be willing to go over the point again and again, having sympathy with those you are instructing, remembering how difficult you found it when you were trying to emerge from darkness into the light.

Whether presenting the Truth publicly or in private, never assume an air of superiority, never manifest haughtiness. Never allow yourself to become so irritated as to say, "I know more about this in five minutes than you do in a year"; nor even imply this thought in the expression of your face, or in tone or manner. You see, you can express yourself in these four different ways at once; but any one of the four would be sufficient to place a barrier between yourself and those whom you were endeavoring to interest. You are to be meek, lowly of heart, humble.

If some one presents to you an argument or a Scripture that he thinks contradicts your position, say to him, "Well, brother, let us see whether that is in harmony with the teachings of the Bible. We must accept as Truth only that which will harmonize all the statements of the Word of God. Let us prove the matter." Have a meek, teachable manner, one which shows that you are willing to learn from another if he can teach you something from the sure Word of the Lord. Thus your opponent will be more willing to hear what you have to say, if he is disposed to be at all reasonable.

Undoubtedly the Lord's people are learning more and more the lesson inculcated in our text—"the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all." It is a lesson that all must learn, Elders and Deacons and every member of the Body of Christ. It is necessary to our own character-building, and necessary in order that we may do more effective service for the Master. When at first we buckled on the armor and took up the

Sword of the Spirit, we probably did some flourishing, and perhaps often did more harm than good. We felt that we had something that no one could argue down. But we have been learning to be more gentle, more wise, more patient, more loving; and thus we have become better qualified to be instructors of others. We have seen how we may injure the Cause of the Lord by a wrong presentation of the Truth, and how by proper presentation we may become more successful in doing the Lord's work, in reaching hungry hearts, and more pleasing to our great King, whom we all love and long to serve.

AUGUST 5

We know that all things work together for good to them that love God ... the called according to his purpose—Rom. 8:28.

Remembering this, all the Lord's people should be content with the lot which Providence seems to mark out for them—not indolent, but content, when they have done all that their hands find to do—not restless, peevish, dissatisfied, complainers against God and His providence. It may be that the Lord is fitting and preparing us individually for some special service, and that the permitted experiences alone will prepare us for that service. We are to remember also that we are incompetent to judge of our own imperfections, and hence incompetent to judge of the experiences which would be most helpful to us

—Z '00, 22 (R 2562).

What blessed comfort the child of God who, as one of His called ones, wholeheartedly loves God finds in the assurance of this text that all his interests are under Divine care and supervision, and that all his experiences, under Divine direction, are conspiring to his development as a Christian. Unlike the poor world, whose interests are exposed to all sorts of accidents, the Christian, assured that there are no accidents in his experiences, knows that whatever befalls him is an expression of God's love and care, and that it helps him to attain his life's ambition—Christlikeness—P '26, 108.

Parallel passages: Gen. 5:20; Deut. 8:2; Jer. 24:5-7; 2 Cor. 4:15-18; Heb. 12:9-11; Rev. 3:19; Rom. 1:6; 9:11, 23, 24; 1 Pet. 5:7, 10; Ps. 76:10; Isa. 51:2; Prov. 16:7.

Hymns: 63, 43, 56, 57, 93, 293, 305.

Poems of Dawn, 136: *Discipline*.

Tower Reading: Z '10, 72 (R 4566).

Questions: Do I love God supremely? What evidence have I of being of the called? Wherein have "the all things" of this week wrought good to me?

DISCIPLINE

THE hammer of Thy discipline, O Lord,
Strikes fast and hard. Life's anvil rings again
To Thy strong strokes. And yet we know 'tis then
That from the heart's hot iron all abroad
The rich glow spreads. Great Fashioner Divine,
Who spareth not, in Thy far-seeing plan,
The blows that shape the character of man,
Or fire that makes him yield to touch of Thine,
Strike on, then, if Thou wilt! For Thou alone
Canst rightly test the temper of our will,
Or tell how these base metals may fulfill

Thy purpose—making all our life Thine own.
Only we do beseech Thee, let the pain
Of fiery ordeals through which we go
Shed all around us such a warmth and glow,
Such cheerful showers of sparks in golden rain,
That hard hearts may be melted, cold hearts fired,
And callous hearts be taught to feel and see
That discipline is more to be desire.
Than all the ease that keeps us back from Thee.

R4566: WORTHY AND UNWORTHY AMBITION

—Matthew 6:19-34.—

Golden Text:—"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

THE Great Teacher taught no extravagance. He was energetic in the Father's business and taught his followers to be "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Nevertheless his teaching in this lesson is that our energies are not to take the selfish form of laying up earthly treasures: We are to lay up heavenly treasures instead. Notwithstanding the reference to moth and rust and thieves despoiling earthly treasures, we understand his teaching rather on a higher plane, though the principle is a broad one. All will admit that it would be folly to lay up clothing or food far in advance of need, except under very peculiar circumstances. But gold might be treasured, or money in the bank, or bonds, or stocks, or farm added to farm, and house to house, and the same principle would be involved.

Although no moth could touch the bank account, nor rust injure the gold, and no thieves could steal the title to the property, the principle is the same. Treasures of every kind may lose their value—do lose their value to us, when we die, if not before. Death, corruption, touches everything earthly under present conditions, no matter how careful or thoughtful the provision. "Naked came we into the world, and naked must we leave it." (Job. 1:21.) Intelligent people are generally agreed that God has provided a future life beyond the tomb, attainable in the resurrection morning. And the Scriptures teach that the degree of our blessing then will stand related to our use of the present life. It is this point that the Great Teacher emphasized in the study of today. All intelligent minds assent to the reasonableness of this.

Let us not take the extreme view entertained by some; let us not suppose that the Master taught that people might not make reasonable provision for their own comfort, and that they might not be dependent upon charity in old age. Let us not suppose that he meant that parents should be neglectful of their duties toward dependent members of their family. The Bible distinctly teaches that "he who provides not for his own is worse than an unbeliever." The proper thought, then is that it is right to economize and, as St. Paul

expresses it, "to lay by in store" for our own future needs or that we may have to lend to others, in need. God's people are to be frugal, to avoid debts, to be "forehanded," and with some reserve of capital.

But earthly things are not to be the treasures of their souls, but merely their servants, conveniences—always ready for use, for every emergency, freely, whole-heartedly. He who follows this course will rarely have large earthly wealth. Only by making wealth a treasure and setting upon it inordinate desire can one become miserly or very rich. Setting the affections on things above would signify so loose a handling of worldly riches as would hinder the accumulation or preservation of great wealth.

The Master's word is, that whoever sets his affections upon earthly treasures will become sordid, selfish, earthly; while he who sets his affections upon the things above will become correspondingly heavenly, spiritual, blessed, generous. We have two eyes and if they be not properly adjusted with relationship to each other our vision of things will be distorted. Hence we seek to correct such a difficulty, that we may get the true view of matters. So it is with the eye of our understanding. It has both a present and a future outlook, an earthly and a heavenly view. It is important that we get these rightly adjusted, so that we may see matters in their true light—see the great value of the future life in comparison with the present one, and correspondingly be guided to the setting of our heart affections there, and in general balancing all the interests of life wisely.

As in the natural body the eyes may become darkened or blinded, so it is with our eyes of understanding. And if this blindness come upon us after we have once seen and enjoyed the Divine promise, our case would be all the more pitiable. How great that darkness would be!

Still another lesson there is for us along the same line. The serving of mammon would bless us in the present life, but be injurious to our future interests. But the service of God would prepare us for future influence. And although obedience to God may cost us the loss of the pleasures of sin and the loss of some legitimate worldly blessing in the present time, nevertheless there is a blessing even now to those who are faithful servants of God and righteousness. And additionally there is the glorious prospect of the future. It is necessary, however, for us to choose between the two masters. We cannot serve both. We cannot get the rewards of both. As Joshua did, so let us determine, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

The Master urges us to commit all of our interests to God and to wholly resolve to be obedient to him, to the extent of our ability, and then to realize the Divine care which is over all creation to be specially over us, because of having come into special relationship to him, in accordance with his promises. Such need have no *anxiety* with respect to their earthly affairs, but may trust all their interests to their Heavenly Father. Our eternal life is worth more than the food and raiment of the present life. If wise we will seek the future life at any cost, at any sacrifice of the present one.

As for the ability of our Heavenly Father to care for our interests, we should consider the manifestations in nature of his power and wisdom and grace, in his provision for the fowl of the air and for the lily of the field. We should realize that he has equal power to provide for our best interests; thus faith should firmly trust him, come what may. Suppose we were of small stature, and inclined to *worry* over the matter of increasing our height? Then let us realize our own littleness and look rather to the Lord for the things respecting the present as well as the future life. Let us be diligent in his service, leaving all of our present experiences as well as our future rewards to his wisdom, love and power.

Should we suppose that God, who cares for the lilies and the birds, would not much more care for us after we had become his children through faith in Christ and through the consecration of our lives? Let us then cast off all anxious care respecting food and raiment and all matters pertaining to these which the world in general are worried about. To be without worry would not mean to be without *proper concern* and due diligence to find work and to do it. But our Father knows better than we the things that we really need, and faith is not merely to trust him, but to accept what he gives as being for our best interests.

Our chief concern as followers of Christ is to seek to attain a share in God's Kingdom with our dear Redeemer—a share in the Millennial Kingdom as the Bride of Christ, who shall sit with him in his glorious Throne for the blessing and uplifting of the world of mankind. We have our Master's assurance for it that whoever pursues this course will do wisely and that God will look out for his earthly interests, for his highest welfare. So doing our lives will be crowned with peace and joy and rest in the Lord, which in his Word he has promised those who trust him.

AUGUST 6

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you—Jas. 4:7.

If we are positive in our rejection of temptation, it increases our strength of character, not only for that time but also for subsequent temptations; and it disconcerts to some extent our Adversary, who, noting our positiveness, knows well that it is useless to discuss the matter with persons of strong convictions and positive characters; whereas if the question were parleyed over, the result would surely be an advancing of further reasons and arguments on the Adversary's part, and a danger on our part that we would be overmatched in argument, for, as the Apostle declares, the devil is a wily adversary, and "we are not ignorant of his devices." Prompt and positive obedience to the Word and Spirit of the Lord is the only safe course for any of the "brethren"—Z '00, 30 (R 2565).

Satan acts not only defensively but also offensively against us. His offensive is cunning, sudden, sharp and persistent. It behooves us to repel him vigorously. We should repulse him by watchfulness, prayer, faith in our equipment, hope for victory, love for defeating him, persistent determination to gain victory, exertion against him, detaching our affections from evil, evasion of evil, diversion of attention from evil, displacement of evil by the opposite good, restraint of evil by other than the opposite good and by presentation of an impenetrable heart and mind to Satan's attacks. Such resistance steadfastly maintained, will defeat and put him to disastrous flight—P '36, 95.

Parallel passages: 1 Pet. 5:8, 9; Eph. 4:27; 6:10-13; Matt. 4:1-11; 1 Chron. 21:1; Job 1:6-12; 2:3-7; Zech. 3:1, 2; Matt. 13:19, 38, 39; Luke 22:31; John 8:38, 41, 44; 12:31; 13:2, 27; Rom. 16:20; 2 Cor. 2:11; 4:4; 11:3, 14, 15; 1 John 3:8, 10, 12; 5:18.

Hymns: 145, 323, 13, 130, 184, 266, 272.

Poems of Dawn, 135: *Endurance*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 147 (R 5896).

Questions: Have I this week resisted the devil? How? What was helpful or hindering therein? What were the results?

ENDURANCE

YET nerve thy spirit to the proof,
And blanch not at thy chosen lot.
The timid good may stand aloof,
The sage may frown—yet faint thou not.

Nor heed the shaft so surely cast,
The foul and hissing bolt of scorn;
For with thy side shall dwell at last
The victory of endurance born.

R5896: MACHINATIONS OF THE EVIL ONE—HOW TO VANQUISH HIM

"Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you."—James 4:7.

THE word Devil represents that evil one who through unholy ambition became the first opponent of God, who attempted to set up a rival government to that of the Almighty, and who was cast out of Heaven and cut off from all association with holy beings. His name, which was once Lucifer, shining one, was changed to that of Satan, meaning *the hater, the accuser*. He who was once called, "Son of the Morning," became the Prince of the "rulers of darkness." (Isaiah 14:12-16; Ephesians 6:11, 12.) Not only did he do evil to himself and cease to be an angel of light, a "morning star," but he became the instigator of evil, a leader into evil. According to the Scriptural account, he has succeeded in leading astray from God, not only the entire human family, by luring our first parents into disobedience, but has also misled a large number of the Heavenly hosts of angels into sin and opposition to Jehovah.

This may upon the surface appear to be a great triumph of Satan over the Almighty God; but such is not the case. God has at all times been Master of the situation. He has purposed to permit all this deflection to teach a great lesson to both angels and men. It is His purpose, "in due time," to judge all these sinners, both angelic and human, by a company that He is now preparing, and to restore to harmony with Himself all who have properly learned their lesson as to the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the desirableness of righteousness and of obedience. We understand that the only exceptions to this rule are Satan himself and some who after having been clearly enlightened, will deliberately choose sin. Satan has become inseparably connected with sin; and his destruction is plainly declared in the Scriptures, as is also that of those who have so imbibed his spirit as to make it impossible to renew them again to repentance—whether in the Gospel Age or in the Millennium.—Hebrews 2:14; Matthew 25:41; Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-29.

God has promised to deliver mankind from Satan's power and his blinding influences. He has promised to open all the blind eyes, and to unstop the deaf ears, and to take away the veil that is spread over all nations. (2 Corinthians 4:4; Isaiah 35:5; 25:7, 8.) This work is soon to be inaugurated in the Messianic Kingdom, which God has arranged to establish upon earth, under Jesus Christ His Son. Jesus taught us to pray for that Kingdom, saying, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven." When this Kingdom is set up, the Lord Jesus will bind that "old Serpent, the Devil," with a great chain, that he may deceive the nations no more for a thousand years, while Christ will be lifting up all mankind from sin, degradation and death—up to the perfection originally lost in Adam. The interim between the time of man's fall into sin and the time of his deliverance and restoration from that fall has been utilized in preliminary features of God's Plan leading step by step to this glorious outcome.

TWO CLASSES OF ELECT

In shadows and types the Lord has prefigured the great work which He is to accomplish for all mankind. During these ages of types, He was preparing a class of elect ones who should rule over the world as "princes in all the earth," during the Millennial Kingdom. During the present Gospel Age, God has been selecting, or electing, a very choice class to be exalted with Christ as Divine, spiritual beings, to reign with Him as His immediate associates in this Kingdom for the blessing of all the world. These are to give instructions to those who shall have charge of the earthly phase of the Kingdom. These are the special Elect, who suffer with Jesus now, following in His footsteps, that they may be exalted with Him to the highest position to which God has ever called any of His intelligent creatures.

This Church of Christ have had their eyes opened in advance of the world, to see the great difference between righteousness and sin, between the character of God and that of Satan. They have unqualifiedly taken their stand on the side of God. They have therefore escaped from the domination of the great Enemy of God. No longer is he their Prince. These have "passed from death unto life." They now have a standing with God, the relationship of sons.

No other members of the human race since the fall of Adam have been sons of God. These are not earthly sons, as was Adam, but spiritual sons. Theirs is a Heavenly Calling, the distinctive offer of the present Age. They still have some of the fleshly weaknesses which they inherited as members of the fallen race, but they have become New Creatures in Christ, with new hopes, new aims, new aspirations. They are begotten of God's Holy Spirit to a new nature, to be a New Creation; and their unavoidable blemishes are covered by the white robe of their Savior's perfect righteousness. His perfection is thus imputed to them, that they may be acceptable sacrifices with Christ, as members of His Body.

THE WILL A STRONG DEFENSE AGAINST SATAN

Satan, who is the opposer of God and who has led astray some of the holy angels, opposes these who have escaped from his thralldom and who have these new hopes and aspirations. He does not need to make such attacks upon the world; for they are already in his power—"The whole world lieth in the Wicked One." (1 John 5:19, *Diaglott.*) He attacks only those who are trying to get free from him. When the spider perceives that the fly which he has entrapped is struggling and is about to get loose from the web, he instantly hastens to throw additional webs around his victim. So when Satan sees any of his subjects endeavoring to free themselves from his entanglements, he at once sets about throwing stronger coils around them, to prevent if possible their escape.

But Satan cannot overcome a decided human will. God has given every creature this defense; and whoever does not break down this defense by a persistent yielding up of that will to evil influence, can resist the power of sin and of Satan to a considerable degree. But poor humanity need Divine help to free themselves entirely from this great Adversary and his hosts of evil. The position of the Christian is invulnerable so long as he keeps close to the Source of his strength. Greater is He that is on our part than all that can be against us. If the time were come for the binding of Satan, our Lord would attend

to it at once. But it has not yet fully come. God's children need not feel, however, that they must flee from Satan and his hosts. They have no such power that we need to strive to get away from them. But rather we should stand our ground, and should firmly resist their influence, knowing that with every temptation God has promised and provided a way of escape. With this knowledge we may be strong in the presence of any adversary.

MAMMON—THE IMPERSONATION OF SELFISHNESS

The Apostle Paul says that we war not against flesh and blood merely, but against spiritual wickedness, or as the margin reads, "wicked spirits" in high positions—the great army of fallen angels under the captaincy of the Devil, the prince of demons. (Ephesians 6:12.) He is the powerful leader of fallen angels and fallen men, of all who may be on the side of wrong. Many are fighting on his side because they are deluded, blinded. They are unwittingly rendering him service. There are two masters: one is God and the other is Mammon. Jesus said, "*Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.*" (Matthew 6:24.) We must serve either the one or the other.

Mammon was the name of an ancient Syrian god—the god of riches, of cupidity, the impersonation of worldliness. Today mammon means the spirit of the world, selfishness, with its avarice and love of wealth. Satan is the promoter of this mammon spirit. St. Paul tells us how we may know which master we are serving. He says, "His servants ye are to whom ye render obedience." (Romans 6:16.) If we are giving time and thought to grasping after riches and worldly honors, if our influence is for war and strife, for selfishness in any form, if our sympathies and affections are tending earthward rather than Heavenward, then we are serving mammon, the worldly spirit, and are thus serving Satan, whether we realize it or not. Close and careful scrutiny of his thoughts, words and doings in the light of the Word of God will soon show any Christian whether he is rendering service to his rightful Master or to the Adversary. Whoever is serving the Devil is his servant, is in his army. If we are serving the cause of righteousness, and that only, we are on the Lord's side.

HOW TO RESIST SATAN'S ATTACKS

The Lord's children are to see to it that they are not deluded into sin and into the service of sin; to that extent they would be deserting their colors and taking their stand as opponents of the Lord. When Christians take a decided stand against Satan and his wiles, they are relieved from his attacks—not that he flees from them in the sense that he is fearful of harm to himself, but that he will leave them. He will retreat just as a general of an army would retreat from a city after having found that its gates were strongly protected and that attack was useless. If the Adversary finds one well protected and resisting him with a firm will, he will at once retreat. But if there be any parley with sin, any tendency to consider a matter when it is seen to be sin, an entrance is at once made for the Adversary; and he will renew the attack and press the matter, placing it in the most alluring light, in order that he may take control, that he may enter the heart where he has found the weakness.

Hence it is of the utmost importance that the child of God should make a positive and prompt decision when he realizes that he is being enticed to evil. A moment's hesitation is very dangerous. Those who take their stand for the Lord, who give themselves fully and unreservedly to Him, He has agreed to protect. He may permit them to be assailed for a time, but He will deliver them so long as they remain loyal and true; and they will be made stronger as the result of the temptations.

THE ADVERSARY'S METHOD OF ATTACK

The attacks of the Adversary are usually made through his angels. We are not to suppose that the Devil himself is in every part of the world at the same time, or in the minds of all the people of the world—nor even in the minds of all God's people. We are to suppose that wherever any of Satan's agents are there is activity. The fallen angels are ever ready to intrude upon the rights and liberties of humanity, and to bring them more fully into subjection, if possible. But they particularly endeavor to entrap the Lord's children. The Adversary seems to be always on the alert to enter the army of the Church and to try to make havoc in its ranks.

Satan acts upon the minds of humanity. The mind, being imperfect through the fall, has thus inherited tendencies toward sin. The assaults of the Adversary may come through human beings that suggest wrong thoughts to others. He probably gets in his work more often in this way than in any other. The Apostle urges all the children of God to let no evil communication proceed out of their mouth. Evil communications often have the effect of tearing down character, and every Christian should be on the alert, not only for his own protection, but also for the protection of others. Each child of God should see that his own heart is kept pure and so free from guile that he will be in no danger of communicating evil of any sort to another by his words. We should carefully guard our conduct, that no thoughtless act of ours should be a cause of injury to any one or bring a reflection upon the Truth, which we love so well, and to the service of which we have committed ourselves.

"He is come to claim His Throne,
And to make thy life His own.
Voices of this passing earth,
Echoes of its praise or mirth,
Reach not where the heart hath heard
Golden music of His Word.
'All for Jesus' henceforth be!
Live for Him who died for thee!"

AUGUST 7

If any one contend in the games, he is not crowned unless he strive lawfully—2 Tim. 2:5, Diaglott.

Jesus observed God's times and seasons and methods. He never recklessly exposed His life until from the Prophets He recognized that His hour had come to be delivered into the hands of His enemies. He did not make long prayers on the street corners to be heard of men, nor exhort the multitude with noisy harangue; as the prophet indicated, He did not lift up His voice nor cry aloud in the streets (Isa. 42:2). He chose God's methods, which are rational and wise, and which are effective in selecting from among men the class which He desires to be heirs of the promised Kingdom. Let those who would so run as to obtain the prize, mark these footprints of the Master, and be filled more and more with His Spirit—Z '02, 265 (R 3069).

Whenever a prize is offered for performance of worthy deeds, rules and conditions to govern the contestant's conduct are laid down; and only when these are observed is the winner awarded a prize. This was true of the games among the Greeks, and is true in our race for eternal life. The Lord has ordained that only those who develop a Christlike character, while laying down life for God's Plan, can have the prize of eternal life in the Kingdom. Nor will these conditions be altered or abridged for some who assume themselves to be special favorites. All are herein treated alike, and the worthy only are crowned with eternal life in the Kingdom—P '30, 109.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 9:24-26; Eph. 6:11-17; 1 Tim. 6:12; Phil. 3:14; Heb. 12:1, 2; 2 Tim. 2:3; 4:7, 8.

Hymns: 13, 20, 78, 183, 266, 272, 200.
Poems of Dawn, 42: *Courage! Press On*.
Tower Reading: Z '02, 264 (R 3069).

Questions: How have I striven this week, lawfully or unlawfully? What encouraged me thereto? What hindered therefrom? How did I overcome hindrances? What was the effect on others and me?

COURAGE! PRESS ON

TIRED! Well, what of that?
Didst fancy life was spent on beds of ease,
Fluttering the rose leaves scattered by the breeze?
Come, rouse thee! work while it is called to-day:
Courage! arise! go forth upon thy way.

Lonely! and what of that?
Some must be lonely; 'tis not given to all
To feel a heart responsive rise and fall,

To blend another life within its own:
Work can be done in loneliness. Work on.

Dark! Well, what of that?
Didst fondly dream the sun would never set?
Dost fear to lose thy way? Take courage yet!
Learn thou to walk by faith, and not by sight;
Thy steps will guided be, and guided right.

Hard! Well, what of that?
Didst fancy life one summer holiday,
With lessons none to learn, and naught but play?
Go—get thee to thy task! Conquer or die!
It must be learned; learn it, then, patiently.

R3069: STRIVING LAWFULLY.

"No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier. And also if a man contend in the games, he is not crowned except he have contended lawfully." "Know ye not that they who run in a race all run, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible crown. I, therefore, so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one beateth the air: but I keep my body under and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." 2 Tim. 2:4, 5; I Cor. 9:24-27.

THESE EARNEST EXHORTATIONS of the faithful Apostle to the Gentiles were most clearly illustrated in his noble course of life. He shunned no danger, shrank from no labor or reproach or privation, and bravely and cheerfully endured hardness and suffered the loss of all things temporal that he might win Christ and be approved of him. As we look upon such a course and consider the fortitude and the strength of character necessary so to run, we may well conclude, that, except we be similarly supplied with the help of divine grace, we shall not be able to persevere to the end.

Paul sped along in that race, not in his own strength, but in the strength which God supplied. And the promise of such aid is none the less ours than it was his. The divine grace is imparted to us through the exceeding great and precious promises of God inspiring us with new and glorious hopes beyond the wreck and ruin of the present order of things. Permitting our minds to dwell upon these we see in the now rapidly approaching dawn of the day of Christ a new heavens and a new earth; and by faith we sit together with Christ in the heavenly places of glory and honor, and together with him are crowned with immortality. By faith we see also the blessed privileges of such an exalted station, and the divinely appointed work in which we will be engaged together with Christ.

A weary, groaning creation awaits our ministry of power; and in the proportion that we partake of the loving, pitiful spirit of our Master will we be able to appreciate such a privilege. If we are cold and selfish and untouched with the feeling of earth's infirmities; if the woes of our fellow-men awaken in us no feelings of sympathy and of desire to help, we can have no appreciation of the prize of our high calling. But if, on the contrary, we love our fellow-men as God and Christ loved them; if we pity their weakness and remember the hereditary cause, we will lay not all their sins and short-comings to their personal charge. We will be anxious to clear their minds from the mists of ignorance and superstition and the bias of prejudices; and to help them to more rational modes of thought and action, and to better ideas of life and its relationships and responsibilities. We will seek to gather out of their pathway all the stumbling stones whereby so many are now precipitated into a course of vice; and to cast up a highway of holiness upon which no lion of intemperance or other evil thing may be found. We will be ready to declare to them all the everlasting gospel of salvation, and to open their deaf ears to hear and their blind eyes to see the salvation of God. If such are our sympathies toward the world of sinners which God so loved, then we are able to appreciate to some extent the privileges of our high calling, when, as joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom and power, we shall be able to put into actual execution all our benevolent desires for the uplifting and healing of our sin-sick world.

Any who have ever experienced the joy of converting even one sinner from the error of his ways, or of establishing the feet of one of Christ's little ones, may have some idea of the joy that will attend the ministry of the saints when they are fully endued with divine power for the great work of their Millennial reign; for they will not be hampered as now, but every effort put forth will be a success.

The privilege of such a blessed work, even aside from the precious thought of association with Christ and of our blessed relationship to the Father, is a wonderful inspiration to every benevolent heart which, even now, would fain take upon itself the burdens which it sees oppressing others whom they love and pity.

But though inspired with such a hope of benevolent service for the whole world in God's appointed time, and of blessed association with Christ in it, we must remember that we have yet to "strive" for the prize of our high calling; and not only so, but we must strive "lawfully." We must run our race, not only with diligence, energy, patience and perseverance, but we must run according to the prescribed rules, as otherwise our labor will be in vain. First of all we must enter into this course by the "strait gate"—by a full consecration of our all to the Lord, after exercising faith in the precious blood of Christ as our ransom price. If we do not enter by this door, we are not counted in the race for the prize, no matter how zealously we run. This is the first rule for those who would so run as to obtain. "Enter ye at the strait gate; ... because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Having so entered, the Apostle now urges that we be filled with the Spirit of Christ, that we may not be led by the desires of the flesh away from God and from the course

which he has marked out. Then the body, the human nature, must be kept under the control of the new mind, the spirit of Christ in us. Its ambitions and hopes and desires must be kept down; and the only way to do this is to keep filled with the spirit. "Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the desires of the flesh."—Gal. 5:16.

If we are *filled* with the spirit—with the same mind that was in Jesus Christ—we will act from the same motives: it will be our meat and drink to do the Father's will. We will engage in his work because we love to do it, even aside from the inspiring prize at the end of our course. Christ was so full of sympathy with humanity, and so thoroughly of one mind with the Father, that he could not do otherwise than to devote his life to the good of others. Yet in all his labors he strictly observed the divine plan. Though, like the Father, he loved the whole world, he did not go beyond Israel to bless the Gentiles with his ministry, because the appointed time for that work had not yet come.

He observed God's times and seasons and methods. He never recklessly exposed his life until from the prophets he recognized that his hour had come to be delivered into the hands of his enemies. He taught his disciples not to go into the way of the Gentiles until the due time; and then he sent them forth. He did not make long prayers on the street corners to be heard of men, nor exhort the multitude with noisy harangue; as the prophet indicated, he did not lift up his voice nor cry aloud in the streets. (Isa. 42:2.) He chose God's methods which are rational and wise, and which are effective in selecting out from among men the class which he desires to be heirs of the promised Kingdom. Let those who would so run as to obtain the prize, mark these footprints of the Master, and be filled more and more with his spirit.

If so filled with the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, we, like him, will desire to be as free as possible from entangling earthly affairs, and to have our time as free as possible for the Lord's service, and then to devote all energy, ability and effort to that service.

To have the mind of Christ is indeed the one requirement of lawful striving—a mind which humbly and faithfully submits itself to the will of God as expressed in his great plan of the ages, and which devotes all energy to the accomplishment of his will, because of an intelligent appreciation of the ends he has in view.

AUGUST 8

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

Each laborer in the present harvest should note well the Lord's instruction in these verses. Wherever the Lord's representatives go, peace should go, not strife, confusion, turmoil, quarreling. True, the Truth will prove to be a sword that will arouse opposition, yet it should be the Truth that causes the opposition and division, and not any rudeness or unkindness of word or action on the part of the Lord's representatives. There are plenty of things to aggravate mankind in this our busy day, and all who have received the Truth should receive also its spirit "speaking peace through Jesus Christ"—Z '04, 108 (R 3346).

The Lord always prepares for His servants a welcome in such families as He desires to entertain them. Wherever His servants are not welcomed, He has made no preparation for them; and it would be well for them to move on. Wherever they go, they are to manifest the Lord's Spirit, prepared to confer spiritual blessings far superior to the earthly blessings bestowed upon them. If their blessings are not desired or appreciated, let them be withdrawn. Let them content themselves with the thought that elsewhere a worthy family awaits their coming—P '35, 117.

Parallel passages: 1 Sam. 25:6, 17; Isa. 9:6; 57:19; Matt. 10:11-13; Psa. 35:13; 1 Cor. 9:4-7; 1 Tim. 5:18; Luke 19:5-9; Acts 10:36; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Eph. 2:2, 3; 5:6; 2 Thes. 3:16; 2 Cor. 2:15, 16.

Hymns: 275, 23, 170, 107, 139, 179, 303.

Poems of Dawn, 148: *The Servant's Path In A Day Of Rejection*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 325 (R 5979).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

THE SERVANT'S PATH IN A DAY OF REJECTION

SERVANT of Christ, stand fast amid the scorn
Of men who little know or love thy Lord;
Turn not aside from toil: cease not to warn,
Comfort and teach, trust Him for thy reward;
A few more moments' suffering, and then
Cometh sweet rest from all thy heart's deep pain.

For grace pray much, for much thou needest grace.
If men thy work deride—what can they more?
Christ's weary foot thy path on earth doth trace;

If thorns wound thee, they pierced him before;
Press on, look up, tho' clouds may gather round,
Thy place of service He makes hallowed ground.

Have friends forsaken thee, and cast thy name
Out as a worthless thing? Take courage then:
Go tell thy Master; for they did the same
To Him, who once in patience toiled for them;
Yet He was perfect in all service here;
Thou oft hast failed: this maketh Him more dear.

Self-vindication shun; if in the right
What gainest thou by taking from God's hand
Thy cause? If wrong, what dost thou but invite
Satan himself thy friend in need to stand?
Leave all with God; if right, He'll prove thee so;
If not, He'll pardon; therefore to Him go.

Be not men's servant: think what costly price
Was paid that thou might'st His own bondsman be,
Whose service perfect freedom is. Let this
Hold fast thy heart. His claim is great to thee.
None should thy soul enthrall to whom 'tis given
To serve on earth, with liberty of Heaven.

All His are thine to serve: Christ's brethren here
Are needing aid, in them thou servest Him.
The least of all is still to Him most dear,
The weakest cost His life-blood to redeem.
Yield to no "party" what He rightly claims,
Who on His heart bears all His people's names.

Be wise, be watchful, wily men surround
Thy path. Be careful, for they seek with care
To trip thee up; see that no plea be found
In thee thy Master to reproach. The snare
They set for thee will then themselves enclose
And God His righteous judgment thus disclose.

Cleave to the poor, Christ's image in them is;
Count it great honor if they love thee well;
Nought can repay thee after losing this,
Tho' with the wise and wealthy thou shouldst dwell.
Thy Master oftentimes would pass thy door
To hold communion with His much-loved poor.

The time is short, seek little here below:
Earth's goods would cumber thee and drag thee down.
Let daily food suffice; care not to know
Thought for tomorrow: it may never come.
Thou canst not perish, for thy Lord is nigh,
And His own care will all thy need supply.

R5979: PRESENTING THE MESSAGE OF THE KINGDOM

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

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

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

This form of salutation sounds rather peculiar to us; for it is not our custom to use this style of greeting. But it is still customary in Eastern countries to salute one another thus, not only in the houses, but in the street or by the way. People will say to one another, "Peace be to you this morning." Nearly every one salutes, and nearly all say something of this kind. We remember how surprised we were when visiting Palestine first, in 1892. Our guide was well known in that country; and as we passed along the street people would address him in the Arabic language, and he would reply. We afterwards asked him, "What did they say to you?" He answered that they said, "Peace be unto you;" or, "God's blessing be with you." We were surprised that the people there would so generally speak in this gracious manner. We could scarcely turn into a road without receiving some kind of salutation.

We have something akin to this, however, in our salutation, "Good day," or "How do you do?" or, "We wish you good day," etc. These phrases express much the same sentiment. In the case of Jesus' disciples their salutation was to prove a test to the people

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

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

PROPER DEMEANOR OF GOD'S MESSENGERS

It is not the great Time of Trouble that constitutes our Message. We are to tell the glad tidings of the Gospel which shall be unto all people, and of the Times of Restitution soon to be ushered in. The Time of Trouble, if referred to at all, should be mentioned only as a necessary accompaniment of the change of dispensations because of the world's unpreparedness for the Kingdom and its blessings. As we go along in our work of proclamation, we would very properly keep in mind that we are peacemakers, not breeders of strife and contention. Some of us might be taken for strife-breeders if we were not very careful how we present the Message. We are to seek so far as possible to promote peace, to tell the people about God's love, mercy and goodness. As we do this in love, we find and reach the very class which the Lord now designs to reach. He is not now seeking the froward. He is seeking a special class, the Bride class.

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

Some might say, "But did not our Lord, when opposed by the Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, use very plain language to them? Did He not call them hypocrites, whited sepulchres and vipers?" This is true; but we are to remember that our

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

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

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

BEGGING FOR THE LORD NOT AUTHORIZED

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

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

MESSAGE OF TRUTH MAKING A SEPARATION

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

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

SOME TIMELY WORDS OF CAUTION

In the days or months yet remaining until the completion of our work here in the flesh, let us be worthy exponents of the precious Truth and worthy representatives of Him whose name we bear. There is danger that those who have not been long in the narrow way, and have as yet learned but partially the lessons of meekness, gentleness, patience and love, may not always leave a sweet, helpful influence in the homes which they enter. There is danger that there may be evil-speaking, backbiting, evil insinuations against others, ungentleness of word or conduct, impatience, etc. The influence of such, even

though they may be pupils in the School of Christ, is *carnal*, highly injurious to spiritual development, injurious to the growth of the various fruits of the Spirit in themselves and in others who are seeking to walk in the right ways, directed by the Lord in His Word.

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

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

AUGUST 9

If therefore the light that is in thee be[come] darkness, how great is that darkness!—Matt. 6:23.

The "harvest" is a time for winnowing the "wheat"—a sifting, a separating time, and it is for each of us to prove our characters: "Having done all, stand!" The tests of this "harvest" must be like those of the Jewish or typical "harvest." One of them is *the cross*, another is *the presence of Christ*, another is *humility*, another is *love*. The Jews were reprov'd because they "knew not *the time of their visitation*." The matter is doubly distressing for those who have once seen the light of Present Truth, and afterward go into the "outer darkness." It implies unfaithfulness—Z '04, 297 (R 3436).

The light in us is the holy Spirit. It is possible for it to become darkness. This occurs when the mind gives up the Truth, and the heart, the Spirit of the Truth. Such an effect can occur only when, losing wisdom, power, justice and love, the heart learns to love sin, error, selfishness and worldliness. Such an one cannot be renewed unto repentance. The darkness in him is great and unending. With what watchfulness, prayer and activity we should guard ourselves against such an outcome! Better never to have begun than end our Christian career in this manner—P '34, 110.

Parallel passages: Luke 11:34-36; Psa. 119:105; Prov. 6:23; Isa. 8:20; 58:8; Matt. 4:16; 5:16; Luke 16:8; John 1:4-9; 3:19-21; 12:35, 36; Acts 26:18; Eph. 5:14; 1 Thes. 5:5; 1 Pet. 2:9; Matt. 8:12; John 11:9, 10; 1 John 2:8-11.

Hymns: 315, 1, 49, 90, 91, 130, 154.

Poems of Dawn, 285: *How Are the Mighty Fallen*.

Tower Reading: Z '09, 231 (R 4444).

Questions: What were this week's experiences with Light and Darkness? How were they met? In what did they result?

HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN

HOW are the mighty fallen!
Those who once stood so strong,
Defending the Truth and their brethren
Through battles severe and long!

Their lives they counted not precious;
No price was too great to pay—
Led by "that faithful Servant,"
They fought in the thick of the fray.

How are the mighty fallen!

Those leaders we learned to love—
Alas! They turned and as traitors
Deserted the Truth from above.

Oh, words too sad to utter!
Oh, hearts too broken to weep!
God's grace 'neath their feet lies trampled;
Deserted, His cause and His sheep!

Oh, how are the mighty fallen!
Though feigning God's friends still to be,
They led His sheep into error
In subtle hypocrisy!

Our heads we'll not uncover,
Nor mourn for those who have sold
Their Lord and their brethren for power—
As Judas in days of old.

Alas! How the mighty are fallen!
Lord, who will be able to stand?
Oh, that I may be found worthy
To receive a "Well done" at thy hand!

R4444: WANDERING INTO "OUTER DARKNESS"

IN the Scriptures the "outer darkness," the darkness of the world, is frequently mentioned in contrast with the inner light, the light of truth, as Divinely revealed. Thus our Lord said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." And the Apostle reminds us that we were translated out of darkness into God's marvelous light. The world in general is represented as lying in darkness, as being unable to see the light of Truth. Thus again we are told that the light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not. Some of the world are asleep, and hence see not the light, while others are very much awake to worldly aims and worldly ambitions and schemes, but thoroughly blind to the Divine purposes.

To a certain class who have certain characteristics of mind, God is pleased to reveal the light, and to guide them by that light in the right pathway. Such as see and improve the opportunity and walk in the way are called "the children of the light," while others who go contrary are called the "children of darkness." Addressing some of these children of the light, our Lord said, To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to outsiders all of these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.—Luke 8:10.

While it is true that this power to understand is "given," yet it is not given indiscriminately; it is given only to those of certain character. To these alone the light is profitable; to others it would be more or less injurious at the present time. We may well thank God, as Jesus did, that for the time being the Divine purposes are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed only to the "babes." For others to have the light would mean injury to themselves, if not a disordering of the Divine purposes and arrangements. As, for instance, St. Peter tells us that those who crucified the Lord did so in ignorance, in blindness, in darkness, "for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;" even though their hearts might have been no better, they could have regulated their conduct by the greater knowledge and thus the Divine purpose, that Christ should be crucified by them, the just for the unjust, would have been defeated.

In Matthew 6:22, 23, our Lord gives us a suggestion respecting the condition of heart and what it has to do with our ability to see or not to see Divine truths. He says, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." And then he adds, "If the light that is in thee be (become) darkness, how great is that darkness!" Evidently our Lord is using the natural eye and the natural body as an illustration to draw our attention to the higher eyes of understanding and their power to bless and to guide and to control the interests of the body.

A single eye would seem to signify singleness of purpose, or of heart intention toward God, because in the succeeding verse our Lord calls attention to the fact that there are but the two masters—good and evil, righteousness and sin, God and Satan. Those who are under the power of Satan completely are blinded; as St. Paul tells us, The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all those who believe not, lest the glorious light of Divine goodness should shine into their hearts. (2 Cor. 4:4.) The only ones who are not blinded are those who are the servants of God, and the degree of their clearness of vision depends upon the singleness of their eye, their singleness of heart, their singleness of purpose, their loyalty to the one Master, to the principles of his government, etc.

All who have seen the light of "present truth" have therefore reason to be specially congratulated on having passed from darkness to light, on having been delivered from the Kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of God's dear Son, from the dominion of Satan as his servants to be disciples of Christ and servants of God. St. Peter speaks of our translation out of darkness into his marvelous light. St. Paul says, We are not of the night, nor of the darkness. St. John says, In him is no darkness at all. Again, Darkness is past, and the true light now shineth, but he that hateth his brother is in darkness.

THE SINGLE EYE OF LOVE

The point we are establishing is, that as our natural bodies are edified by good eyesight, so as New Creatures we have clearness of spiritual vision in proportion as we have loyalty to the Lord and the enlightening influence of his spirit of holiness, the spirit of love.

The question arises, Is it possible for any of us, after passing from darkness into the Lord's marvelous light, to again get into the dark—to go out of the light? The Scriptures answer that it is possible. They tell us that in certain instances God will force people out of the light into the "outer darkness" common to the world in general; that disloyalty to the Lord and to the principles of his teaching tends in this direction.

We might suppose that those who should thus be cast into "outer darkness," either suddenly or gradually, would be greatly distressed, but, on the contrary, we have every reason to believe that the world in "outer darkness" is not greatly distressed by its darkness, but rather, as our Lord suggests, "loves darkness rather than light"; because it is in an evil condition; because it has not the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love. The inference, therefore, is plain that those who go out of the light into darkness will feel as contented as those who have never come into the light of "present truth"—who even are boastful in respect to the darkness and very unkind in their criticisms of the light—hating the light.

In the Scripture quoted above, under the figure of a single eye, the Lord pictures the singleness of purpose and of heart which must characterize all who become his disciples indeed, or children of light. He even intimates that those who lose this singleness of heart, singleness of eye, singleness of purpose, and then go into darkness, are in some respects in a grosser darkness than are others who have never seen the light. He says, "If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness!" Our experience fully corroborates this. Those who have once been in the light of the Lord's countenance, and in the light of the Divine Word, and who lose this, seem to be in a condition much more to be regretted than that of the world in general who have never had their eyes of understanding opened. None others in the world seem capable of such violations of the spirit of love, the spirit of truth, the spirit of righteousness, the spirit of justice. They seem to be capable of saying and doing and thinking more mean, uncharitable, wicked things, than before they were enlightened.

We have tried for years to see the philosophy of this fact which has been painfully manifest to us on various occasions, and we believe we have found the correct explanation of it as follows:—

THE WORLD-STANDARD VS. NO STANDARD

The natural man guides his conduct, words and thoughts considerably by the conduct and words of his fellowmen. The strongest appeal to the natural man is, What would Mr. Brown, or Mr. and Mrs. Jones, or Mr. and Mrs. Smith think of such words, or such conduct? This measuring of themselves with others of the same character and standing, and the gauging of conduct by that of others whom they respect, seem to be the only standard by which the world walks. It sees not clearly the principles of righteousness, justice, truth and love.

But when true conversion to the Lord takes place, when the eyes of understanding become opened, new standards appear before the opened eyes of understanding. The

Master's word is heard, saying, "Be ye like unto your Father which is in heaven," and "Be ye followers of me," and "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." Some see cross-eyed, endeavoring to serve two masters, and to walk according to two standards—to be pleasing to the Lord, and also to walk according to the earthly standards as formerly. But this is found to be a very unsatisfactory course; it has neither Divine approval nor the approval of worldly friends. Those of single eye, of single purpose, say within themselves to the contrary,

"To my Lord I must be true
Who bought me with his blood."

These soon learn that the world is in darkness, and that to walk with the world, and according to worldly standards, would mean to fail to progress from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, and from glory to glory, under the leadings of the Master, who instructed us to walk in his steps. Hence these of the single eye cut loose entirely from the worldly standards which formerly were their guides, and they look to the Lord, and, so looking, have the very best of guidance, the very highest standard imaginable. Looking unto him, copying Jesus, they come more and more to appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of Divine love and justice, and seek more and more to be transformed in all their words and thoughts and doings into harmony with the glorious pattern which their single eye entitles and enables them to clearly see. How blessed is their condition! Instructed by the example of the Lord and by his word of grace and truth they are rising daily to newness of life in the character-likeness of their Redeemer, and becoming fit for the heavenly Kingdom and for the glorious resurrection change.

THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE

The Divine purpose is not only to call out the single-hearted, the single-eyed, and to instruct and guide them, but also to test and to prove them. Thus we read, The Lord your God doth prove you to know whether ye do love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. (Deut. 13:3.) The test of obedience is the divine law—supreme love for God and absolute justice to your neighbor—to love him as ourself. Additionally, the consecrated have the New Commandment to love one another as the Redeemer loved them—to the extent of sacrificing, laying down anything and everything on behalf of each other, for each other's welfare and assistance. If this test be faithfully endured, it means that the individual has not only reached the mark of perfect love, but has stood tests thereat and has demonstrated his worthiness of eternal life under Divine terms and conditions. But if these tests be not endured, it means the rejection of the individual from the light, and that he will go from the light, so that the things which were once light to him will appear dark, and the things of darkness will appear right, just, proper.

It is not for us to complain, therefore, of these trials and testings which the Lord declares to be necessary; it is not for us to insist that those whom we love must be maintained in the light and ultimately be accepted to the Kingdom. It is rather for us to show our obedience to the Lord, to demonstrate our love for him with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength by acquiescing in the Divine arrangements and judgments.

The Lord is selecting the members of the Bride class. He has given us the privilege of being co-laborers with him in this work, but merely along the lines of his instruction. With him is the decision. If they do not maintain the single eye, the singleness of heart, the singleness of purpose, loyalty to God, to the principles of righteousness, justice and love they cannot continue to be his disciples; they cannot continue in the light; they must go into "outer darkness."

If any fail to go on in the development of the spirit of love, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of God, they will surely retrograde, and the light that is in them will become darkness—great darkness. Instead of the spirit of love exemplified by our Lord, who laid down his life for us, a spirit of hatred, envy and malice will come in; a spirit of murder which, although hesitating to do outward violence and come under the ban of the law, will not hesitate to assassinate character and to say all manner of evil against those toward whom they become embittered. By such fruits ye shall know them. Such thorns do not grow on the grapevine, nor on the fig tree.

The philosophy of their course is this: When they lose the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of justice and of love, of kindness, and mercy, and truth, they lose the Lord's supervision, direction and control. And having previously discarded the rules and influences which control the world in general, they are without *any* guidance or restraint in respect to their course of life. Hence they not only act contrary to the Divine standards, but violate the principles of justice and decency, in word and conduct, that assist and guide the world in general. It is for this reason that those who once go out of the light of Present Truth can think, and say, and do, more mean and contemptible things than can the worldly who still retain helps to order and decency by having in mind what their fellows in life would think of their course, their words and conduct.

WALK AS CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT

In conclusion, then, we urge that all who have been once enlightened, and made partakers of the holy Spirit, who have tasted of the good Word of God, and the powers of the age to come—we urge these to be zealous, to maintain the standing to which they have already attained. We urge that they be conformed to the character-likeness of God's dear Son; that they be perfected in love, that they put off all of these: anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife; for if any of these be retained, they will tend to blindness and "outer darkness." More than this, we urge that they put on all of these graces of the Lord's Spirit: meekness, gentleness, patience, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love. These will strengthen and develop the character-likeness of the Redeemer which God has predestinated must be attained by every one who will be accepted as a member of the Bride of Christ. And then the Apostle suggests, If we do these things we shall never fail, but an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

AUGUST 10

If there be therefore any consolation [comfort] in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind—Phil. 2:1, 2.

What exhortations these are to unity, peace, brotherly kindness! How they suggest to us patience, forbearance, gentleness, helpfulness and *comfort* one toward another in the Church; that thus the Spirit of the Lord may abound in all, that each may make the greatest possible progress in the right way. Dear brethren, let us more and more be worthy of the name of Barnabas—Comforter of the brethren. Let us have the holy Spirit abounding in us more and more, for this is the Lord's good pleasure; that with it dwelling in us richly we may be all sons and daughters of comfort in Zion, representatives of our Father, and channels of the holy Spirit, as well as of the Truth—Z '04, 296 (R 3434).

Nothing pleases the Lord's servants more than the spiritual prosperity of those whom they serve; for these are their spiritual children, for whose welfare they labor and for whose ultimate victory they lay down their lives. This thought should move the Lord's people to strive to gladden the hearts of those who minister to them. And let the Lord's servants rejoice in seeing the rich fruits of the Spirit, particularly in the various forms of love, abundantly growing in their spiritual children; and so the spiritual mother and children will rejoice together in the Lord—P '33, 111.

Parallel passages: 2 Cor. 13:14; John 7:39; 1 John 3:24; Phil. 1:8; Col. 3:12; John 3:29; Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 3:16; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 1:26, 27.

Hymns: 90, 166, 198, 92, 23, 170, 95.

Poems of Dawn, 99: *The Secret of His Presence*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 362 (R 5810).

Questions: What were the week's experiences in line with this text? What did they effect?

THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE

IN the secret of His presence
How my soul delights to hide:
Oh, how precious are the lessons
Which I learn at Jesus' side.
Earthly cares can only vex me,
Trials never lay me low,
And when Satan comes to tempt me,
To the secret place I go.

When my soul is faint and thirsty,

'Neath the shadow of His wing
There is cool and pleasant shelter,
And a fresh and crystal spring.
And my Savior rests beside me,
As we hold communion sweet;
If I tried, I could not utter
What He says, when thus we meet.

Only this: I know, I tell Him
All my doubts, and griefs, and fears;
Oh, how patiently He listens,
And my drooping heart He cheers.
Do you think He ne'er reproves me?
What a false friend He would be,
If He never, never told me
Of the faults which He must see.

Do you think that I could love Him
Half so well, or as I ought,
If He did not plainly tell me
Each displeasing word and thought?
No! for He is very faithful,
And that makes me trust Him more,
For I know that He doth love me,
Though sometimes He wounds me sore.

Would you like to know the sweetness
Of this secret of the Lord?
Go and hide beneath His shadow,
This shall then be your reward.
And whene'er you leave the silence
Of that happy meeting place,
You must mind and bear the image
Of the Master in your face.

R5810: A LITTLE TALK BY THE WAY

"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Philippians 2:2-5.

THE CHURCH at Philippi, as is well known, was the first Ecclesia established in Europe. It had a very small and humble beginning. Philippi was one of the principal cities

of Macedonia. (Acts 16:9-14, 20, 21.) In seeking an opportunity for service for the Lord in this place, the Apostle went on the Sabbath day down to a river bank, where a few women habitually resorted for prayer; and he spoke to them the Word of God. Dr. McLaren, commenting upon the small beginning of the Church at Philippi, says: "Not blowing of trumpets, not beating of drums of any sort; a few women and some worn-out travelers talking together by the banks of the rushing river. How scornfully the great folk of Philippi would have smiled, if they had been told that the chief title of their city to be remembered at all would be the presence in it of that one insignificant Jew, and his letter to the Church founded on that morning!"

The general character of the Philippian Church is revealed in St. Paul's Epistle, written to them at a later period. We find in it nothing like correction or reproof, as we note in most of the Epistles written by the Apostle to other Churches. His Philippian letter is a particularly beautiful and loving one, and indicates a very close bond of sympathy between him and this Church. On four different occasions that are recorded, this Church rendered practical sympathy and service to St. Paul, by financial assistance, as well as by words of comfort and cheer. Twice he received gifts from them for his support while he was at Thessalonica. Again, while he was at Corinth, they ministered to him. When he was a prisoner at Rome this loving Church did not forget the Apostle. It was their messenger, Epaphroditus, who brought to him the last touching memorial of their love.

Epaphroditus, it will be remembered, was the brother who was brought "nigh unto death," for the Gospel's sake—because of his faithful service in the assistance of the Apostle in the work of the Lord when there seemed little help coming from other sources. Upon his recovery from this severe illness, the Apostle Paul sent by him to the Church at Philippi this beautiful letter known to us as the Epistle to the Philippians. See Philippians 2:25-28; 4:14-19; 2 Corinthians 11:9.

THE APOSTLE'S LOVING COUNSEL

The other Churches may possibly have ministered to the Apostle also; and we know that this was true in the case of certain *individuals*, among whom were Aquila and Priscilla. But we have no record of any *Church* that ministered to St. Paul as did the Church at Philippi. Apparently other Churches missed a great opportunity. We may be sure that while the Apostle urged the Churches to contribute to the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem, etc., he made no request for personal assistance, however much he may have been in need, or however much he might have appreciated any small manifestation of their love for him and the cause of the Lord whom he served.

The lesson respecting love and humility which we find in the passage of Scripture under consideration does not intimate that these graces were lacking among the Philippians; but it indicates that the Apostle recognized the great importance of these fruits of the Spirit, and the need for their continual cultivation, in order to a continued growth in the likeness of Christ. The opening words of the chapter are an exhortation to brotherly love and affection among themselves. He says, "If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any bowels and mercies." The bowels were formerly

considered the seat of the tender emotions, pity, compassion of heart. It would seem that the Apostle would put the Church at Philippi to the test, would let them answer as to whether these graces appertain to all who are New Creatures in Christ—as if he would say, "If you have found these blessed fruits to be a part of the character-likeness of Christ, let these be more and more developed in you all."

Then, as though they had assented to this proposition, had conceded that there is comfort, love, fellowship, sympathy, consolation, in Christ toward one another, he adds: You can fill my joy to the full by being thus minded toward each other, by having love one toward another, by having one mind, or purpose, or will, as a Church—the Lord's will. How grand an expression this is! His joy would be full; not by knowing of their mere professions, but by knowing that they loved, sympathized with, and consoled one another, that they had the proper fellowship as members of the Body of Christ. These things filled his joy more full than anything else that he could know concerning them. And he knew that these conditions would be most pleasing in the sight of their Lord and Master. The Apostle John emphasizes the same thought saying, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—1 John 4:20.

LOOKING ON THE THINGS OF OTHERS

To this end—that such a spirit of perfect unity and fellowship might obtain amongst the disciples at Philippi—the Apostle exhorts that each one cultivate the grace of humility; that in every matter each shall take heed that "nothing be done through strife or vainglory," that self-laudation and strivings for preeminence be thoroughly put away as the greatest enemies to the Spirit of the Lord and to the attainment of His blessing. He urged that each should have that lowliness of mind which could see the good qualities and talents of the fellow members of the Body; and that they should appreciate these qualities as, in some respects at least, superior to their own.

Lowliness of mind does not necessarily signify an ignorance of any talents or graces which we may ourselves possess; but so long as the Church is in the present imperfect, or tabernacle, condition, we may never expect to find all the abilities, all the talents, all the graces of the Holy Spirit in their highest development, in any one person. So, then, each may, if he be lowly of mind, see in others of the brethren certain desirable qualities or graces superior to his own; and these he should delight to recognize and to esteem their possessors accordingly.

For each to look merely on his own things, his own interest or welfare or comfort, or his own talents, and to ignore or forget the interests and comfort or talents of others, would be a manifestation of selfishness and a dearth of the Spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of love, consideration and generosity. In proportion as we are filled with the Holy Spirit of love, we shall find ourselves interested in the welfare and happiness of others. This was the mind, the disposition, which was in our dear Redeemer when He walked the earth, a disposition which He so wonderfully manifested; and we are sure that He has not since changed. And if we would be like Him we must develop in our characters these

traits. If we are to be ultimately of the Bride class in glory, we must become copies of "God's dear Son."

The Apostle Paul not only holds up the Lord Jesus before us as the great Example of proper humility, self-abnegation and love, of a forgetfulness of self in the interests of others, but he also holds up before our vision the result, the reward, of our Lord. He reminds us of the high exaltation of the Master by the Father, that we also may be encouraged, and may realize that, if we are faithful in following the footsteps of our Redeemer, in sacrificing the advantages of the present, in crucifying self, in laboring as far as we are able in the advancement of the Cause of God and His Truth, in developing the fruits of the Holy Spirit, we may expect also to be glorified with Him, to share His name and His Throne of glory and His great work throughout the eternal future, as His Body, His Bride, His joint-heir.

A CLOSING WORD OF EXHORTATION

In verses 12-17, following our text, the Apostle pays a beautiful tribute to the Church at Philippi, and expresses his great love for them. How he reveals his confidence in their loyalty! And how glad he was to pour out his own life on their behalf (see margin v. 17) that they might attain unto the fulness of the likeness of Christ! He lovingly exhorts, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings." In following the Master in the narrow way, we are not to murmur as we go, finding fault with its difficulties and its narrowness; nor are we to dispute respecting it, nor to seek to have any other way than that which Divine providence marks out before us. On the contrary, we are to realize and believe that the Lord knows exactly what experiences are necessary to our development in the School of Christ; that He is supervising our experiences for our highest good and His glory; that He is not forgetful of His promises to those who are His, but will, as He has promised, cause "*all things* [that come to us in the line of faithfulness] to work together for good" to us. And even our blunders or stumblings, if properly received, will be overruled for our blessing.

We are glad to see this disposition of trust and loyalty in so many of the Lord's dear saints. Thus following the Master, dearly beloved, we shall "be sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom we shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life." Thus shall those who are over you in the Lord "rejoice in the Day of Christ [when our 'change' shall come] that we have not run in vain, neither labored in vain."

THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE

"In the secret of His presence
How my soul delights to hide;
Oh, how precious are the lessons
Which I learn at Jesus' side.
Earthly cares can only vex me,
Trials never lay me low,

And when Satan comes to tempt me,
To the secret place I go.

"Would you like to know the sweetness
Of this secret of the Lord?
Go and hide beneath His shadow,
This shall then be your reward.
And whene'er you leave the silence
Of that happy meeting place,
You must mind and bear the image
Of the Master in your face."

AUGUST 11

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life—Rev. 2:10.

In a little while the trials will be over, but until that little while is past we are in the trial time, and it is proving us either worthy or unworthy of the glorious favors which we seek. ... If we appreciate them let us seek them in the Lord's way; let us see to what extent there are other things in our lives that we might render unto the Lord and which He will accept, not through the worthiness of the deeds or the sacrifices but through the merit of Christ. Let us see if the days and hours as they pass are spent in a consecrated manner; let us note to what extent moments and days are spent in some selfish manner, or wasted upon others beyond the reasonable requirements of duty as marked out in the Divine Word. Let us see to what extent we perform our vows unto the Lord—Z '05, 380 (R 3685).

To be faithful implies a wholehearted devotion to a person, cause or principle. All of these are implied in a Christian's faithfulness to God, which prompts to the use of our all for Him in the things, spirit and manner pleasing to Him. Nor is such devotion for a brief time. It must be unto death, *i.e.*, it must produce death and last until death. For such, a crown of life everlasting is reserved as a gift-reward. Light indeed will then seem to them the hardships incidental to their gaining life everlasting; and blessed indeed will be the lot which will be theirs to all eternity—P '32, 112.

Parallel passages: Prov. 28:20; Matt. 10:22; 24:13; 25:14-23; Luke 16:10-12; 1 Cor. 4:2; Heb. 3:14; Rom. 8:17, 18; Gal. 6:7-9; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:4-8; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:2, 3; Rev. 3:21.

Hymns: 326, 21, 27, 32, 58, 92, 78.
Poems of Dawn, 204: *Oh! To Be Ready*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 150 (R 5688).

Questions: Have I been faithful or not this week? Wherein? How did this affect my hope for life everlasting?

OH! TO BE READY

OH! to be ready when death shall come,
Oh! to be ready to hasten home!
No earthward clinging, no lingering gaze,
No strife at parting, no sore amaze;
No chains to sever that earth hath twined,
No spell to loosen that love would bind.

No flitting shadows to dim the light
Of the angel-pinions winged for flight,
No cloud-like phantoms to fling a gloom

'Twi'xt heaven's bright portals and earth's dark tomb,
But sweetly, gently, to pass away
From the world's dim twilight into day.

To list the music of angel lyres,
To catch the rapture of seraph fires,
To lean in trust on the risen One,
Till borne away to a fadeless throne;
Oh! to be ready when death shall come,
Oh! to be ready to hasten home!

R5688: THE "CROWN OF LIFE"—WHO WILL RECEIVE IT?

**"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."—
James 1:12.**

THE above words of the Apostle James are a part of an earnest exhortation to all the Church of God scattered abroad. "Blessed is the man who endureth [with fortitude] temptation." Those who do not love the Lord with all their hearts, in whom self or some other idol has first place, will be seduced by the world, the flesh or the Devil into some form of rebellion against the Divine Word or Divine providences. They will have schemes, theories or desires which they will prefer to the Lord's Plan and way; and their own theories, plans and ways will be found, when analyzed, to be based upon selfishness and ambition or an evil spirit of envy, hatred, jealousy, pride, etc. It is only such as endure such temptations and besetments with fortitude, by the grace of God conquering and subduing the fleshly mind, that will receive the promised crown.

The Apostle here speaks of the final reward as being "the crown of life." It might be possible to view this matter of the crown of life from different standpoints; for instance, to think of life as being a crowning blessing, on whatever plane of being. Those who will be brought into the Lord's favor during the Millennial Age will, after the close of that Age, if proven worthy, gain everlasting life. In other words, they will be crowned with a life which will be endless. The Ancient Worthies will have this life everlasting. They will be crowned with life. Life, perfect, unending, is the greatest blessing God could bestow. Then the Little Flock will be especially crowned with life; for they will have life on the superior plane, the life of the Divine nature—the nature of Jehovah; life in the very highest form will be their crown. So we think of all these things as being crowns of life when all have been tested and proven to the end of their course.

THE CROWN ABOVE ALL OTHERS

But we have reason to suppose that St. James is here referring to the Church, the Bride of Christ, the most blessed of all humanity. The Church is now especially on trial. This trial of our love, endurance, faith, patience, is for the purpose of demonstrating which of

us will be found worthy of the chiefest of all blessings—the Divine nature, which God has promised to those who love Him—love Him more than they love houses or lands or bonds, more than they love wife or husband or parents or children or self, or any other thing. God will have a reward for others, also; but it will not be this highest crown, which He offers to the Bride of His Son alone.

What constitutes the temptation spoken of in our text? The answer of the Scriptures is that the Lord has said there will come trials and temptations—disciplinings—to those who are His, to develop their character, to prove their steadfastness and loyalty. Without trials and temptations our allegiance to God would never be shown. Self-love might be reigning in our hearts, and we would not recognize it unless it were demonstrated. It is very easy to think how much we love the Lord and how much we would like to do for Him. Then comes the temptation to sloth, and to do something for ourselves instead of for the Lord. It is easy for us to think we love His will, and to sing:

"I love Thy will, O God."

Then we are severely tried on that line, and we sometimes find out that our love for His will needs yet farther development and greater fixity.

Our covenant with the Lord is to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We are to live up to this standard in the spirit of our minds so far as we are able by Divine assistance, trusting to the merit of the precious blood to cover our unavoidable deficiencies. Yea, we are to "lay down our lives for the brethren." The temptation comes to love other things more, to love self more than we love God and the brethren. The Lord permits these trials and temptations and difficulties to come to us. The way we meet these, we think, will have much to do in deciding whether we shall be worthy of the highest crown of life.

THE CROWN OF LIFE AFTER THE TRIAL

"When he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life." The expression, "when he is tried," does not mean one trial merely; but our entire experience is spoken of as a trial, a test of loyalty. Our whole life is a matter of trial or testing to see how sincere we are, how fully we love the Lord, what we are willing to sacrifice, in harmony with our covenant. "When he is tried," then, means, when his trial is over. Then he will receive the "crown of life." He will not get it before. That would not necessarily mean, however, that he would get the crown the minute the trial was over—as soon as his sacrifice was completed in death. Jesus slept until the third day before He received His crown. The Apostles and others slept for many centuries before they received theirs.

It does not mean, either, that the very minute or the very day on which the Christian had fully demonstrated his faithfulness to the Lord he would immediately fall asleep or would be instantly ushered into honor and immortality by the glorious change of the First Resurrection. The Lord might have further purposes of usefulness, etc., in regard to His children before their sacrifice would be completed.

So with every phase of our trial and testing there should be a demonstration of our loyalty. Let the trials come, then, and let them continue to come. No matter what our natural infirmities may be, we shall be granted grace sufficient; and we are expected to be loyal under all conditions, at all times, until the end.

AUGUST 12

Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. ... Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength and my redeemer—Psa. 19:12-14.

It would appear that every intelligent Christian would continually pray this inspired prayer, for cleansing from secret faults, that he might thus be restrained from presumptuous sins; and thus praying heartily, he would also watch against these beginnings of sin and keep his heart in a cleansed and pure condition, by going continually to the fountain of grace for help in every time of need. He who seeks to live a life of holiness and nearness to the Lord by merely guarding against *outward* or presumptuous sins, and who neglects the beginnings of sin in the secrets of his own mind, is attempting a right thing in a very foolish and unreasonable way—Z '98, 22 (R2248).

All of us have secret faults, which have come to us mainly by heredity, though associates, surroundings and training have measurably increased them. These defile us; hence the desirability of our prayer for cleansing from them. The Father reveals them to us, and thus enlists our co-operation in purging them away. Especially dangerous are presumptuous sins. Well may we pray that the Lord keep us back from them and prevent their gaining control over us. We will be enabled to gain victory over these, if the meditations of our hearts and the words of our lips are acceptable unto God, our Strength and Redeemer—P '26, 109.

Parallel passages: Job 13:23; Psa. 24:3-5; 26:1, 2; 51:10; 139:23, 24; Ezek. 36:25, 26; 1 John 1:7, 9; 3:3; Heb. 6:4-9; 10:26-31; 1 John 5:16; 2 Pet. 2:1-20; Jude 4-25.

Hymns: 13, 130, 125, 136, 145, 183, 20.

Poems of Dawn, 69: *How Strong and Sweet My Father's Care!*

Tower Reading: Z '98, 22 (R 2248).

Questions: How has the Father cleansed me this week? What were the circumstances, agents and effects?

HOW STRONG AND SWEET MY FATHER'S CARE!

1 PETER 5:7.

HOW strong and sweet my Father's care!
The words, like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—
He cares for thee.

The thought great wonder with it brings—
My cares are all such little things;

But to this truth my glad faith clings,
He cares for me.

Yea, keep me ever in Thy love,
Dear Father, watching from above,
And let me still Thy mercy prove,
And care for me.

Cast me not off because of sin,
But make me pure and true within,
And teach me how Thy smile to win,
Who cares for me.

O still, in summer's golden glow,
Or wintry storms of wind and snow,
Love me, my Father: let me know
Thy care for me.

And I will learn to cast the care
Which like a heavy load I bear
Down at Thy feet in lowly prayer,
And trust in Thee.

For naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me, nor mine,
Since Thou with tenderness Divine
Dost care for me.

R2248: SECRET FAULTS AND PRESUMPTUOUS SINS.

"Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."—Psa. 19:12-14.

THIS prophetic prayer represents well the heart attitude of the fully consecrated and earnest Christian. While realizing a forgiveness of the "sins that are past through the forbearance of God," through the grace of God which was in Christ Jesus, which imputed our sins to him and his righteousness to us who believe in him, nevertheless the well-instructed soul realizes its faults, its short-comings. These secret faults may be of two kinds: (1) They may be faults which were secret to ourselves at the time committed—slips, unintentional errors. Of course the earnest heart, desiring full fellowship with the Lord, will regret even his unintentional short-comings and will strive and pray for divine grace to get the victory over these: but besides these there are other secret faults, which

are secret in the sense of being unknown to any one but ourselves and the Lord: imperfections or faults of the mind before they take the outward form of actual and presumptuous sins.

All Christians of experience in the good way and in the battle against sin and self have learned that there can be no outward or presumptuous sins that have not first had their beginning in secret faults of the mind. The sinful thought may be one of pride suggesting self-exaltation; it may be one of avarice suggesting unlawful acquisition of wealth; or it may be some other fleshly desire: the mere suggestion of the thought before our minds is not sin; it is merely the operation of our faculties, and of the influences which surround us, inquiring of our wills whether or not we will consent to such thoughts. Many consent to thoughts of evil who at the time would utterly repudiate any suggestion to commit evil deeds; but if the thought be *entertained* it is a secret fault, and the growing tendency would surely be toward the more outward and presumptuous sinful conduct, the tendency of which is always from bad to worse. For instance, to illustrate, suppose the suggestion should come to our minds of a method by which we could advance our own interests of fame or honor or reputation by the undermining of the influence and reputation of another, how quickly the evil, selfish thought, if entertained, would lead to envy and possibly hatred and strife. Almost surely it would lead to back-biting and slander and other works of the flesh and the devil. The beginnings are always small, and correspondingly much easier to deal with than in their developed form. Hence, the prophetic prayer, "Cleanse thou me from *secret faults*" and thus restrain or keep me back from presumptuous sins.

In the Epistle of James (1:14, 15) we read, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own desire and enticed. Then when desire hath conceived it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Here we have the same thought differently expressed. The temptation consists at first in the presentation to the mind of *suggestions* which are impure or unkind or unfaithful to obligations; but there is no sin, no fault, as yet. The fault begins, when we harbor the evil suggestions, begin to turn them over in our minds and to consider the attractions which they may have to offer. This is where *desire* (taking hold of the evil thing instead of resisting it) causes a beginning of the secret fault; and it is only a process of development which in many instances under favorable circumstances may be very rapid, that sin, the presumptuous or outward acts of sin, results;—for instance, bearing false witness against a neighbor, or slander, or other evil deeds. And the evil course having begun in the fostering of the evil suggestion, and having progressed to presumptuous sin, there is a great danger that their entire course of life will be ultimately affected thereby and bring the transgressor into that condition where he will commit the *great transgression*—wilful, deliberate, intentional sin—the wages of which is death, second death.

It would appear then that every intelligent Christian would continually pray this inspired prayer, for cleansing from secret faults that he might thus be restrained from presumptuous sins; and thus praying heartily, he would also watch against these beginnings of sin and keep his heart in a cleansed and pure condition, by going continually to the fountain of grace for help in every time of need. He who seeks to live a

life of holiness and nearness to the Lord by merely guarding and striving against *outward* or presumptuous sins, and who neglects the beginning of sin in the secrets of his own mind, is attempting a right thing in a very foolish and unreasonable way. As well might we seek to avert the smallpox by outward cleanliness, while permitting the germs of the disease to enter our systems. The bacteria or germs of presumptuous sins enter through the mind, and their antiseptics and bactericides of the truth and its spirit must meet them there and promptly kill the bacteria of sin before it germinates and leads us to such a condition of evil as will manifest itself in our outward conduct.

For instance, whenever the bacteria of *pride* and self-importance present themselves, let the antidote be promptly administered from the Lord's great medical laboratory for the healing of the soul: the proper dose to offset this species of bacteria is found in the words, "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted;" and "Pride goeth before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall."

If the thought presented to our minds be the bacteria of *envy*, then let us promptly apply the antidote which declares that envy is one of the works of the flesh and of the devil, and contrary to the spirit of Christ, which by our covenant we have adopted as ours. And let us remember that envy is closely related to and apt to be followed by *malice*, *hatred* and *strife*, which under some circumstances mean murder, according to the New Covenant and our Lord's interpretation.—1 John 3:15; Matt. 5:21, 22.

If the bacteria which presents itself to our minds is *avarice*, with the suggestion of unjust methods for its gratification, let us promptly apply to it the medicine furnished in the Lord's Word, namely, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "For the love of money is a root of all evil, which some, coveting after, have erred from the truth and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

The more attention we give to this subject, the more we will be convinced, from our own personal experiences, of the truth of the Scriptural declarations respecting the beginnings of sin as *secret faults in the mind*; and the more we will appreciate the statement of the Word, "Keep thy heart [mind, affections] with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—Prov. 4:23.

But we are not to wonder that God has so constituted us as to permit temptations to come to our minds, nor are we to pray that we may have no temptations; for if there were no such presentations, no such temptations, then there could be no victories on our part, no overcoming of sin and of the wicked One. But we know that for this very reason we are now in the school of Christ; not that we shall there be shielded from all temptation, but that we may learn of the great Teacher how to meet the Tempter, and by our Master's grace and help to come off conquerors, victors in the strife against sin. The degree of our success in this conflict will depend largely upon the keenness of our faith and trust in the great Teacher. If we feel confident in his wisdom, we will follow closely his instructions and keep our hearts [minds] with all diligence. Faith in the Lord's wisdom and in his help in every time of need is necessary to us in order that we may be thoroughly obedient to him; and hence it is written, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your

faith;" *i.e.*, it will be by the exercise of faith and the obedience which flows therefrom that we will be enabled to "come off conquerors and more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us."

Nor are we to seek divine aid far in advance, as, for instance, to be kept throughout the year to come, or month to come, or week to come: rather we are to know that if we have made a covenant with the Lord and are his, that he is near us at all times in every trial, in every temptation; and that his assistance is ready to our use, if we will but accept it and act accordingly. Hence, our prayers should be for help *in the time of need*, as well as general prayers for the Lord's blessing and care for each day. In the moment of temptation the heart should lift itself to the great Master, in full assurance of faith, recognizing his love, his wisdom and his ability to help us, and his willingness to make all things work together for good to those who love him. Asking for assistance in such a time of need would surely draw to us the Lord's counsel and help and strength for righteousness, truth, purity and love; and thus we should be hourly victorious, daily victorious, and finally victorious.

The difficulty with many is that they are looking for some great battles, instead of averting the great battles by availing themselves of the Lord's provision, and keeping their minds cleansed from secret faults. The little battles, and much more numerous, are the ones in which we gain the victories with their ultimate rewards. "Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit [mind, will] than he that taketh a city."

Finally, the grand results of obedience to this counsel of the Lord, the grand attainment of those who have faithfully kept their hearts with diligence, is expressed in our text, and may well be the repeated earnest prayer of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus,—*"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."*

A year from now we hope to hear from very many of great blessings received through this counsel of the Lord's Word, as suggested in our last issue.

AUGUST 13

We are ambassadors for Christ—2 Cor. 5:20.

If we as Christians could keep this thought always prominent before our minds, what a dignity it would add to our character! what a transforming power it would be! what an assistance to the new nature in its battle with the low and groveling tendencies of the old nature now disowned by us and reckoned dead! "Our citizenship is in heaven," says the Apostle. While still living in the world, we are not of it but have transferred our allegiance and citizenship to the Kingdom. ... And now, as appointees of our Kingdom, while still living in the world among aliens and strangers, we as representatives and ambassadors should feel both the dignity and the honor of the position and the weighty responsibilities and ever keep in memory the Apostle's words, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus"—Z '04, 72 (R 3329).

God is the rightful King of the earth, though its scepter now by usurpation is in the hands of Satan. God has selected His people to be His ambassadors, acting as Christ's mouthpieces. As such we are demanding of Satan the release of God's people, present and prospective, as well as are preparing for their release. We likewise are announcing to others the transfer of the kingdom from Satan to Christ. Such an office is for its incumbents a high honor, and requires that we act with such tact, nobility and grace as befits our office, and thus commend our cause to all right-minded persons. If earthly ambassadors so act as to honor their countries, much more ought we so to do—P '36, 95.

Parallel passages: Job 33:23; Mal. 2:6, 7; 2 Cor. 3:6, 9; 6:1; Eph. 6:20; 1 Sam. 2:35; 12:8; Ezra 7:10; Isa. 52:1-12; Jer. 20:9; Ezek. 34; Matt. 10:16-24; 20:25-28; 24:8-11; John 10:1-15; Acts 20:22-24; Rom. 2:21-23; 1 Cor. 2:2.

Hymns: 116, 70, 164, 210, 260, 272, 275.

Poems of Dawn, 77: *Amen, Amen.*

Tower Reading: Z '04, 71 (R 3329).

Questions: Have I been an ambassador for Christ this week? How? Why? Under what circumstances? What was helpful or hindering? What were the results?

AMEN, AMEN

I CANNOT say,
Beneath the pressure of life's cares today,
I joy in these;
But I can say
That I would rather walk this rugged way,
If Him it please.

I cannot feel

That all is well when dark'ning clouds conceal
The shining sun;
But then I know
God lives and loves; and say, since it is so,
"Thy will be done."

I cannot speak
In happy tones; the tear-drops on my cheek
Show I am sad;
But I can speak
Of grace to suffer with submission meek,
Until made glad.

I do not see
Why God should e'en permit some things to be,
When He is love;
But I can see,
Though often dimly, through the mystery,
His hand above.

I may not try
To keep the hot tears back; but hush that sigh,
"It might have been;"
And try to still
Each rising murmur, and to God's sweet will
Respond—"AMEN."

R3329: "DO ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS."

**"Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."
—Col. 3:17.**

WHETHER he realizes it or not, each one who professes to be a Christian speaks and acts *in the name* of the Lord Jesus. The thought of our text therefore must be that we should endeavor to keep this fact continually before our minds, to the intent that our actions and words may properly represent our Lord and honor the name which he has permitted us to bear. Imagine a maiden from the lower strata of society married to a prince of royal blood. We can imagine a true wife under such circumstances extremely careful of her every word and action, seeking to have these as nearly as possible comport with her new station in life—her new relationship. We can well imagine that from the moment of her espousal the thought of her husband's high position and of her responsibility as his helpmate and family representative, would lead her to guard particularly her every action and word. From the time that she assumes his name, or acknowledges that she is espoused to him, whatever she does or says must of necessity be either to the credit or the discredit of his name. Elsewhere the Apostle wrote respecting

the Lord's people, likening them to a "chaste virgin espoused to one husband, which is Christ;" hence this picture very accurately represents our present responsibilities to the great name which our heavenly Bridegroom has granted us permission to use as his espoused. What an honor to be his representatives in the world! and what a responsibility to bear his name!

Another scriptural illustration well represents the manner in which our words and conduct—good or bad—are all done in the name of the Lord Jesus from the time we formally confess him. The Apostle's words are, we are "ambassadors for Christ," "who also hath made us able ministers of the New Covenant." (2 Cor. 3:6; 5:20.) The United States appoints ambassadors or ministers of state to foreign countries. These are all supposed to be persons of good, reputable character before they are chosen, but we can well suppose that the most honorable and discreet amongst them, after realizing the dignity of such an appointment, would feel doubly impressed with the responsibility of his position. Previously he acted in his own name, and because of his own self-respect and personal love of justice, truth, honor, etc., he was careful of his words and conduct; but now he has not only the same personal responsibility but, additionally, an appreciation of the fact that the nation he represents will be either honored or dishonored by his course. If he were careful about his language and conduct before, his carefulness would be increased many fold. And then, because of his official position as the representative of a great nation, his words and actions would be more critically weighed than previously by those who know him to be the American ambassador; and we may be sure that morning, noon and night a realization of his position as representative of a great nation would be with him, prompting him to prudence. He would realize as never before that, whatsoever he said or did, all would be either to the credit or discredit of the nation whose general character and policy he represents—in whose name he speaks and acts.

If it is an honorable matter to represent one great civilized nation of earth before another, how much more honorable it is to represent the heavenly Kingdom and its King of kings and Lord of lords before the "children of this world." If we as Christians could keep this thought always prominent before our minds what a dignity it would add to our character! what a transforming power it would be! what an assistance to the new nature in its battle with the low and groveling tendencies of the old nature now disowned by us and reckoned dead! "Our citizenship is in heaven," says the Apostle. "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world," says our Master, Jesus. While still living in the world we are not of it, but have transferred our allegiance and citizenship to the heavenly Kingdom,—set free through the merits of "him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood." And now as the appointees of our Kingdom, while still living in the world amongst aliens and strangers, we as representatives and ambassadors should feel both the dignity and the honor of the position and the weighty responsibilities, and ever keep in memory the Apostle's words, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Another scriptural figure represents us as the "members of the body of Christ" under our Lord Jesus as our Head. "As he was so are we in this world." When Jesus was here in the flesh he suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring men to God. Since his

exaltation according to the divine plan such of the redeemed ones as now enjoy the hearing ear and understanding heart, and as are in full sympathy with the Lord's great plan, are called to be joint-heirs with him in his Kingdom—to be changed from human nature to spirit nature in a resurrection like that which highly exalted our great Head. But all such are called upon to demonstrate their loyalty to the Lord by walking in his footsteps. Because of their ignorance, superinduced by the great Adversary, the world hated our Master, opposed him, said all manner of evil against him falsely; and he requires that those whom he shall ultimately recognize as members of the glorious Kingdom class shall now attest their loyalty by being so faithful to him, and to the principles of righteousness for which he suffered, that they will draw upon themselves more or less of the same opposition of the world which he endured.

As his was a most honorable position as the ambassador and representative of the Father, so ours is the same, for he counts us as members of his body, his flesh and his bones. But he forewarns us not to expect worldly appreciation of the high standards of his teaching, but contrarywise, in proportion as we are faithful unto him and the heavenly Kingdom of light—in proportion as we let our light so shine that men may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven—we will, nevertheless, draw against ourselves the opposing forces of darkness. Our Lord explains this, saying, that the darkness and those who are of the darkness hate the light, and therefore oppose all who are children of the light in proportion as they are faithful representatives of it.

We see, then, that when the prophets spoke "beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow," those sufferings included not only the tribulations upon the Head, Christ Jesus, but those also to be endured by all the members of his body before the ushering in of the Kingdom glories—before the change of all the members of the body to the spiritual nature—before their shining forth as the sun in the Millennial Kingdom glory, for the blessing of all the families of the earth with the true light and opportunity for return to harmony with God.

As ambassadors, therefore—as representatives of the Lord Jesus, members of his body, bearers of his name—we are not to expect under present conditions that our embassy will be highly esteemed among men; rather we should "marvel not if the world hate us, for we know that it hated him before it hated us." (John 15:18; I John 3:13.) But we are also to remember that an ambassador of a hated government is more critically and unsympathetically watched than under other circumstances, and that such ambassadors would endeavor to be all the more careful as respects their every word and action.

This subject may be viewed from still another standpoint. With some the tendency is that, whatsoever they do, whether in word or deed, they shall do all in their own name—for their own credit, for their own glory. This is a spirit and disposition contrary to those which the Lord is seeking, and he who maintains such a disposition will surely not be accounted worthy of any place in the Kingdom, whatever may be his ultimate end. The class which the Lord is seeking will be composed of those only who have such an appreciation of the Lord and his grace, manifested in their redemption and forgiveness of

sins and call to fellowship with him in his suffering and subsequent glory, that they will take delight in crediting all the honor, all the praise, to him. Not only their honor and praise for salvation, but additionally their credit for any kind deeds or benevolences or services they may be able to render to any. They will be glad to be able to do something in his name—to the glory of him who did so much for them. Their sentiment of heart is well expressed in the Apostle's words: "We thus judge, that since one died for all, all were dead, and that we who live should not henceforth live unto ourselves but unto him who died for us"—"doing all things in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Another erroneous custom amongst those who have named the name of Christ is that of ignoring his name in favor of some sectarian name. Such as are thus misled consecrate themselves, devote their lives, talents, etc., and spend these talents and opportunities in seeking to glorify the names of human institutions. One does all *in the name* of Methodism; another *in the name* of Presbyterianism; another *in the name* of Lutheranism; another *in the name* of Roman Catholicism, etc. This is all a mistake. None of these names were ever authorized by the Lord; and who can confidently depend upon it that even the best of works done in these names and for the upbuilding of these institutions, which the Lord and his apostles neither instituted nor authorized, will be accounted of the Lord as just the same as though his admonition through the Apostle had been heeded,— "Do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus"?

Another view of the subject is this: many are unauthorizedly using the name of the Lord Jesus in combination with the name of some earthly institution. Mark the words:—"Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to take my name into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and casteth my words behind thee?" The wicked here are not the worldly wicked, but those who have a form of godliness and deny the power thereof—those who draw nigh unto the Lord with their lips while their hearts are far from him. These covenant-breakers are the wicked of this text. These the Lord reproveth, telling them that they have no right to take his name—to attempt to speak in his name and call themselves Christians, to advertise themselves before the world as his representatives and ambassadors, when as a matter of fact he disowns them.

If a sharply dividing line were drawn in the Church, which would place on the one side the sincere believers in the precious blood, begotten of the holy Spirit, and thus recognized of God as his ambassadors,—and on the other side of the line all those who are merely nominal Christians and without either ability or authority to act as representatives of the heavenly Kingdom, what a small number it would leave on the Lord's side amenable to the Apostle's words in our text and ready to be influenced by the presentation of them we are here making! There are some who are anxious to get the worldly to sing the song of Zion, to get the worldly to name the name of Christ in religious profession: but we are not of these. We are anxious to recognize as brethren in the Lord all who hold "the faith once delivered to the saints"—faith in the Lord and in the salvation which he is yet to bring to us at his revelation—and who on the strength of such faith have presented their bodies living sacrifices to God, and are therefore commissioned of the Lord to be his representatives and to bear his name; but we would be glad indeed to see all others than these discard the precious name which they misrepresent.

Would it seem like a great falling away? We answer that it would affect only the "tare" class, and that all the true "wheat" would be much better off separate from the "tares." It is only the holy class the Lord recognizes as his, anyway. The great mass of professors have neither part nor lot in his present grace. The sooner we learn that at the present time the Lord is choosing out of the world a peculiar people, zealous for *his name* and delighting to do his will, and that the hope of all others lies in the Millennial Kingdom, with its chastisements and corrections of righteousness and uplifting influences, the greater will be the benefit to ourselves who are seeking to make our calling and election sure to a place in that Kingdom.

One of the ten commandments given to the Jews forbade their taking the name of the Lord *in vain*; and although this commandment was not given to spiritual Israel we can readily see how the spirit of it comes to us. The spirit of that commandment applied to us would not relate to profane swearing, cursing, etc., but rather to a misappropriation of the Lord's name. We have taken the name of Christ as our name. We are counted as members of the body of Christ. The holy name of the Head belongs to all the members of the body. The honored name of the Bridegroom belongs to his espoused. What carefulness the thought of this should give us, and how appropriately we should say to ourselves:—"I must see to it that I have not taken the Lord's name in *vain*,—that I appreciate the honor, dignity and responsibility of my position as his representative and ambassador in the world. I will walk circumspectly, seeking as far as possible to bring no dishonor to that name, but contrariwise to honor it in every thought and word and deed."

Nothing in this should be understood to mean that our Lord expects from us absolute perfection. He merely expects us to do *all in our power* to glorify him "in our bodies and our spirits which are his." Nor are we to consider the Apostle to mean that whatsoever things we do, in word or in deed, are all to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus—with the hope that by thus doing things well we shall obtain salvation. The thought is really the reverse of this. Those whom the Apostle is addressing are the "saints at Colosse," and the words are applicable today only to a similar class—"saints." Only the "saints" are authorized to take the Lord's name and act as his ambassadors and representatives. And this honorable position came to them because their sins had already been forgiven by the grace of God—through faith in the precious blood; and because on the strength of this forgiveness of sins they had been called to membership in the body of Christ which is the Church;—and because they had accepted this invitation and presented their bodies living sacrifices to the Lord.

Having thus properly, legally, officially taken the name of Jesus upon us, and having been acknowledged by having had his Spirit shed abroad in our hearts, and having been promised in addition the completion of this work of grace at the close of this age, we seek to speak and to act to his name and to his glory, not in hope of obtaining forgiveness of sins, but because we have obtained divine favor and because we appreciate the same and love him who first loved us. This loving devotion to him whose name we bear must with all "saints" be the power of God, working in us to will and do his good pleasure;—to honor his name and to serve his cause to the best of our ability. And the best of our

ability, thank God! is accepted in the Beloved as perfection. How gracious are the divine providences! The more we realize these things the more careful and circumspect they will make us,—that whatsoever we do, in word or deed, it shall all be done in the name of Jesus and to his glory.

AUGUST 14

It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?—Matt. 10:25.

However graciously stated, the Truth is a sword which penetrates in every direction, and which as our Lord foretold, frequently sets parents against children and children against parents, because the darkness hates the light and opposes it in every possible manner. In view of the Lord's teachings regarding this subject, and of how the wisest presentation of it may be ultimately misconstrued, it behooves everyone who would serve the Truth faithfully to be as careful as possible not to be misunderstood; to let it be clearly understood that we neither participate in nor advocate anarchy of any kind; but on the contrary, are standing for righteousness and the highest of laws, the Divine law—Z '03, 13 (R3130).

It is indeed from every standpoint enough that the pupil be as his Teacher and the servant as his Master. It is honor enough, dignity enough, reward enough, distinction enough, approval enough and recommendation enough from the Teacher and Master to the pupil and servant. What more desirable thing suitable to our sojourn in the flesh could we seek than treatment like our Lord's? If this brings us ridicule, slander, excommunication, expatriation, violence even unto death, we should congratulate ourselves that we are being honored in being accorded treatment similar to our Lord's. Let us be glad and rejoice in the goodly fellowship into which this introduces us, as well as in the goodly inheritance to which it leads us—P '30, 109.

Parallel passages: Matt. 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 6:40; 11:15; John 8:48, 52; 17:14; 13:16; 15:20; 2 Tim. 3:12; 2:11, 12; Acts 14:22; 1 Pet. 2:19-24.

Hymns: 167, 168, 170, 322, 299, 325, 326.

Poems of Dawn, 40: *The Cost of Discipleship*.

Tower Reading: Z '09, 154 (R 4398).

Questions: Have I this week suffered reviling for loyalty to the Lord? How did I bear it—as an honor and privilege, or as a disgrace and a burden? What helped or hindered therein?

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

LUKE 9:23.

WOULD ye be My disciples? Consider again:
Can ye follow My footsteps through trial and pain?
Can ye throw away pleasure, and glory, and fame,
And live but to honor My cause and My name?

Can ye turn from the glitter of fashion and mirth,
And dwell like a pilgrim and stranger on earth,
Despising earth's riches, and living to bless?
Can you follow the feet of the shelterless?

Can ye ask from your heart the forgiveness of men?
Can ye list to reproaches, nor answer again?
Can ye pray that repentance to life may be theirs
Who've watched for your falling, who've set for you snares?

When ye hear I am come, then can ye arise,
The joy of your heart springing up in your eyes?
Can ye come out to meet Me, whate'er the cost be,
Though ye come on the waves of a storm-crested sea?

When I call, can ye turn and in gladness "come out"
From the home of your childhood, the friends of your heart?
With naught but My promise on which to rely,
Afar from their love—can ye lie down and die?

Yea, we'll take up the cross and in faith follow Thee
And bear Thy reproach, Thy disciples to be.
Blest Savior, for courage, to Thee we will fly;
Of grace Thou hast promised abundant supply.

R4398: "IF WE SUFFER WITH HIM"

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:16, 17.

ST. JUDE speaks of "our common salvation"—a salvation from sin, from death, from human imperfection to human perfection—to all that God intended that our race should be, to all that our race lost through Adam's disobedience. The Divine provision is, as expressed by our Lord, "to seek and to recover that which was lost."—Matt. 18:11.

The world is to be sought and to be recovered during the Millennium, its period for judging (disciplining) and trial for life eternal. Then the faithful and obedient of all peoples will obtain full Restitution and life eternal. But *now*, in advance, this "common salvation" comes *by faith* to a certain class—to those who have the hearing of faith and the eye of faith, and obedient hearts. These, by virtue of the merit of Christ applied to them when Jesus "ascended up on high there to appear in the presence of God for us"—these are reckoned as having all the advantages of restitution *imputed* to them on account of their faith. They do not get restitution actually, but *reckonedly*. Their faith is counted to them for righteousness or perfection.

Why is there this discrimination in Divine providence—that some now *hear* the voice of the Son of Man and live, through Justification of Faith, while others will not hear the voice of the Son of Man and come to life and perfection until the Millennium and then actually and not reckonedly?—"Verily, verily, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that *hear* (obey) shall live."—John 5:25.

The answer is that this is a part of the "Mystery" of God; that the Lord is now seeking for and electing a special class to be joint-heirs with his Son—joint-sufferers with him in his sacrifice and joint-sharers in his Kingdom glory, "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife." The special arrangement permitting these to be justified by *faith* instead of *actually* justified (or perfected) is with a view to their being privileged to offer a proper sacrifice—"holy, acceptable to God, their reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.) This Justification by faith is necessary because nothing unholy or unclean may come to the Lord's altar, as the Law clearly taught and the types clearly showed. Every sacrifice for the Lord's altar must be "without spot or blemish." Every member of our race was spotted and blemished by inherited sin and imperfection, and hence the necessity for the Divine provision of Justification by *faith*—not faith in Covenants, but faith in the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." This faith grasps the fact that while the sin of the world has not yet been taken away by the Lamb of God, and the world still lies under condemnation, nevertheless the merit of the blood has been applied on behalf of the "household" of faith—and in due time will be made efficacious, under the New Covenant, for the bringing of forgiveness to every creature, with the opportunity of eternal life.

But under which Covenant does God purpose to receive the *faith-justified* ones as *sacrificers*? The answer is that the Divine proposal to the Redeemer that he sacrifice and as a reward of his sacrifice be highly exalted to the Divine nature and glory—this blessing (which belongs only to Jesus and was applied only to his sacrifice) has by the gracious plan of God been extended to include all those of this Gospel Age who have the character likeness of the Redeemer. They are invited to share in his sacrifice, and are promised that if faithful they shall share in his glory.

But what sacrifice is this? Could Justice call for more than a life for a life—the death of Jesus as the *ransom-price* for the death penalty of father Adam? Surely not. Justice has no voice in the present proceeding of Grace. Justice, however, cannot interfere, if it is agreeable to the Great Judge and the Redeemer to accept a "little flock" of justified believers as members under the Redeemer as Head. This very matter pleased the Father and pleased the Son, and is, therefore, a part of the Divine program. These members are "elect according to God's foreknowledge through sanctification of the spirit and the belief of the Truth." (1 Pet. 1:2.) Their selection is not a change in the Divine program, for they were "chosen in him before the foundation of the world." (Eph. 1:4.) Their selection was unexpected of the angels and of men and hence was a "mystery" and still is a "mystery" to mankind. "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not." (1 John 3:1.) But the

selection of this class was always the Divine purpose. "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus foreknew us also by Jesus."

Whatever, therefore, was the Divine program for the Master, the Forerunner, the Chief-priest, is the Divine program for his *members*—they must "walk in his steps"; they must "suffer with him"; they must "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." If any decline so to do, he loses his place as a member of the Body. We know, nevertheless, that the full number of the "elect" will ultimately be found and every one of them will be *sacrificers*, for none others are *members of his Body*. It is the spirit of the Head coming upon these that produces the sacrifice of the flesh (the justified flesh) "holy, acceptable to God."—Rom. 12:1.

There is only one object in the sacrifice which God has provided for, the sacrifice which Jesus accomplished, and is accomplishing in all those who will become his members—that is a *sacrifice for sin*. It is presented to God, holy and acceptable. In this respect it differs from other sacrifices which men make; as, for instance, a father or mother may sacrifice comfort or even sacrifice life, on behalf of their offspring, but such sacrifices, however appropriate, are not the *sacrifice of Christ*—are not of the "better sacrifices" typified in the sacrifices of the bulls and the goats.

St. Paul calls our attention to the fact that only those sacrifices which were burned outside the camp were a *Sin Offering*. Next he shows how our Lord was the sin offering. Then he points out how, if faithful *members of his Body*, we also must suffer outside the camp—as members of the sin-offering—represented in "the Lord's goat." This sacrifice is not yet completed. It is in process. Hence the Apostle's expression, "Let *us* go to him outside the camp, bearing *his reproach*"—just as the slain goat was carried outside the camp and there consumed as the bullock had been. (Heb. 13:11-13.) These matters, dear readers, are amongst the "deep things of God which no man knoweth except by the spirit of God." (1 Cor. 2:10.) The world knows nothing about them. "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to outsiders all these things are spoken in parables." (Matt. 13:11.) *Outsiders* are in what the Scriptures term "outer darkness"—the darkness which belongs to this present time of ignorance and superstition. (Matt. 25:30.) The few have been permitted to enter into the banqueting halls and to see the glorious beauties of the riches of Divine grace. Blessed are your eyes that see and your ears that hear. As for those who never saw they properly have our sympathy, nor should we expect so much of them as of ourselves who have been blessed with this knowledge of this important sacrifice and of its glorious reward. Furthermore, as we are now in the sifting and testing time, it must not surprise us if some who once saw eye to eye with us in these matters become blind to them and drift into the "outer darkness" as respects these matters and others—we know not how far. Truths so interweave that one lost or perverted injures presently the beauty of the entire fabric.

Our expectation must be that the differences will increase and that the loss of spiritual sight will ultimately extend to other features of the Divine Plan. We have nothing but sympathy to express for such. Indeed to us their case is most pitiable. It is practically a hopeless case, too, whereas some of those who have never seen and never tasted we may

hope will yet see and taste of this grace. But of those who see and who then become blind our Lord says, "If the light that is in thee become *darkness*, how great is the darkness." (Matt. 6:23.) It would be better not to have known the way of Truth than to have departed from the holy command. It is not for us to judge one another, but to leave all in the Lord's hands, assured that he makes no mistake. We may have thought their hearts all right, when the Lord may have seen them to be all wrong. But the results will show. And what we could not read, and should not have attempted to read of unfaithfulness to the Truth, will be manifest of themselves in the Lord's time and way. Let us not forget that he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified (his *members*) are all *one*. He is in us all. In our consecration we lose our humanity and all of its rights, exchanging these for our spiritual membership in the Body of Christ.

AUGUST 15

Now we exhort you, brethren ... be patient toward all—1 Thes. 5:14.

This seems to imply that the better balanced among the Lord's people should look with sympathy upon and exercise patient forbearance not only toward the weak and those who lack courage, but toward *all*, including those who have too much courage and self-push. ... Growth in knowledge helps us to grow in this grace of patience, for as we appreciate more and more the Heavenly Father's patience with us, it helps us to apply the same principle toward others. ... The thought that our Heavenly Father has favored and called anyone should make us extremely careful how we would co-operate with the Lord in respect to the call, and be as helpful as possible to all those who are seeking to walk with us in the footsteps of our Lord in our narrow way—Z '03, 24 (R 3135).

The original word here rendered, "be patient," is *makrothymeo*, which means "to be long-suffering." Appropriate, indeed, is this exhortation and necessary is this quality. The physical, mental, moral and religious lacks, faults and weaknesses of ourselves, the brethren, the world and our enemies, call upon us to exercise long-suffering. Few, indeed, of the secondary graces are required for use more frequently than this grace; and hardly any of them is so rarely in evidence and is so difficult to practice. Therefore there is all the more need for the exhortation: "Now we exhort you, brethren ... be long-suffering toward all"—P '35, 117.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 13:4; 2 Cor. 6:4-6; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:1, 2; Col. 1:11; 3:12, 13; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Tim. 3:10; 4:2; Heb. 6:12, 15; Jas. 5:7, 8, 10.

Hymns: 95, 198, 23, 143, 170, 21, 322.

Poems of Dawn, 209: *Wait, O Thou Weary One, a Little Longer*.

Tower Reading: Z '03, 23 (R 3135).

Questions: Have I been long-suffering this week to all? Why? How? With what results?

WAIT, O THOU WEARY ONE, A LITTLE LONGER

WAIT, O thou weary one, a little longer,
A few more years—it may be only days;
Thy patient waiting makes thee all the stronger;
Eternity will balance all delays.

Wait, O thou suffering one, thy days of sorrow
Bring to thy weary soul its richest gain;
If thou a Christian art, a brighter morrow
Will give thee ten-fold joy for all thy pain.

Wait, O thou anxious one; the cloud that hovers
In gathering gloom above thine aching head
Is sent of God in mercy, and He covers
Thee with His heavenly mantle overspread.

Be patient and submissive; each disaster
Will bring thee nearer to thy loving Lord.
These trials make thee like thy blessed Master,
Who knows them all, and will His grace afford.

Be patient and submissive; strength is given
For every step along the weary way.
And for it all thou'lt render praise to Heaven,
When dreary night gives place to perfect day.

Yes, perfect day, the day of God eternal,
When not a shadow shall flit o'er the scene
In that fair land where all is bright and vernal,
And we will be with Christ, and naught between.

Wait, then, dear heart; control thy sad emotion;
God will subdue each angry wind and wave,
And when the voyage ends across life's ocean,
Within the haven of sweet rest will save.

R3135: "HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

—1 Thessalonians 5:14-28—

OUR LESSON is a summary statement of the proper attitude for the Lord's people to maintain in order that they may grow in grace and through faithfulness finally come off conquerors through their Redeemer. Although addressed to the saints at Thessalonica, these noble words have been a source of strength, encouragement and discipline to the faithful in Christ Jesus from their writing to the present time. No child of God can afford to ignore nor to neglect these words of divine counsel, and in proportion as each of us gives heed to them our lives will surely be the more Christ-like, and we will thus be the more pleasing to the Lord, and eventually make our calling and election sure to joint-heirship with him in the Millennial Kingdom, and its glories and its service to the world of mankind. Let us take up these apostolic injunctions seriatim.

Not the elders alone are exhorted by the Apostle, as though they were a separate class, exercising control and treating the brethren as their wards; he addresses the "brethren"—the entire Church, including the sisters also. But this does not signify that the counsel would not apply specially to the elders; because they were selected as amongst the brethren most advanced in Christian doctrine and practice, and as the representatives of

the Church, to specially look after the interests of the Lord's flock. These apostolic words apply to each member of the flock in proportion to his capacity and ability, but would naturally come with special force to the elders who, under God's providence, had the oversight of his Church, "to feed the flock." (Acts 20:28.) While, therefore, all the brethren are to see to the carrying out of the injunctions here given, the elders in every Church should feel a special responsibility respecting them—a responsibility derived from the position they occupy as representatives of the Church,—its standard-bearers.

The unruly are here contrasted with the feeble-minded or faint-hearted and the weak. The divine arrangement is full of order as well as full of liberty; and, rightly understood, liberty can best be conserved by order; and order best be maintained through a reasonable recognition of personal liberty. The mistake frequently made, not only by earthly law-givers and disciplinarians, but also in the Church of Christ, is along the line of extremes, either in one or the other of these directions. Some misunderstand liberty to mean lawlessness, disorder, unruliness. Others with equally good intentions, no doubt, are disposed to carry order and obedience to rules to such an extent as to dwarf the individual liberties of the flock. Great grace is needed along this line, to prevent friction amongst the Lord's people—to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bonds of love and peace.

We are not to have such false ideas of personal liberty as would ignore rules, law, order, in the assemblies of the Lord's people; and those disposed to be unruly, self-conscious, thrusting themselves forward, without the request of the Church, need to be held in check—to be "warned"—to be shown that their course is contrary to the spirit of the Lord and all the arrangements instituted by the apostles, his representatives. They need to be "warned" also that their course would mean injury to the Church, instead of blessing and peace and joy and development; and injury to themselves, in that it would develop in them a combativeness or self-esteem, already too large, and might thus not only work injury to the cause, but hinder themselves from attaining the character-likeness necessary to a share in the Kingdom.

But while some might need thus to be warned and held in check, others, faint-hearted and weak, would need aid, support, encouragement;—naturally backward, diffident, lacking in combativeness and self-esteem, they need to be pushed to the front a little, in order to bring out what talents they really possess, for their own encouragement and for the blessing also of the entire household of faith.

"Be patient toward all" seems to imply that the better balanced amongst the Lord's people should look with sympathy upon and exercise patient forbearance toward the classes above mentioned;—not only toward the weak and those who lack courage, but toward *all*; including those who have too much courage and self-push. The Scriptures repeatedly admonish us, "Ye have need of patience," and day by day the advanced children of the Lord realize the truthfulness of this, and come to appreciate patience as one of the chief Christian graces. (1) Growth in knowledge helps us to grow in this grace of patience, for as we appreciate more and more the heavenly Father's patience with us it helps us to apply the same principle toward others. (2) As we come to realize the great disaster that is upon our race as a whole—our fallen condition and how the fall has

affected some more in one manner and others more in another—some chiefly mentally, some chiefly physically, and some chiefly morally, it enlarges our sympathy toward our fellow-creatures, and thus increases our *patience* in dealing with them. This is particularly true in respect to the household of faith, in which we recognize amongst those whom God has graciously called, some more blemished, perhaps, than ourselves in some particulars—though we may be more imperfect in others. The thought that our heavenly Father has favored and called anyone should make us extremely careful how we would co-operate with the Lord in respect to the call, and be as helpful as possible to all those who are seeking to walk with us in the footsteps of our Lord in the narrow way. We certainly should have special patience, therefore, with the brethren.—Rom. 14:15; 1 Cor. 8:11.

"See that none render evil for evil unto any." This exhortation has a special force when we remember how much evil treatment was heaped upon the followers of our Lord at that time; and that the writer himself, as well as those specially addressed, had suffered much on account of their faithfulness in dispensing the Word of the Lord, the Word of life, the good tidings. The exhortation means that the Lord's followers are not to attempt to retaliate upon their enemies by doing them evil in return, or in any manner to "get even with them." The Lord's exhortation is that we seek to render good in return for the evil we receive, and includes our language as well as our conduct, we are not to give word for word, railing for railing, accusation for accusation, slander for slander any more than blow for blow. It includes also our very thoughts, for we are not even to render anger for anger, malice for malice, envy for envy. Two evils can never make a good—two wrongs will never make a right. Our sympathy for our blinded enemies is to cultivate our patience and forbearance toward them in thought, word and deed.—1 Pet. 2:21-23.

The Lord's people, so far from ever turning aside to render railing for railing or evil for evil, are uniformly to "*pursue that which is good*"—that which is right, that which the Lord approves. This will mean that each member of the Royal Priesthood will pursue righteousness to the extent of his ability—pursue every good and noble sentiment, and seek to live as nearly as possible up to the high standard of righteousness, perfection, exemplified absolutely in our Lord. This pursuit of goodness is to be maintained not only amongst the brethren, where all are professing the same pursuit, but also toward others—in our dealings with the world. Some of the world can learn more of the gospel through witnessing our avoidance of evil and our constant pursuit of righteousness, than by anything we can say to them;—and possibly as they discern the new life in us they may gradually come to have "an ear to hear" the message of good tidings which has wrought this change in us.

The worldly spirit does not approve this part of the Apostle's counsel, but urges, rather, that we should treat others as they treat us—that we should "give as good as we get,"—meaning that we should give as bad as we get. By way of saying as good a word as they can in their own favor along these lines they sometimes accuse the Lord's followers of cowardice. Courage is one of the noble qualities of humanity, and it is quite a trial to some to be considered timid or lacking in courage; and to such this enjoined restraint of word and act is a particular trial. It is not true, however, that the Lord's

counsel tends to effeminacy or lack of courage. This matter is well stated in the language of another, as follows:—

"One feature which stands out clear in the society founded by Christ and his apostles is the extraordinary heroism which was shown in the face of death and tortures, not only by men, but by feeble women and tender children. It amazed the heathen magistrates who were striving after *fortitude* by the aid of philosophy. It amazed the wild savages, who mistook gentleness for cowardice, when they found it was harder to terrify the missionary who came with the Gospel than the invader who came in battle array. Quiet endurance may be *more heroic* than violent resistance, and the Christian law of bearing personal insults and injuries meekly tends to the development of the highest courage and truest manliness. There is nothing more courageous, more heroic, in all history than living up to this precept."

"Rejoice evermore" is the same exhortation that in our last lesson we saw the Apostle sending to the Philippians. The Christian's rejoicing is not hysterical, but founded on established principles, upon promises and comforting assurances of the divine Word which stands firm amid all the storms and trials and shocks of life.

"Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." Only somewhat advanced pupils in the School of Christ are prepared clearly to comprehend this exhortation. Having surrendered their wills and all of the interests of the present life to the Lord, exchanging earthly interests for heavenly interests, the Lord's people are less disposed than others to pray unceasingly for *earthly good things*. Having set their affections on things above, their prayers are in respect to those things,—the heavenly robe, the heavenly food, the heavenly favor. Their prayers are specially for such leadings of divine providence and such assistance of divine grace as will enable them to rejoice always in such experiences as their gracious Lord may deem best for their spiritual development. More and more they find their prayers to consist of thanksgiving for blessings already received, as well as for those yet to come, which they grasp by the hand of faith.

Their prayers are without ceasing, in that, having the condition of heart which is in fellowship with the Lord and fully devoted to the doing of his will, they not only implore his blessing at the beginning of each day, and present their thanks at the close of each day, but in all of life's affairs they seek to remember that they have consecrated their all to the Lord, and by faith look up to him in all of the affairs of life;—and in proportion to the importance of their undertakings they, by faith, realize the association of God's providence with all the interests of life and give thanks accordingly. This is the will of God concerning us;—he wills that we live in such an attitude of constant regard for his will and for his blessing;—and he wills it in respect to us because it will be the condition most favorable to our progress in the narrow way, and which will best assist us in making our calling and election sure.

Having stated succinctly the Church's proper attitude toward the Lord to be one of continued rejoicing, prayer and thanksgiving and acceptance of his divine providences,

the Apostle next briefly admonishes them respecting their attitude toward each other in the Church, in their feasting together on the Word of the Lord;—saying,

"Quench not the Spirit. "Despise not prophesyings. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. "Abstain from every form of evil."

By following these admonitions, their fellowship in the Lord would be the more profitable—they would, as a congregation of the Lord's followers, be helped onward the more toward the grand standard to which we are called. The spirit of the Lord amongst his people is compared to "a flame of sacred love" for the Lord and all connected with his cause: this flame is enkindled through the divine message in each one individually, when begotten of the holy spirit, and appertains, therefore, to the Church collectively, under the guidance of that spirit. In proportion as the church grows in knowledge and in love and in fellowship with the Lord this "flame of sacred love" will make it a light in the world,—as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid. This is a different figure from the use of fire as a symbol of destruction.

True, the flame of sacred love does not consume and destroy sin, but sympathy with sin; sin is not a part of the new creature, which opposes it and desires to have it consumed,—that the light of righteousness and truth may shine the more brightly. This "flame of sacred love" may, indeed, consume our mortal bodies, as living sacrifices in the service of the truth; but with such a consumption the new mind is fully in accord, and rejoices, realizing that it has in heaven an enduring habitation, and counting it all joy to be reckoned worthy to suffer for the Lord's cause. The more this "flame of sacred love" burns, individually and collectively in the Church, the greater will be the progress in all good things. Hence we are to be specially on guard, that our words and conduct and the general management of the interests of Zion in our midst shall permit this spirit of love to have free course in all our hearts and lives—that it be not quenched either with false doctrines or forms and ceremonies, or too rigid rules or by worldly spirit or by cares of this life or by any other thing, circumstance or condition under our control.

The Church is not to despise prophesyings: the Apostle does not mean that we are not to despise the prophecies of the holy men of old who spoke as they were moved by the holy spirit—it would be unnecessary to caution the Church on that subject. The exhortation is, not to despise prophesyings that may be done in our midst. As we have previously seen, the gift of prophecy in the sense of foretelling coming events was to some extent in the Church in the Apostle's day, as one of the gifts of the spirit, to mark out the Lord's people and to assist in establishing them at a time when the inspired messages of the Lord were unavailable. We find, however, that the Apostle frequently used this word "prophecy" in respect to *public utterance*, declamation, preaching. The early churches were accustomed to having general gatherings for their mutual assistance and upbuilding, and may have been in danger of thinking more of the gifts of miracles and tongues than of connected and logical discourse respecting the truth. The Apostle points out that without discarding the other blessings, this one should not be despised—our Lord was a preacher; the apostles were preachers, and the Lord has since raised up instructors amongst his people. Hence, such service should not be despised or ignored.

We live in a time when the very reverse of this is true; when the danger is rather that too much time and too much attention may be given to preaching, and not sufficient to the other methods of inculcating truth and encouraging the Lord's flock, "edifying and building up yourselves in the most holy faith"—when too much reliance is apt to be placed upon a leader and a connected discourse.

"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." However much they should ever come to respect prophesyings, or public preaching, the Lord's people should learn proportionately not to receive what they might hear without proper examination and criticism: they should prove all things that they hear, should exercise discrimination of mind, as to what is logically and scripturally supported, and what is mere conjecture and possibly sophistry. They should prove what they hear, with a view to holding fast everything that stands the test of the divine Word, and shows itself to be in accordance with the holy spirit; and they should as promptly and thoroughly reject whatever will not stand these tests. Alas! the Lord's people today greatly need to give attention to this exhortation; for much is being presented in the name of the Lord and as the teaching of his Word that is neither logical nor scriptural—that is supported neither by the letter nor the spirit of the Word;—much that is not good, and should be rejected. With such a discrimination prevailing amongst the Lord's consecrated ones, how much of the chaff of nominal "orthodoxy" would be rejected, and what a hungering and thirsting and searching there soon would be for the good Word of God, that would stand these tests! Let us diligently heed the Apostle's exhortation on this point.

"Abstain from every *form* of evil" (Rev. Ver.) gives the Apostle's thought. There are various evils which present themselves; some in their true hideousness, and some under a cloak of hypocrisy—some openly and boldly admitting their evil character and endeavoring to decoy the Lord's people into sin; others, garbing themselves as angels of light, would seek to mislead and to deceive. The exhortation is that everything that is evil, whether it have a good form or a bad form, is to be resisted and opposed. We may not say with some, "Let us do evil that good may follow." The Lord's people must be loyal to the *principles* of righteousness, under any and all circumstances. To do otherwise would be surely to undermine the character which they are seeking to build up.

To abstain from every *appearance* of evil is another thought—a different one from what the Apostle's words in the original would warrant; nevertheless, they represent a sound principle. We surely should abstain not only from evil things, whatever their form or garb, but we should abstain so far as possible from doing things that we know to be good, which our friends or neighbors might misunderstand and consider to be evil things. The spirit of a sound mind dictates that not only evil in its every form, but everything that has an evil appearance, even, should be avoided—that our influence for the Lord and the truth may be the greater.

In closing, the Apostle pronounces his benediction. It is an invocation—the expression of his heart's desire on their behalf—that the God of *peace* would sanctify them wholly. He thus emphasizes the fact that God is not a God of confusion, anarchy, turmoil and

disturbance, but a God of peace; and that in proportion as we are taught of him in the School of Christ we will become lovers of peace, and the peace of God will dwell in us and will abound in us more and more, and cause us to be not unfruitful in regard to holy character, and will make us advocates and promoters of peace in our words and deeds. As it is written, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Peace in the heart, manifesting itself in the look and word and conduct, is, as the Apostle intimates, an evidence of whole or complete setting apart, and that God's spirit has come into such a sanctified heart and is filling it with his peace, the peace of God which passeth all understanding.

"And may your spirit, soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (R.V.) The Apostle could mean this only in respect to the Church, as a whole, and not concerning the individual members; because he surely did not expect the Christians at Thessalonica without exception to live until the presence of the Lord, even as he did not himself expect to live until that time, and so declared. (2 Tim. 4:7, 8; 2 Pet. 1:12-15.) The Apostle is not, therefore, to be understood as speaking of the spirit and soul and body of each individual Christian at Thessalonica, but respecting the spirit of the Church, the soul of the Church, and the body of the Church. In other words, his desire was that the Church at Thessalonica might continue to the full end of the Gospel age as a noble and faithful congregation of the Lord's body, full of his spirit and courageous in his work. As a matter of fact, we know that the Apostle's good wishes, or prayer did not come true; for this congregation, like the others he planted, died out: not heeding with sufficient care his injunctions and exhortations, not proving all things, not holding fast the good, not abstaining from evil, not being sanctified wholly, the spirit of the Lord in their midst was quenched, and as a congregation it died, or ceased to be—the light having blessed and confirmed some, passed on to other quarters, seeking those "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

"Faithful is he that called you, who will also do it." The fact that the Thessalonica Church has not been kept in accordance with the Apostle's prayer, is not to be charged to unfaithfulness on God's part, but to neglect and unfaithfulness on the part of those whom the Apostle addressed, or their successors in that congregation. So it is with every one of us who has been called of the Lord. It is for us to hear and to heed the Lord's message through his servants, if we would make our calling and our election sure. If not disposed to hear his message in the way he has sent it, the fault lies at our own door. Faithful is he who called us, who would rejoice to do for us abundantly better things than we could ask or think, if we accept his provisions in faith and follow the directions of his Word.

"Brethren, pray for us." There was nothing of the pope or lord about the Apostle—no feeling of such a superiority to the others of the Lord's flock that he could pray for them to their advantage, but needed not their prayers. Similar is the spirit of all who are in the proper relationship with the Lord—a spirit of humility and appreciation of all the household of faith, and of their petitions at the throne of grace—a realization that the humblest of the Lord's people has access to the throne of heavenly grace, and may there obtain mercy and find strength to help in every time of need.

"Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss." This was the ancient style of greeting, corresponding to our present style of saluting with the hand or with the hat or by shaking hands. The custom of men kissing each other is still followed in eastern countries. The Apostle's thought is that there should be thorough cordiality amongst all who claim membership in the body of Christ, and that this fellowship should be manifested by the accustomed form of greeting,—whatever reasonable form that might be. Possibly he meant—"I greet," etc., implying that he would love to be with them and greet them personally, and now did so by letter.

Before invoking the Lord's blessing upon the Church, the Apostle charged most strongly that this epistle should not be considered as a private message or letter to those in whose care it was sent, but that it should be considered as his address to the entire company of the Lord's faithful, and should be read to them all. The Apostle seemed to fear that there might be a spirit of censorship amongst the leading brethren which might lead them to preserve his letter to themselves, and to dole it out second-hand to the Church, either as a whole or such parts of it as in their judgment would be *prudent*. Such a spirit on the part of the elders in any Church would be reprehensible. God's Word is for God's people, and whoever would hinder its flow would surely offend the Master himself. That the elders at Thessalonica were faithful is apparent from the fact that the epistle was delivered to the Church. Some today need caution along this same line: many preachers and teachers have discerned in *The Plan of the Ages* the light of the Millennial dawn, but, instead of heralding it to others, have sought to hide it from the Lord's people that they might use it as a personal illuminant to cause themselves to shine before their flocks. They consider this cunning,—"*wise and prudent*,"—forgetting that the Lord declares that he *hides* his deep things from the wise and prudent and reveals them unto babes. (Luke 10:21.) True to our Lord's words, this class rarely makes much progress;—the truth passes on and ere long they are in comparative darkness;—because they received not the truth in the love of it, but in the love of self. (2 Thess. 2:10.) Loyalty to the Lord and to his flock and to his Truth, through whatever channel it comes, demands that it shall be heralded by each of us to the extent of our ability and in its purity and as speedily as possible,—consistent with the condition and interests of those for whom the Lord intended it—his flock. Shepherds who feed themselves and not the flock are warned by the Lord of his displeasure, and could not be expected to thrive spiritually, or otherwise to enjoy the light of the Lord's face.—Ezek. 34:2, 7-10.

AUGUST 16

In every thing give thanks—1 Thes. 5:18.

Having the condition of heart which is in fellowship with the Lord and fully devoted to the doing of His will, the Lord's people not only implore His blessing at the beginning of each day, and present their thanks at the close of each day, but in all of life's affairs they seek to remember that they have consecrated their all to the Lord, and by faith look up to Him in all the affairs of life; and in proportion to the importance of their undertakings they, by faith, realize the association of God's providence with all the interests of life and give thanks accordingly. This is the will of God concerning us; He wills that we live in such an attitude of constant regard for His will and for His blessing; and He wills it in respect to us because it will be the condition most favorable to our progress in our narrow way, and which will best assist us in making our calling and election sure—Z '03, 25 (R 3135).

The noble natural man recognizes the appropriateness of gratitude for benefits; yet frequently, because of our shortsightedness in overlooking the fact that our untoward experiences, though working earthly disadvantages, are means of great spiritual blessings to us, we fail to give thanks for them. These, as well as toward experiences, should be regarded as blessings calling upon us to render thanks to the Lord. All things work together for good to them that love God. Therefore let us give thanks for all things—the hard and the easy, the joyful and the sorrowful, the toward and the untoward. All of them are love letters and tokens from our dear Father and are intended to work our truest, highest good—P '34, 110.

Parallel passages: Eph. 5:20; Col. 1:12; 2:7; 3:15-17; 4:2; Psa. 50:14, 15; 105:1, 5; 106:1; 107:1, 2, 15, 22; Joel 2:26; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1; 4:3, 4; Heb. 13:15.

Hymns: 324, 9, 19, 37, 55, 199, 219.

Poems of Dawn, 131: *Count Your Blessings*.

Tower Reading: Z '02, 12 (R 2935).

Questions: Have I been thankful in everything this week? How? Why? With what results?

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

DO not count, when day is o'er,
Daily loss from life's rich store;
But the gains, however small,
Count them daily, one and all:

Every sweet and gracious word,
Every pleasant truth you've heard;
Every tender glance and tone,

Every kindly deed you've known;

Every duty nobly done,
Every rightful victory won—
Treasure all, and count them o'er
As a miser counts his store.

But if bitter word or thought
Have a bitter harvest brought;
If some foeman hath assailed you,
Or the friend most trusted failed you;

If unkindness and untruth
Have to you brought saddest ruth,
Blot the score without delay—
Keep no record of the day.

Keep no record of the care,
Loss and cross we all must bear;
On the page of memory write
Only what is fair and bright.

Let all evil things go by;
Still, with brave endeavor, try
Simple joys to multiply.
Thus you'll learn how large a sum
Will with faithful reckoning come.

Long as after cloud and rain
Blessed sunshine comes again,
Long as after winter's gloom
Summer roses bud and bloom,

Long as we have with us here
One sad heart that we may cheer,
Long as love gilds sorrow's cross,
Life's rich gain o'errepays the loss.

R2935: DRINKING AT THE BROOK

"He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

—Psalm 110:7.

OUR TEXT refers directly to our Lord Jesus, and secondly to all the members of the church, his body, each one of whom must share his experiences—walking in his steps

and drinking of the same "brook," if they would in due time share with their Lord in his exaltation, to glory, honor, and immortality; this exaltation being represented in our text by the expression, "lift up the head." In ancient times as at present, human language was full of figures and symbols, water representing truth, and drinking of water representing appropriation of the truth, namely, wisdom (See Prov. 18:4); and lifting up the head, exaltation.—See Gen. 40:13.

Our text is given as the reason for the glorious blessings and honors predicted of the Christ and described in the preceding verses of the same psalm. Let us notice these. The first verse is directly applied to our Lord by the Apostles (Acts 2:34; Heb. 1:13; I Pet. 3:22), and our Lord applied the same to himself. (Matt. 22:44.) A figure of speech is again employed, descriptive of our Lord's relationship to the Father in Glory; he is not literally seated beside him at his right hand, but he has been honored with a superior station, a position above all others—he specially is at the right hand of divine power. Nor does his second coming hinder or change this relationship; at his second coming he will still be at his Father's right hand as he himself, declared (Matt. 26:64.) At the Father's right hand during the Millennial Age, the Father, through him, shall subdue all things to himself—put down all opposing authority and insubordination; blessing those who come into heart-harmony with his kingdom of righteousness, and destroying from the earth all who after fair knowledge of good as well as evil, choose the evil. These will be considered as followers of Satan instead of followers of God, and the second death, we are specifically told, is for the Devil and his messengers, servants.—Matt. 25:41.

The description of the Millennial Kingdom is continued by the Prophet, who declares, "Jehovah shall send the rod of thy strength out of (or through) Zion"—primarily the Church, the "Bride," the "body" of Christ; the rod or sceptre or authority shall be exercised through the Church, by the Lord Jesus the Head of the Church, under the divine commission,—"Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." This is not in any measure fulfilled yet. Jesus when in the flesh did not rule in the midst of his enemies, and the Church has not thus ruled; on the contrary, both he and his followers have been subject to the powers that be, and the violent have taken the kingdom by force and have despitefully used the Head and the body members. (Matt. 11:12.) The enemies are not yet made the footstool of the Lord, Zion has not yet been glorified, and Messiah's sceptre or authority has not yet gone forth therefrom. On the contrary we are still in "this present evil world," we still wait for the completion of the elect Church that together she may be glorified with her Lord—enter into His glory—when he, the due time having come, "shall take unto himself his great power and reign;"—then the nations will be angry, etc., (Rev. 11:18) and divine wrath will come upon them; and following that "day of wrath" shall come the promised blessing, upon all who shall demonstrate under the good opportunities of that Millennial Kingdom, that they love righteousness and hate iniquity.

This latter class—those who during the Millennial age, during that day of his presence, shall become the Lord's people (I Cor. 15:23)—are referred to by the Prophet when he says,—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The day of his *power* is not yet here, as the poet declares: "Wrong and evil triumph now." The "Prince of this world" still rules and is "god of this world" as the Apostle asserts; because our Lord has not yet

taken to himself his great *power* nor begun his reign. The people who shall be willing in the day of his power are not, therefore, the saints of this Gospel age: these latter are only the "first fruits unto God of his creatures" and are willing *before* the day of his power—willing to hear the Shepherd's voice and to follow him; willing to sacrifice all and to lay down their lives in his service, for the brethren.

Evidently, therefore, those referred to as "Thy people" who shall be willing in the day of Christ's power, the Millennial Age, are those whom our Lord represents as his "sheep," in the parable of the sheep and the goats. They are those who after the Son of Man shall be seated on the throne of his glory, and after his Church is seated with him in his throne, and after the judgment or trial day for the nations, the world, is ended,—after the knowledge of the Lord has filled the earth, after it has gradually proved the savor of life unto life, or death unto death to the world, shall be found truly "his people,"—willing, nay, glad to serve him when they know him and understand his will. As his sheep they will desire to follow in the way of righteousness, truth and holiness; as his people they will not need to be coerced further, but learning the truth in the day of his power, when the adversary is bound and when the eyes of their understandings are opened, they will be *willingly* his people. And all who shall not then become willingly his people will be esteemed his enemies, "goats," angels or messengers or servants of the adversary, and be destroyed with him in the Second Death.

"In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth." That is to say, as morning after morning comes forth fresh and vigorous as its predecessor, as the sun grows not old and feeble, so with Messiah, and so also with those accepted as the members of his body, they will have perpetually the freshness and vigor of youth,—glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature—this is part of the blessing that is promised, and which will result, our text tells us, from drinking of the brook in the way.

Having told us of the kingly power and authority of Messiah, it is appropriate that the Lord through the prophet explains to us that Messiah's priestly office is to be also of a higher type than the earthly,—that his priest and kingly offices are to be blended and united as was typified in Melchisedec, who was both king and priest. Our Lord when on earth was not of the Aaronic priesthood, nevertheless, Aaron was his type, and the sacrifices which Aaron performed were typical of the "better sacrifices" performed by the antitypical priest, in the laying down of his own life and in the consecration and sacrifice also of all those who are his during this Gospel age, who thus "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." By and by our High priest will have completed all that was illustrated in the Aaronic type, he will have finished the Day of Atonement sacrifices, and then the glory promised will follow,—instead of a suffering priesthood there will be "a royal priesthood"—a reigning priesthood.—I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:10.

Then follow assurances that this glorious priest-king will prosper, that his reign of righteousness will be successful; the assurance being that God will be at his right hand supporting him and bringing matters to a successful issue,—smiting down kings and wounding the heads over many countries, and subduing all things mightily. The great day of trouble coming is very generally referred to as "the day of Jehovah," the day of His

wrath, although it will be under the direct supervision of our Lord Jesus, for the purpose of introducing and establishing his Millennial dominion.

These, foregoing, descriptions of the greatness of Messiah and his kingdom, lead up to our text; and it, as before suggested, is given as the reason why so great blessings, honors, and dignities and authority are conferred. "He shall drink of the brook in the way; *therefore* shall he lift up the head—[be exalted.]"

LEARNING OBEDIENCE BY THE THINGS SUFFERED.

As we look into the Word for testimony upon the subject, we find that our dear Master did indeed learn certain lessons of experience; as the apostle declares, he "*learned* obedience in the things which he suffered." Not that he had ever been disobedient to the Father's will, but that his testing at the time that he came into the world to do the Father's will was of a character and of an intensity such as never before had been brought to him nor any other creature. His obedience attested his love to the Father, attested his faith in the Father's love and justice; and in all these things he fully approved himself of the Father; he overcame every trial, he drank frequently of the brook of wisdom, in connection with these lessons. Moreover, it was expedient that he, to be the great High Priest of mankind, should be touched with a feeling of their infirmities, and therefore that he should be tempted in all points like as his followers are tested—along the line of personality, of self will; along the line of worldly ambition; along the line of faith and trust; along all the lines of obedience to God's plan. He drank deeply of the cup, and rejoicingly said, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"—John 18:11.

And now we come to a point of special interest in our text; for we perceive that if it was necessary for our glorious Lord from the heavenly courts to drink of the brook of experience, and gain wisdom by the things he suffered, endured, and thereby to demonstrate his confidence in God, it is equally necessary that all the members of his body should likewise drink of the brook in the way, if they would hope to share with the Lord in the Kingdom blessings—glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature.

Our dear Master's time for drinking at the brook is past, yet the lessons and encouragements therefrom are still before us in the Scripture records. It is now our time to drink of the brook of experience,—to learn the lessons that are necessary to our preparation for the Kingdom. It is not enough that we have tasted of the brook of experience, that we have learned something of obedience, that we have endured some trials, that on some occasions we have learned obedience through the things we have suffered; we must continue drinking until we can gladly say—Father, thy will, not ours be done! If we drink not of the brook in the way we shall not share in the glory to follow.

Some of the Lord's people not discerning the matter in its true light, are disposed to pray that they may be spared from trials and temptations; whereas they ought to understand that the trials and difficulties of the consecrated are witnesses of the spirit that they are children of God, and are under his training and preparation for a glorious share

in the Kingdom, to which he has called us. Because if we are not tried we cannot be "overcomers"; if we do not suffer with him, and learn to endure hardness as good soldiers, and to esteem our trials and difficulties from the right standpoint, and to count it all joy when they come to us, knowing their object and knowing the Lord's sustaining grace and strength, we will not be "fit for the Kingdom."

Others interpret the trials of life as evidences of divine disfavor, and fail to realize that they are designed of the Lord to shape and polish our characters and thus to work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Because of their misunderstanding they are profited little by many of life's experiences through which they are called to pass—they feel the rod, but not discerning the loving purpose behind it, they fail to learn the lesson intended. Let us become more and more awake, more and more alive to the things of God,—to the facts of the case as he presents them to us in his Word—to our call to joint-heirship to the Kingdom, and incidentally to the drinking of the brook of experience and wisdom in the way that will fit and prepare us for the glories to follow.

Drinking of the brook does not, however, imply that we sorrow and are disconsolate above others; on the contrary, those who drink of the brook properly are full of joy. As the apostle declares, they are enabled in everything to give thanks unto God,—in life's difficulties, as well as in its pleasures—even as he again says, Count it all joy when ye fall into divers difficulties, knowing that under divine providence they will work out for you a greater blessing. (James 1:2.) It is the world, which must also share its part of life's difficulties, that sorrows as those who have no hope, or who have false hopes. The apostle points out side by side the world's condition and the Church's condition under the trials and difficulties of this present evil world, saying, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." Then he explains the position of God's people, begotten of his spirit, who are walking in the Lord's footsteps, and drinking of the brook in the way, saying, "We ourselves also groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of the body"—the body of Christ, the Church. This hope, which we have, gives a changed coloring and silver lining to every dark and troubled subject which comes to us in common with mankind; so that inspired by draughts from the brook we can sing in the house of our pilgrimage, even though as yet we must also groan, because we are in this imperfect tabernacle, this unsatisfactory mortal body.

We want to ask the Lord, our Master and Head, that he will bless us more and more, as with fresh zeal we shall endeavor faithfully and rejoicingly to drink of the brook of life's experiences, and gain wisdom therefrom that will fit and prepare us for his service by and by; and which will the better fit and prepare us for his service also in the present time, and enable us by his grace to show forth his praises in all the trying circumstances and vicissitudes of life so as to glorify him in our bodies and spirits which are his. Let us, as we drink of the brook, take a lesson from the little birds, which when drinking repeatedly lift the head as though giving thanks to God. Let us continually give thanks to our Lord for every taste of life's experience, for every lesson, for every trial—appropriating them all to our spiritual development. The time for lifting up our heads in glory is nearing, too, and already the Master directs that seeing (with the eye of faith) the evidences of their

approach, we may lift up our heads and rejoice, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh.—Luke 21:28.

AUGUST 17

Quench not the Spirit—1 Thes. 5:19.

The Spirit of the Lord among His people is compared to "a flame of sacred love" for the Lord and all connected with His cause; this flame is enkindled through the Divine message in each one individually, when receiving the holy Spirit, and pertains to the Church collectively, under the guidance of that Spirit. In proportion as the Church grows in knowledge and in love and in fellowship with the Lord this "flame of sacred love" will make it a light in the world, a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid—Z '03, 25 (R 3135).

From this verse it is apparent that the Spirit is not Jehovah; for if it were, such an exhortation would be both unnecessary and absurd. How foolish and unnecessary to exhort us not to annihilate the Almighty and Self-existent One! Understanding the Spirit as the Lord's disposition in us, the exhortation is both wise and necessary. Just as a candle light can be extinguished, so can the Spirit, a holy light, be quenched by sin, error, selfishness or worldliness gaining dominance over us. The Spirit once quenched, unlike the candle, which may be relighted, cannot be rekindled. Therefore let us give all diligence not to quench this priceless light, else we will remain in perpetual darkness; and how great would that darkness be!—P '33, 111.

Parallel passages: Rom. 8:1-16; 1 Cor. 2:10-16; Isa. 11:2, 3; John 7:39; 1:12, 13; Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 1:17, 18; 1 John 4:1, 6; 2 Tim. 1:7; Eph. 4:30; Isa. 7:13; 63:10.

Hymns: 90, 267, 95, 125, 196, 1, 249.

Poems of Dawn, 89: *Filled With Christ's Fulness*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 343 (R 5129).

Questions: Have I this week increased or quenched the Spirit? How? What helped or hindered therein?

FILLED WITH CHRIST'S FULNESS

JESUS, my Lord, Thou art my life,
My rest in labor, strength in strife;
Thy love begets my love of Thee;
Thy fullness that which filleth me.

Long, long I struggled ere I knew
My struggling vain, my life untrue.
I sought by efforts of mine own
What is the gift of Christ alone.

I prayed, and wrestled in my prayer,
I wrought, but self was ever there;

Joy never came, nor rest, nor peace,
Nor faith, nor hope, nor love's increase.

Mine effort vain, my weakness learned,
Weary, from self to Christ I turned,
Content to let His fulness be
An unbought fulness unto me.

Life's heavenly secret was revealed—
In Christ all riches are concealed.
We try and fail; we ask, He gives,
And in His rest our spirit lives.

O peaceful rest! O Life Divine!
Mine efforts cannot make Thee mine.
I yield my sinful heart to Thee,
And in Thy love Thou fillest me.

R5129: "QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT"

—I Thess. 5:19.—

IN THE SCRIPTURES light is used as a symbol of the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is symbolized, not only by the oil with which the priests were anointed and which represented the indwelling power of the Spirit, but also by the light of the golden candlestick which stood in the Holy. After we had been favored with the knowledge of the Truth and had consecrated ourselves, the Lord accepted our consecration and gave us the Holy Spirit, which became the illuminating power of our hearts. All down the Gospel Age the Church has been the light of the world. This our Lord intimated would be true when He said to His disciples on one occasion, "Ye are the light of the world."—Matt. 5:14.

As there are various ways by which a light may be extinguished, so there are different means by which this light of the Holy Spirit may be quenched in us. A light will go out if the supply of oil or gas which feeds it be cut off, or if the oxygen of the air be shut off from it, whether because the supply is exhausted or because something is placed over the light to extinguish it. So it is with us. The light of the Spirit may be permitted to die out for want of replenishing, or it may be quenched by contact with some outside force.

In order to have the Holy Spirit in large measure, we must keep near to the Lord; for if we get away from Him, the light will go out. If we neglect the privilege of prayer or of study of the Scriptures or of fellowship with the Lord through failure to think of Him, the illumination of the Spirit will grow dim. On the other hand, it will become brighter in proportion to our realization of our own imperfections and to the degree of our consecration to the Lord. This we manifest by the zeal with which we study His will as

expressed in His Word, and with which we practice that will in the affairs of life. These are the means by which we may supply the oil to keep our light burning brightly. But while we are endeavoring to do this, we must see to it that we do not come into contact with anything which will tend to extinguish the flame of sacred love in our hearts.

The world, the flesh and the Devil are all in opposition to the light of the Holy Spirit. To whatever extent they are brought into contact with the light, to that extent they smother it. If the spirit of worldliness come into our hearts, it will extinguish the light of the Holy Spirit. If the spirit of selfishness or of thoughtlessness enter our hearts, it will cause the light to grow dim and finally to die out. Weariness in well-doing will produce the same result. If we indulge in pleasures of the flesh, these will tend to quench the Spirit. *Sinful pleasures* should, of course, be shunned by *everybody*. But there are pleasures which are *not sinful* and which are proper enough for the natural man. Yet to whatever extent the consecrated indulge in these and thus gratify the longings of the *flesh*, proportionately the *new nature* will suffer.

Christian fellowship is thought to be one of the very best aids to maintaining the light of the Spirit. Yet even in this there is a danger-line which is not always recognized and which, if crossed, will produce the opposite effect. A visit to the seashore and a bath in the ocean may in some cases be very profitable; but in others it may be carried to such an extent that it becomes dangerous to the new nature. Those who become weary in well-doing are usually those who have found something attractive in another direction to take their attention away from the things of the Spirit.

ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLAN MOST ESSENTIAL

Amongst the various arrangements which God has made for the New Creatures in Christ is the assembling of themselves together in order to *maintain* their light and to *let it shine*. The Apostle Paul exhorts the Church not to forget the assembling together wherever it is possible to do so. (Heb. 10:25.) Where the assembling *is not possible*, the Lord makes up for the lack in some other way; and so we sometimes find a dear brother or sister who has not had the opportunity to meet with others in the Truth, but who seems to be very clear and to have a deep appreciation of the Lord's Plan. Not having the privilege of fellowship with others, such a one has done so much the more reading and studying.

Those who have this opportunity for fellowship and who do not appreciate it, seem to be in a very unsatisfactory condition. In such cases, the oil is not burning brightly, else that one would delight to be with fellow-pilgrims in the same way, marching toward the same goal. We should be as careful of our spiritual condition as of our physical. If we have a bad taste in our mouth and no appetite, we conclude that we are not well; and if we do not care to go to meetings, we may know that we are not in good spiritual health. When we find that we have not the desire to meet with others of "like precious faith," it is an indication that we should go to the Great Physician, that He may help us.

In some cases, however, the individual would do better not to go to meeting at first, but to read and study for awhile. Many have been hindered in their spiritual growth by getting a smattering of the Truth and then attending meetings. Such become stumbling-stones to themselves and to others. If they have not the time to read as well as to attend meetings, it would be better to read until they have become established, and then to assemble with others of like precious faith.

Many, even of those who are leading classes, are not so clear in the Truth as would be desirable. Some of these seem not to know what they are talking about, although they think that they do. There are various means by which one may redeem the time for study. One may take a book with him and read while on the car, going to and from his daily task. We know a dear brother who read the entire six volumes in this way.

The right course is to exercise the spirit of a sound mind on this subject, as well as on others. Our first thought should be for the glory of God; our second, for our own profit; our third, for the benefit of others. In this matter we owe it to ourselves to put ourselves first; for if we fit ourselves for service, we then have larger opportunity for helping others. Here *self* comes first, by *Divine command*—"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"; "This is the will of God [concerning you], even *your* sanctification."—Matt. 6:33; I Thess. 4:3.

As each one comes to know for himself after receiving the Holy Spirit, He is authorized to teach what he has learned for himself. So we may all be taught of God and be used in teaching others, in proportion as we learn the lessons and apply them to our own hearts. Each one's conscience should decide for him what is to the glory of God in respect to attending meetings.

A flame might be revived, even after having been wholly extinguished. Many of us have seen a candle extinguished, and yet there was a bright, warm core which a quick breath of air might rekindle. So with us. There might be something in our lives to extinguish the flame, but the light would not go entirely out; the breath of the Lord might rekindle it. We have seen people who apparently had been zealous for the Lord, but who seemed to lose their love and zeal; but later it has been rekindled. In other cases, the light has seemed to die out altogether. We should ever be on guard lest we allow anything to dim or to extinguish our love for the Lord, for the Truth or for holiness and Christ-likeness.

AUGUST 18

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good—1 Thes. 5:21.

However much they should ever come to respect prophesyings, or public speaking, the Lord's people should learn proportionately not to receive what they might hear without proper examination and criticism. They should prove all things that they hear, should exercise discrimination of mind, as to what is logically and Scripturally supported, and what is mere conjecture and possibly sophistry. They should prove what they hear with a view to holding fast everything that stands the test of the Divine Word and shows itself to be in accordance with the holy Spirit; and they should as promptly reject whatever will not stand these tests—Z '03, 26 (R 3135).

Satan has caused the doctrine of the Divine right of the clergy to prevail, claiming for them that they are the Divinely authorized mouthpieces, to whom the people are to render blank and unquestioning credence and obedience. Through this doctrine he has succeeded in deceiving almost the whole world. God does not desire His sons to be under the influence of a doctrine capable of such results. Therefore He bids them carefully to examine all things presented to them for acceptance, and to require that they be harmonious with themselves, Scriptural passages and doctrines, God's character, the Ransom, facts and God's purposes, and to adhere to things only which stand such thorough and reasonable tests—P '32, 112.

Parallel passages: Ex. 23:7; Prov. 28:5; Jer. 29:8; Matt. 24:4; John 5:39; 1 Cor. 2:15; 14:29; Phil. 4:8; Heb. 10:23, 24; 2 Pet. 1:15-21; 1 John 4:1-3; Rev. 2:2.

Hymns: 79, 22, 49, 296, 306, 311, 332.

Poems of Dawn, 5: *Great Truths*.

Tower Reading: Z '10, 297 (R 4684).

Questions: Have I this week examined what was presented for my belief? How? Why? With what results?

GREAT TRUTHS

GREAT truths are dearly bought. The common truth,
Such as men give and take from day to day,
Comes in the common walk of easy life,
Blown by the careless wind across our way.

Great truths are dearly won; not found by chance,
Nor wafted on the breath of summer dream;
But grasped in the great struggle of the soul,
Hard buffeting with adverse wind and stream.

Sometimes, 'mid conflict, turmoil, fear and grief,
When the strong hand of God, put forth in might,
Ploughs up the subsoil of the stagnant heart,
It brings some buried truth-seeds to the light.

Not in the general mart, 'mid corn and wine;
Not in the merchandise of gold and gems;
Not in the world's gay hall of midnight mirth,
Nor 'mid the blaze of regal diadems;

Not in the general clash of human creeds,
Nor in the merchandise 'twixt church and world,
Is truth's fair treasure found, 'mongst tares and weeds;
Nor her fair banner in their midst unfurled.

Truth springs like harvest from the well-ploughed
fields,
Rewarding patient toil, and faith, and zeal.
To those thus seeking her, she ever yields
Her richest treasures for their lasting weal.

R4684: IS THE READING OF "SCRIPTURE STUDIES" BIBLE STUDY?

THE plan of reading twelve pages of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES each day, tried by so many, results in more Bible study than any other way that we know of. We believe that it is not so much the *time* that is given to Bible study, but the *amount* of study done and the amount of information gained, that counts. We all know people who have spent days and weeks and years in the study of the Bible and have learned little or nothing. We think the idea that Bible study is merely the time spent in handling a Bible and reading over some verses is a mistaken idea.

It is a great deal like hunting or fishing. Some people go hunting every year, and though they do a lot of hunting, it is no sure indication of how much they get. Some do a lot of fishing, but do not get many fish. Bible study is very much the same. It is not the amount of time we spend in poring over a passage, but the amount of information we secure from the Bible.

The six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES are not intended to supplant the Bible. There are various methods to be pursued in the study of the Bible and these aids to Bible study are in such form that they, of themselves, contain the important elements of the Bible as well as the comments or elucidations of those Bible statements, on exactly the same principle that our Lord and the Apostles quoted from the Old Testament, and then gave elucidations of those Old Testament passages. Many of the elucidations were such that if we had not had them, had not had specific interpretations, we might never have been able to discern the proper application of them.

THE HARVEST THE DUE TIME FOR A CLEAR UNFOLDING OF THE TRUTH

The applications of the SCRIPTURE STUDIES are, of course, based upon those of the Lord and the Apostles. We do not feel that it would be in our province to give any interpretation except that which would be either already given by our Lord and the Apostles or such as would so fit and dovetail with their interpretations as to leave, in our judgment, no doubt as to the proper application of the Scriptures referred to and explained.

Those parts of the Bible which once we thought we understood well, we find that we did not understand at all. Some of the very things relative to the Ransom, relative to Salvation, we did not understand. Looking back over *our* experiences, we fully believed that there was a God and that he would reward those who diligently sought him, and that he had sent Jesus his Son, but *how* and *why*, we did not comprehend. We had wrong ideas as to what was the penalty for sin; wrong ideas as to why a Savior should come; entirely wrong ideas as to what the Savior did; wrong ideas as to what he was to do in the future, and as to what would be our relationship to the Father and the Savior. We knew, in some sense of the word, that we were called to be a son, but how to become a son and what was meant by the begetting of the holy Spirit, and kindred terms, we did not comprehend; and in our experience we have found none who ever did comprehend these things.

So we believe that the thought for us to take in this connection is that it is because we are living in this particular time, in the ending of this Age, that we are favored with such a clear unfolding of spiritual things. It is also our thought that present blessings of a temporal kind, such as the electric light, are due for similar reasons. We believe that any other explanation would confer too great honor upon the individual connected with the production. The very ablest minds in the world have examined these subjects, but now, by God's grace, we have come to the place where the veil is taken away and where we can see the real meaning of God's Word—not merely one person can see it, but hundreds, thousands, see it.

We think that we get the right conception to thus view it rather than to think that we had some great power which enabled us to put together a great system of theology, more wonderful than all other systems of theology put together—a thousand times more wonderful. Therefore, the simplest way to explain the matter is to acknowledge that the Lord's due time has come and that he has guided to the right understanding.

If, then, the Lord has provided us with something in our day that other days than those of the Apostles knew nothing about, no matter how good nor how wise they were—for us to ignore the line of teaching which has been thus developed would be, in our judgment, to ignore the Lord's providences. It is for each one to think for himself, however, and to guide his conduct in every way accordingly.

If the six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES are practically the Bible topically arranged, with Bible proof-texts given, we might not improperly name the volumes—the Bible in an arranged form. That is to say, they are not merely *comments* on the Bible, but they are practically the Bible itself, since there is no desire to build any doctrine or thought on any individual preference or on any individual wisdom, but to present the entire matter on the lines of the Word of God. We therefore think it safe to follow this kind of reading, this kind of instruction, this kind of Bible study.

Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the Divine Plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the SCRIPTURE STUDIES aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them for ten years—if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES with their references, and had not read a page of the Bible, as such, he would be in the light at the end of the two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures.

Our thought, therefore, is that these SCRIPTURE STUDIES are a great assistance, a very valuable help, in the understanding of God's Word. If these books are to be of any value to us it must be because we see in them *loyalty to the Word of God*, and as far as our judgment goes, see them to be in full harmony with the Word and not antagonistic to it. Therefore, in reading them the first time, and perhaps the second time, and before we would accept anything as being our own personal faith and conviction, we should say, "I will not take it because these studies say so; I wish to see what the Bible says." And so we would study the Scriptures in the light of these SCRIPTURE STUDIES; we would prove every point, or disprove it, as the case might be. We would be satisfied with nothing less than a thorough investigation of the Bible from this standpoint.

If, after doing that, we should find the books to be in accord with the Bible, then we would think we were logical in saying, "I will not need to go through that process now every time that I read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES, for I have looked up those texts of Scripture and know certainly that the New Testament proves all those points." If, at the same time, in any future reading, we should come to a place where something did not seem clear to us and we thought of some Scripture which seemed not as harmonious with it as we had previously thought, we would think it our duty to refer at once to the Scriptures, because the Scriptures are the *standard*, and in that reference to the Scripture it would be with a view to discerning whether or not we had been mistaken in our previous examinations.

"THEY SHALL BE ALL TAUGHT OF GOD"

We would conclude, practically, that we could not understand anything about the Bible except as it was revealed. We would, therefore, not waste a great deal of time doing what we know some people do, reading chapter after chapter, to no profit. We would not think of doing it. We would not think we were studying the Scriptures at all. We would

think we were following the course that had been anything but profitable to ourselves and many others in the past—merely reading over the Scriptures. We would say that the same Heavenly Father who had guided us to this Truth, to this understanding of the Scriptures as his children, if he had some further information for us he would bring it to our attention in some manner; and therefore we would not see the necessity of reading the New Testament every day or every year; we would not consider that necessary. We would consider that the Scripture which says, "They shall be all taught of God," would imply that in his own appointed way God would bring to our attention whatever feature of Divine truth would be "meat in due season for the household of faith."

Further, we would say that now, having satisfied ourselves respecting what the Divine Plan is, we would understand that we had reached the place that the Apostle speaks of as being a qualified ambassador of God, a qualified minister of the New Covenant, and that, as a servant or minister of the New Covenant, we now had a responsibility in making known these things that we had learned; that we were not put here primarily to read the Bible, but primarily to serve the Lord and his Truth. It was quite proper, however, that before we came to a knowledge of the Truth, and when we were in measurable discontent of mind as to what was the Truth, that we should refrain from telling anybody else.

We remember very well in our own personal experience that after we had tried some street preaching, etc., we came to the conclusion that there was something wrong; that we did not understand what we were trying to tell to others; that we did not understand with sufficient clearness to properly present it and make sure that we were representing the Lord and his message aright, and we said to ourself, "I will stop any endeavor to teach others until I know what I believe."

We think that should be the attitude of every one of us. Why should we attempt to preach or teach anything that we do not understand? So, after God favors us in this time with an understanding of Present Truth, he has given us a knowledge of more truth than we could have gained in a thousand years if we had read and studied unaided; and now we can attempt to present it to others. Why has he given us a knowledge of this Truth? He wishes us to be "thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work." Therefore, we should study that we may be able to speak the word of the Lord freely and know that we are not misrepresenting the Divine purpose and plan and character; and we ought therefore to give the more earnest heed to the opportunities for service and consider that the information which has been given us has been given for the very purpose that we may impart it to others—to those brethren and sisters of the Lord's family, some of whom are in Babylon yet, honest at heart, perhaps, and very desirous of knowing the truth, though perhaps very much blinded as we once were.

"SCRIPTURE STUDIES" NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE BIBLE

This is not, therefore, putting the SCRIPTURE STUDIES as a substitute for the Bible, because so far as substituting for the Bible, the STUDIES, on the contrary, continually refer to the Bible; and if one has any doubt as to a reference or if one's recollection

should lapse in any degree, one should refresh his memory, and, in fact, should see that his every thought is in harmony with the Bible—not merely in accord with the SCRIPTURE STUDIES, but in accord with the Bible.

We might remark that quite a number of the friends in the Truth are making it a rule to read twelve pages of the SCRIPTURE STUDIES a day, and that we do not know one who has been following this course and making use of the various means of grace the Lord has provided (Dawn and testimony meetings and Sunday meetings and Pilgrim meetings and the Berean lessons, Manna text, etc.), who has gone out of the Truth. We know a great many who, on the contrary, have been of the opinion that they knew these things long ago, while in fact they do not know half of what they *did* know—they have forgotten more than half of what they read and they are those who are now stumbling—going into outer darkness.

We are not wishing in this to say anything against one's poring over chapters that he does not understand and others do not understand, hoping that he might light on some truth. We have no objection to this. He has a perfect right to do so if he wishes. He has a right to spend weeks and years in this way if he chooses, but the chances even then are that when he does light on something he will have it all wrong.

Furthermore, we would suggest that merely *reading* twelve pages of the SCRIPTURE STUDIES would not be *studying* in the proper sense of the word—neither studying the Bible nor studying the SCRIPTURE STUDIES. A proper study would be to think of the meaning of every word and every sentence. The thought is, it is not to see *how much* one can read, but to make sure that one goes no further than he comprehends or understands, whether that means one page or twenty pages. We should not consider it a Scripture study in any sense of the word unless our thought has grasped the matter from the standpoint of seeking to know what the Scriptures teach and seeking to call to mind these Scriptures that are being explained and to call to mind other texts, perhaps, that are not cited, or of which only a small portion is cited.

If one will do all this it will not be merely a reading but a *study*; and from this standpoint, whoever reads two pages of SCRIPTURE STUDIES each day with the suggested passages connected with those two pages, would do more Scripture studying in that time than he could do by any other method. Whenever he reads these pages and calls the corresponding or connecting Scriptures to mind he is drawing from the whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, with practically every page he reads. Now is it possible to find any other Bible study that would accomplish as much for us in the same time as this would do? If there is we ought to take it. If there is not, then we have our option.

AUGUST 19

Abstain from every form of evil (ASV)—1 Thes. 5:22.

The exhortation is that everything that is evil, whether it have a good form or a bad form, is to be resisted and opposed. ... To abstain from every *appearance* of evil is another thought—a different one from what the Apostle's words in the original would warrant; nevertheless, they represent a sound principle. We surely should abstain not only from evil things, whatever their form or garb, but also we should abstain so far as possible from doing things that we know to be good, which our friends or neighbors might misunderstand and consider to be evil things. The spirit of a sound mind dictates that not only evil in its every form but also everything that has an evil appearance, even, should be avoided, that our influence for the Lord and the Truth may be the greater—Z '03, 26 (R 3135).

Whether we accept the KJV or the ASV translation of this text, it makes but little difference, since both give a thought worthy of our acceptance and practice. Surely as lovers of righteousness and haters of wickedness, we will abstain from every form of wickedness, be it ever so small. So, too, will we abstain from every appearance of evil, be it ever so innocent. We will avoid both the former, because wrong, and the latter, because wrong may result from it to us and to others, if it is not avoided. The latter has been the cause of undermining the influence of some of God's children for good, as well as causing the weak and erring to stumble. Blessed are we, if we practice both precepts!—P '26, 109.

Parallel passages: Ex. 23:7; 1 Cor. 6:18; 8:1-13; Eph. 4:25-32; 2 Cor. 8:20, 21; 1 Thes. 4:3, 12; Phil. 4:9; Rom. 14:1-23; 2 Tim. 2:21-23.

Hymns: 266, 44, 20, 78, 125, 183, 145.

Poems of Dawn, 136: *What Would Jesus Do?*

Tower Reading: Z '10, 392 (R 4728).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences along the lines of the text? How were they met? What were their results?

WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

WHEN the morning paints the skies,
And the birds their songs renew,
Let me from my slumbers rise,
Saying, "What would Jesus do?"

When I ply my daily task,
And the round of toil pursue,
Let me every moment ask,
"What would Jesus do?"

Would the foe my heart beguile,
Whispering thoughts and words untrue?
Let me to his subtlest wile
Answer, "What would Jesus do?"

Countless mercies from above
Day by day my pathway strew,
Father, I would prove my love,
Asking, "What would Jesus do?"

Ever let Thy love, O God,
Fill my spirit through and through,
While I tread where He hath trod,
Whispering, "What would Jesus do?"

R4728: THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF EVILS

"Abstain from every form of evil."—I Thess. 5:22.

IN the Revised Version the word *appearance* is rendered *form*—"abstain from every *form* of evil." Evils have different forms. Sometimes they are crude and repulsive forms; sometimes they are attractive forms. No matter what the form, if we know the thing to be evil, sinful, injurious, either to ourselves or to others, we are to abstain from it. The Apostle has enumerated some of these forms of evil, namely, "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like, of the which I have told you before, that they that do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:19-21.) He says that these are the works of the flesh and that they are *manifest*.

To Christians these forms of evil must be very repulsive, because to be a Christian at all, one must have the New Mind. And the New Mind, in proportion as it is developed, will cleave to that which is good. We are to remember, however, the Scriptural admonition that all of these grosser evils have, for the Christian, a more refined form, as, for instance, when our Lord declared that "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." This is quite a fine line of distinction that applies to the Christian. We can see that that spirit in a Christian which would content itself with hating, instead of killing, a brother would be a very evil condition for the heart and would mean death to the New Creature.

Our Lord defines adultery as not merely the outward act, but also the having of an adulterous feeling in the *heart*—the having of a purpose or willingness in the heart. Hence the New Creature, taking this standpoint, should be earnest and zealous to guard his heart. And so with Covetousness. It is covetous to be discontented with what we have and desirous of obtaining what others have. This is one form of *selfishness*, and the spirit

of selfish desires is evil. In fact, we might say that every form of evil, so far as we can discern, is a form of selfishness. No evil thing that we can think of in humanity would be apart from selfishness—the desire to have something, to be something. These things, leading on to their culmination, would mean a desire to be a usurper of power—to grasp things that are not our own—an improper condition of lust for power, lust for wealth, etc.

ACTIONS, WORDS AND THOUGHTS

Evils may be summed up into three forms—actions, words and thoughts. Evil actions are those which would be easily discerned by others. Evil words might not be quite so manifest. Evil thoughts, along any of the lines referred to by the Apostle, or along any other lines, are injurious, sinful, and should be abstained from. If, by reason of the weaknesses we have inherited and which belong to our mortal body, we be not fully able to master these evil propensities, we must show God that we are striving against them to the best of our ability. And as to what is the ability of each, is for himself and God to determine.

We should abstain not only from the evil things, but we should also seek to abstain from every *appearance* of evil. We should abstain, so far as possible, from doing things that we know to be good, if our friends or neighbors might misunderstand and consider these things to be evil. In order that our influence for the Truth may be the greater, we should avoid, not only evil in its every form, but everything that has an evil appearance.

To our mind, *evil thinking* is one of the greatest evils with which God's people have to contend. They can restrain actions and words to a considerable extent and they are, as the Apostle says, to seek to bring also every *thought* into obedience to the will of Christ. This does not mean that an evil thought would not cross the pathway of the mind. But the character of the thought should be discerned, whether it is mean or hurtful, and if so, it should be considered as a deadly foe and immediately a warfare should be waged against it, lest it fasten itself in some degree.

Has the Apostle suggested an impossibility when he says, "Abstain from every form of evil"? It is possible for us to abstain as New Creatures, to be out of sympathy with all forms of evil—to be antagonistic thereto. But on account of the imperfections of the flesh, one may not always be able to do this actually. The flesh is merely *reckoned* dead. It is the duty of the New Creature to see that the evil thought is battled against, if, indeed, it should ever attain full development. It is to wage this warfare against sin that we have enlisted with the great Captain of our salvation. He showed his own fidelity to righteousness and is the Father's Agent for abolishing sin.

And it is for those who would walk in the Master's footsteps to join in this crusade against sin. The first place to begin the crusade is in our own minds, in our own dealings. The Scriptures tell us to fight a good fight in our own flesh—not against sin in someone else. And to this our Lord refers when he warns us to overcome in ourselves ambition, pride, lasciviousness, etc.—not to let them conquer us as New Creatures. We are to conquer these things in the fallen flesh, in which we all share—some more and some less.

According to our zeal we will have the Lord's approval. And according to unfaithfulness in this matter, we shall lack that approval.

All who serve the Lord's cause in any capacity—as Pilgrims, Colporteurs, etc.—should seek to keep their *bodies under* and live after the manner of the teachings of the Scriptures—and they will be blessed proportionately as they do this. And in proportion as they are less careful, they will be less blessed—less skilful in the preaching of the Word and in the service of the truth.

GOD'S DEALINGS UNDER THE DIFFERENT COVENANTS

The Decalogue of the Law Covenant was composed of prohibitions—"Thou shalt not." God's dealings with those who will become members of the "House of Sons" seem to be different from this. Instead of telling us what we shall *not* do, he tells us what we *shall* do.

How will it be with those with whom God will deal during the existence of the Messianic Kingdom, under the New Covenant arrangement? We answer that during the reign of Christ they will be under a very similar arrangement to that of the Jews under Moses. Thou shalt, and Thou shalt not, will be enforced by the great Mediator. And the enforcing will be necessary, because of the sins and imperfections and degradation in which the people will be. In harmony with this we read that "Whosoever will not obey that Prophet will be destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:23.) The word *obey* implies a command and that the command is backed up by the authority to enforce.

The fact is that there will be a reign of Law in Messiah's Kingdom. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isa. 2:3.) And those who will not fall into line with this law will have tribulation that they may learn righteousness. "The judgments of the Lord will be abroad in the earth" (Isa. 26:9) and the people will take notice of these. They will not be dealt with as under the Covenant of Grace. The *will* will not be taken as instead of the *deed*. And they will not have the Advocate.

On the contrary, the great Mediator will, during the thousand years of the Mediatorial Kingdom, instruct and reward and bless and uplift all the willing and obedient, to the intent that all those during that reign who desire to be helped will be helped and will be ready to be turned over to the Almighty at the close of the Age. "And when all things shall be subdued under him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (I Cor. 15:28.) Not, therefore, until the end of that Age will any of the World, under the New Covenant arrangement, reach sonship. But if, by that time, they have been perfected as sons, and will endure the tests then given, the Father will accept them and give them the blessings of eternal life, etc., as sons.

A certain Scripture gives us intimation of how this will proceed. This Scripture shows us the injunctions and precepts God will put upon the world. "And this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jer. 31:33.) He also says, "And I will give them one heart; and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." (Ezek. 11:19.) This brief statement implies a full restitution to all that was lost in Adam.

Adam was created perfect, but the depravity of mankind and the intensification of this in many cases have brought the world today to a condition of stoniness of heart, until the inhumanity of man toward man is appalling. The precepts of God will be gradually brought before the human mind and engraved and interwoven in the whole fibre of his being, so that man at the end of the Millennial Age will be as Adam was in the beginning—fully in accord with every principle of righteousness and sympathetic with everything that is good and unsympathetic with everything that is evil. This condition will come to be the very fibre of human nature again and only to such as will attain this will come the blessing of eternal life.

We read that God will test all whom he will receive. We read of how Satan, at the close of the Mediatorial reign, will be loosed to test all whom God will have lifted up out of human imperfection. This will not be done to see whether or not they are perfect, because *they will be perfect*, but it will be to see whether or not, in their perfection, they will be loyal to God. All such as will not stand this test will be destroyed as not worthy of having the great blessings of eternal life and Divine favor!

AUGUST 20

Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you—Acts 17:23.

The Apostle's *method* is worthy of imitation. All wise people distrust novelty, and incline to say that whatever is valuable has long been. We, like the Apostle, should endeavor to show that the true Gospel is not a new theology, but the old theology; not a new gospel, but the old Gospel; the one foretold to Abraham; the one declared by the Lord Jesus Himself and by all His Apostles. In proportion as we would show that errors prevail today, which had their origin in the "dark ages," we must show that we are not forging a new theory equally erroneous, but that we have discarded the errors of the Dark Ages, and have gone back to the first principles and precepts and instructions of the Gospel, as announced by the Lord and His authorized representatives, the Apostles—Z '03, 29 (R 3138).

Few things effect larger results for God's servants than tact. One may be ever so talented, but, if tactless, he sways but little influence for good; while tactful persons with small talents generally effect greater results than tactless men of large talents. Paul affords us an example of the blending of large tact and great talent; therefore he accomplished the greatest results. Tactfully and talentedly he dealt with the Athenians. Had he been tactless though talented, he would have effected nothing with them except to prompt them to put him to death, thereby enforcing their law that required his death under the existing circumstances. Like him, we do well to use our talents, better to use our tact, but best of all to use a combination of both, thereby gaining best results—P '36, 95.

Parallel passages: Prov. 15:1; 25:15; 1 Cor. 9:19-22; 2 Cor. 12:6; Judges 8:1-3; 1 Sam. 10:27; 11:7, 12-15; 25:18-37; 2 Sam. 3:28-37; 20:16-22; 1 Kings 3:24-28; Acts 16:3; Phil. 1:10-22; Acts 23:6-10; 21:20-25.

Hymns: 280, 136, 95, 198, 315, 145, 44.

Poems of Dawn, 147: *Only*.

Tower Reading: Z '03, 27 (R 3138).

Questions: Have I been tactful in presenting the Truth this week? Why? What were the circumstances? What helped or hindered? What were the results?

ONLY

ONLY a word for the Master,
Lovingly, quietly said,
Only a word!
Yet the Master heard,
And some fainting hearts were fed.

Only a look of remonstrance,
Sorrowful, gentle and deep,

Only a look!
Yet the strong man shook,
And he went alone to weep.

Only some act of devotion,
Willingly, joyfully done,
"Surely 'twas nought!"
(So the proud world thought),
But yet souls for Christ were won.

"Only"—but Jesus is looking
Constantly, tenderly down
To earth, and sees
Those who strive to please,
And their love He loves to crown.

R3138: "THIS IGNORANCE GOD WINKED AT."

—Acts 17:22-34—

Golden Text—"He preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection."

PERSECUTION followed the Apostle to Berea, where we, in a previous lesson, left him teaching a very noble class of inquiring and searching minds. His enemies in Thessalonica discovered his whereabouts, and at once began to create a disturbance—no doubt believing that thus they were doing God service. The Apostle's own experience as a persecutor of the body of Christ must have helped him to very charitable views of those who so viciously pursued him. The evidences of coming trouble were so strong that the Berean friends feared to have him embark at a regular port, at which he might have been recognized, and the direction of his journey anticipated, and thus prejudices might have gone with him or before him into new fields; they, therefore, secretly hastened him to the near seashore where he obtained coastwise shipping for Athens. The Apostle, as the chief spokesman, "drew the fire" of his enemies to such an extent that their hatred seems to have been confined to him alone—not affecting Silas, his companion, nor Timothy, at this time his assistant or servant. The latter two were left behind, to strengthen and encourage the believers, whose faith already had been established.

Under these circumstances the Apostle arrived at Athens, once the world's capital in every sense of the word; but still its capital in respect to science and art and theology and schools of general instruction—its commercial and political influence having gone to Rome with the imperial control. To Athens came the youth of wealthy families of the world, and many others possessed of a special craving for wisdom,—to avail themselves of the teachers, studies and lectures—practically the only means of instruction at that time.

Without a miracle no other one of the apostles would have been competent to secure a hearing before the Athenian Council of the Areopagites—composed of the teachers of the various schools of learning, and generally speaking, of the reputedly wisest men of the world. That the Apostle Paul, without letters of introduction, without political or other influence, serving as such, should succeed in a few days in obtaining an invitation to address this august body of men, indicates clearly that he was a man of remarkable talent, as well as learning. These natural qualities in him were reinforced by the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of the divine revelation, the true Gospel. The Apostle lost no time in beginning his special work: true, he first made a general inspection of the chief features of the city's attractions, noting its numerous public statues to the gods, whose number Pliny gives as over three thousand in the time of Nero. It was while making this inspection of the city and considering how best he could launch the gospel message there, that his attention was drawn to one altar erected "To the Unknown God." He kept this as a text for his principal effort when the time should be ripe, and meantime, as usual, he began his ministry by going into the Jewish synagogues; but apparently finding little interest here he resorted to the public squares and markets, and discussed religious topics with the numerous students and others who gathered there.

Amongst those who heard him were some of a cynical turn of mind who said, Let us listen to what this babbler is saying; the word "babblers" signifying seed-picker, inferentially meaning that the Apostle had gained a mere smattering of knowledge, picked up some seeds of thought from others of the great teachers, and was now attempting to set himself up as a teacher. Others, disposed to persecute, said, He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods;—for to set forth any strange gods in Athens was a crime, it being held that they already had them in plenty, and that to admit that any one could present a new god of which the Athenian teachers knew nothing, would be an insult to their learning and evidently a fraud. This, together with the Apostle's talents, secured for him a hearing before the Areopagites, or Council of the Learned. It was this Council which had the power to sentence to death anyone who should attempt to set forth strange gods in Athens; and hence the Apostle's hearing before them was probably, more or less, in the nature of a trial for life, because he had been preaching Jesus—an unheard-of god amongst the Athenians up to this time—and the resurrection.

The Apostle's theme is worthy of our notice. Under the divine guidance he seemed to have a way of approaching the pith of the gospel most directly, and these words of our Golden Text, "Jesus and the resurrection," really embraced the whole of the gospel preached. The world, under divine sentence, was dead or dying: the redemption price, our Lord's ransom sacrifice, had just been paid, and the hope to be built upon his work and to be announced to the people was *the resurrection of the dead*—that our Lord's death was the purchase price for the sins of the whole world, and that as a result, in God's due time, an awakening of the dead shall come, and eventually the full raising up to the perfection of life of all who will accept the Redeemer as their leader and guide. This is the gospel which should still be preached, but which, by reason of various errors that crept in during the dark ages, has been beclouded and forced out of its way to such an extent that remarkably few lay any stress whatever upon the grand doctrine of the resurrection of the

dead; and some are even dropping from their teachings "the ransom for all" given by Jesus.

We can picture before our minds the Apostle addressing the Council of Mars' Hill, composed of "the noblest blood of Athens, the first politicians, the first orators, the first philosophers; accordingly the most august, not only of Athens, but of Greece, and, indeed, of the whole world, under whose supervision 'came the transactions of the popular assembly, religion, laws, morals and discipline.'" Now the Apostle had use for the text he had found. He must prove to these men that he was not the setter forth of a *new* theology, but an *old* one. He at once brought forth his argument, not in the discourteous language of our English Common Version, intimating that his auditors were ignorant and superstitious, but, on the contrary, in complimentary language, which we paraphrase: he said to them;—"I perceive that more than others you Athenians have respect for whatever is divine. The conviction of this came to me as passing through your city I beheld the various evidences of your devoutness, and amongst other altars noticed one with the inscription, "To the Unknown God." Information regarding this God I am setting forth. He is the God that made the world and everything therein, and is the Lord of heaven and earth, too great to dwell in any temples made with hands, for he is the Lord of heaven as well as earth; neither can he receive service at our hands, for he needs nothing which we have to give, but is the author of life and breath and all things; who himself created every nation of men dwelling throughout all the earth—and even all their affairs are subject to his regulations and appointments.

Thus did he set before them the greatness of the true God, in contrast with their numerous gods whom they feared or hated, revered or placated, and whose vices and frequent impotency they admitted. The Apostle thus brought his teachings within the rules and regulations, as being not a new teaching, but a fuller declaration of a God already recognized by his hearers. And indeed, so high, so noble, so great a thought of God, must have impressed his hearers favorably. We cannot doubt that the teachings of the Jews, supplemented by the gospel presentations, have done much to lift the minds of men out of the deep degradation which came upon them soon after the flood, as explained by the Apostle.—Rom. 1:20-32.

A God who was not merely the God of one nation or of one city or of one precinct, but who had created all races and nations, and had had to do with the rise and fall of nations, was certainly a very different God from anything that had ever been heretofore suggested to the minds of these philosophers; for although the Jews had preached the same God, undoubtedly their presentation of him as the God of the Hebrews must have favored the impression that each nation had its own god or gods, demanding its worship, reverence, sacrifices, etc.

In vs. 26 and 27 the Apostle implies that the Lord's ordering of the national affairs had something to do with the propagation of the knowledge of himself, and so we find it has been. The bringing of the world under successive empires—the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman—had tended to unify the race to some extent, and to make more possible the promulgation of the gospel. During the Grecian period the Greek

language was spread abroad throughout various lands, and it still maintained its supremacy as the language of the world, although the reins of government had passed to the hands of the Romans, under whose pushing, warlike power the world in general would be brought much closer together than it had ever been from the time of the confounding of tongues at Babel. All this had occurred at the proper juncture of time as concerned God's favor to Israel, according to the flesh, the birth of Jesus, his crucifixion and the gathering of the ripe "wheat" from that nation, and the scattering of the remainder. All these things were, under divine supervision, working in the interest of mankind, "that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us." The Apostle would assist his hearers in finding this true God, who was to be found of them, and whom they had indicated their desire to know when they erected the altar referred to.

Describing the true God further, the Apostle assured his hearers that none could live or move or have existence, even, aside from the power and good intent of this great God. His words are equally truthful, whether we restrict them to the imperfect existence of the present time and the dying condition of the world, with but a spark of life, or whether we apply them in the fuller sense to the Lord's provision for the future by restitution processes and arrangements. Still wishing to offset the thought that his message was a new one, the Apostle declares that certain Grecian poets had practically expressed this thought in saying, "We are also his offspring." Carrying the mind, then, to the logical conclusion, he urges that if we are the offspring of God our thoughts respecting divinity should not lead us to make or to worship images of any kind, all of which are professedly of man's device.

The Apostle's *method* is worthy of our imitation. All wise people distrust novelty, and incline to say that whatever is valuable has long been. We, like the Apostle, should endeavor to show that the true gospel is not a new theology, but the old theology; not a new gospel, but the old gospel,—the one foretold to Abraham; the one announced by the angels on Bethlehem's plains as "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people;" the one declared by the Lord Jesus himself and by all his apostles. In proportion as we would show that errors prevail today, which had their origin in the "dark ages," we must show that we are not forging a new theory equally erroneous, but that we have discarded the errors of the dark ages, and have gone back to the first principles and precepts and instructions of the gospel, as announced by the Lord and his authorized representatives, the apostles.

An explanation was necessary as to why this great God who had created all nations, and was directing their welfare, had neglected to send word to the Athenians until now. The Apostle did not go into a full explanation of the matter, with which his hearers would not have sympathy—he did not attempt to show how God in the past had merely been giving the world lessons in respect to the wages of sin, neither did he mention how Abraham's seed had been selected as the line through which divine blessings were to be carried eventually to all the families of the earth, and that God had been dealing with the natural seed of Abraham for the preceding eighteen centuries, making types of them and through them illustrating the progress of the divine plan as it shall ultimately be carried

out. He did not explain, either, how that Christ offered himself to this nation of Israel, and (in harmony with the divine foreknowledge) had been rejected, and that now God was seeking a spiritual seed of Abraham—spiritual Israelites—to take the place of the broken-off branches of the fleshly house.—Rom. 11.

He contented himself with the bare statement of the truth, that in times past God had "winked at" or overlooked or disregarded and paid no attention to the idolatries of the world, but that now the time was come for a change of dispensation;—that now God was sending his message to them, and to all who had ears to hear, commanding repentance from sin and turning from idolatries to true worship and righteousness. Quite possibly, though the account does not state it, the Apostle explained that the foundation or basis of this call to repentance was the fact that Christ had been a propitiation (satisfaction) for the sins of the whole world—clearing men thus from the original condemnation of death and alienation from God, and permitting the return to his favor of whomsoever would.

The word "because" commencing vs. 31 has a special significance which should not be overlooked. God calls upon all men to repent and reform, *because* he has appointed for them a day of judgment—a day of trial or testing. Not a trial for testing or judging whether or not they are imperfect and fallen, for this God already knows, even better than we do, and his Word expressly declares that "There is none righteous, no, not one." Such a trial, such a judgment day, therefore, to see if any were righteous, would be a farce. The object of the day of trial or judgment referred to by the Lord is totally different from this.

It is to be a trial day or judgment day to see, to test, to prove which of the world of mankind desire fellowship with the Lord, desire to be obedient to him, desire to walk in his ways. The Millennial Age is this trial day, and the Lord assures us that a full opportunity shall be granted to each and every member of the race to hear, to know, to comprehend his goodness, his love, his redemption of the world through Christ, and his willingness that they should come back into fellowship with him—back to a condition in which he could justly accord to them everlasting life. God could not reasonably command any to repent and return until the ransom was paid at Calvary, because it was his own law that had forbidden them to have fellowship with him, and that law must first be satisfied; and because he could not reward with life everlasting any who would seek his face, until he had made provision through the death of Christ for the payment of the death penalty against the race and through his resurrection for the times of restitution.

It is a further part of this blessed assurance that the judgment or trial of the world will be "in righteousness"—under a reign of righteousness when the besetments of the Adversary and his deceptions will be at an end, and when, therefore, a clear and explicit knowledge of the Lord and of the truth will fill the earth, as the waters cover the great deep. What a gracious gospel the Apostle had to preach! It was so good, indeed, that he had to be guarded in his expression of it;—too good for his hearers to appreciate, with their debauched ideas of the cruelty and perversity of the gods—even as it is too good to be appreciated today by those whose minds have been more or less confused by the horrible theological nightmares coming down to us from "the dark ages."

The Apostle was proceeding logically to show that the resurrection of Christ from the dead was God's assurance to all that he would ultimately carry out this great plan of blessing the world, by granting to each member of it an individual trial or judgment for life, under the favorable conditions of the Millennium; and that the resurrection of Christ was not only God's attestation to men that his sacrifice has been satisfactory, but was also necessary, that our Lord Jesus as the risen and glorified Son of God might exercise in due time "all power in heaven and in earth," and thus bring about the great Thousand-Year Judgment Day, or "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21.) But with this his hearers, who must have been amazed with the logic of his argument, and must have wondered how their various disciples would be influenced by the new teacher, and to what extent they would lose caste, as being less logical or less lofty in their sentiments, found occasion for an expression of dissatisfaction, and of thus logically casting aside the entire argument—dismissing it as unworthy of further consideration.

Their objection rested on the resurrection, which the Apostle made so prominent, so indispensable to the carrying out of the entire plan of God; indispensable, first, as to the Redeemer, that he must rise from the dead, ere he could be the agent of Jehovah in prosecuting the work of blessing the world; necessary to the world of mankind, that they might come forth from the tomb and be granted a knowledge and opportunity of restitution or resurrection to all that had been lost by Adam's disobedience. When the resurrection was mentioned the occasion for expressions of derision was furnished, as though they would say: We knew that there could be no thorough-going philosophy superior to our own; we were on the look-out for the weak point in the argument of this speaker who sets himself up to be a teacher, and now we have found it;—the resurrection! Nonsense! Whoever saw or heard of a resurrection from the dead?

Others of his auditors were less violent in their expressions, but agreed that they had heard enough for the present—implying that the argument was not very satisfactory when it needed to be supported by a resurrection hypothesis which, to them, seemed very much less reasonable than their own philosophies,—that a man never died, and that when he appears to die he really becomes more alive than he ever was before. From their standpoint of view there could be no resurrection of the dead, since there were none dead,—all being more abundantly alive from the moment of apparent death. This has been the point of contest between the Scriptures and those who hold to them as the Word of God, and all other theories advanced by and backed by the Adversary and in accordance with his original deceptive statement, "Ye shall not surely die." Those who would be on the Lord's side must accept the Lord's statement, "Ye shall surely die;" must admit that it is true; must admit that it was necessary that Christ should die, as our representative and substitute, to free us from the condemnation of death, and must admit also that only by a resurrection of the dead can we come back again to life,—to absolute perfection and full harmony with God.

However, one member of the Council of Mars' Hill (the Areopagite Society) had been deeply interested in the truth he had heard; also a woman of some distinction, and others with them;—for although the Society alone occupied the place of prominence in such

discussions, the people in general were privileged to surround the court. The Apostle's experience here, as elsewhere, like our own, demonstrates the fact that at the present time not many have ears to hear the Word of the Lord; not many are seriously "feeling after him if haply they might find him." The majority are blinded by the god of this world, Satan, through various traditions, heathen and Christian, so that they cannot discern the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the true gospel. At the present time it is not given to all to see and to understand (Matt. 13:11; Mark 4:11), but we thank God that the time is coming when all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped; and then the preaching of "Jesus and the resurrection" will mean a great blessing, and all shall come to the knowledge of the truth, from the least to the greatest, as the Lord, through the Prophet, has declared.—Jer. 31:33, 34.

AUGUST 21

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness—Matt. 6:33.

The Lord's people of spiritual Israel will do well to bear this thought continually in mind—that spiritual interests are to be given the preference always; that temporal affairs are to be managed and controlled from the standpoint of the everlasting welfare—from the standpoint of spiritual growth and development and prosperity—from the standpoint of the best interests and influences upon their children. They should not only hesitate to follow any suggestion that would take themselves and their families into unfavorable, godless surroundings, but they should determine that not under any consideration would they follow such a suggestion—that on the contrary the Lord's people should be their people, even though this would mean less of the comforts and luxuries of this present life—Z '02, 350 (R 3110).

In this verse Christ sets before us an ambition worthy of our best efforts; for what is more valuable than Christ Jesus, and everlasting life in the Kingdom with Jesus? Nor need the magnitude of these ambitions affright us; since God Himself has invited us thereto, binding Himself by an oath to give us all necessary help; since Jesus exercises His High Priestly office on our behalf, to insure our successful attainment thereof, and since our participation in the holy Spirit furnishes us with all the capacities therefore. These three things furnish us with all the helps both external and internal, necessary for our overcoming. More than these would injure us. Less than these would make us fail—P '30, 109.

Parallel passages: 1 Kings 3:13; Mark 10:30; Rom. 8:32; 14:17, 18; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rom. 12:9-21; 1 Cor. 13; Gal. 5:22-25; Eph. 4:1-7, 12-16; 5:1, 2; Col. 3:10-25.

Hymns: 58, 66, 72, 73, 95, 198, 267.

Poems of Dawn, 144: *Take Time To Be Holy*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 69 (R 5862).

Questions: What was my chief ambition this week: self, the world, sin, error; or love, justice, wisdom, and Kingdom-mindedness? How did my chief ambition express itself? What results did it gain?

TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY

TAKE time to be holy! Speak oft with the Lord;
Abide in Him always, and feed on His Word;
Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak,
Forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.

Take time to be holy! The world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret with Jesus alone;

By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be;
Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.

Take time to be holy! Let Him be thy guide,
And run not before Him, whatever betide;
In joy or in sorrow, still follow the Lord,
And, looking to Jesus, still trust in His word!

Take time to be holy! Be calm in thy soul,
Each thought and each motive beneath His control;
Thus led by His spirit to fountains of love,
Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above.

R5862: TREASURES LAID UP IN HEAVEN

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is there will your heart be also."—Matthew 6:19-21.

PLEASURE, delight, joy, comfort—all these sentiments are suggested to us by the word *treasure*. Our thoughts, our hopes, our plans, center there. Our treasure is the inspiration of our lives, the incentive to energy, perseverance and endurance, for the hope which it enkindles. Most people have treasures, but they are generally such as yield slight satisfaction, because they are transitory and disappointing. How many have built their hopes upon earthly things only to find them but illusive baubles, mocking delusions, leaving the heart at last broken, crushed and barren! The treasures of wealth, fame, social distinction, of houses and lands, of friends and home and family, of power and influence, are subject to change and decay! And if the heart be centered in them, they are liable in a moment to be swept away, leaving the life desolate and despairing, all the more so because of the high hopes which they had inspired.

The wealth, laboriously gathered and husbanded with great care, may vanish in a night. The fame so dearly won may change to censure and reproach at the caprice of fickle public sentiment. The social prestige which bade you to the uppermost seats may a little later relegate you to the lowest seat, and your name may be cast out as evil and you be ostracized. Houses and lands and carefully hoarded belongings may disappear under the sheriff's hammer. Friends long trusted may suddenly grow cold and turn their backs upon you, and even become your enemies. The home you love must some time break up, the family be scattered or invaded by death. The love that glows upon the home altar may flicker and become dim or extinct. How many have found the high hopes of youth and early life turn to ashes in a few short years or months!

THE BALM OF GILEAD FOR BROKEN HEARTS

To all of these the Word of the Lord should appear with special force, when calling them to come to Him with their burdens and their broken hearts. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." (Psalm 34:18.) His love and His precious promises come like the sweet balm of Gilead to those who, sad and disappointed in the struggle of life, come to Christ for rest and comfort, for life and healing. Many storm-tossed mariners upon life's ocean, discouraged and despairing, bereft of all hope, have found that these very experiences were the means of leading them to the Haven of eternal Refuge. There alone true blessing and safety can be found; there alone is the *real treasure*, far exceeding the choicest treasures of earth.

We think of the experience of a dear brother who recently found the Lord, when his earthly treasures had been swept away from him, all the savings of years, through conditions brought about because of the European war. He had lost all hope and was about to end his life by his own hand, when Present Truth was brought to his attention. He listened, then embraced it with joy, securing the SCRIPTURE STUDIES. Afterward he stated that he now knew why the Lord had permitted him to meet with such reverses—it was to lead him to Himself. How this dear one can now rejoice in his sorrowful experiences and realize that he has gained in exchange the "Pearl of great price," beside which all other treasures pale into insignificance!

Truly, in this our day, as never before perhaps, would all who have the spirit of a sound mind to any degree be longing for a treasure which will be secure, a rock upon which they may plant their feet, one which will securely hold in these days of stress and uncertainty, when men feel that everything is slipping from beneath their feet, when nothing earthly is sure, when fear with distress is on every hand. At such a time as this, how blest are we who are safe-sheltered in the cleft of the Rock of Ages, which cannot be shaken by the mightiest earthquake shock! How unspeakably precious is the treasure which we have laid up in Heaven; for we know our treasure is safe, where no storms nor billows can touch it.

THE TREASURES WE LAY UP IN HEAVEN

The all-important question for those who seek this great treasure then is, How can we lay up treasure in Heaven, and what kind of treasures are those which are to be stored up in the Heavenly depository? We have the assurance of the Divine Word that everything that is pure, holy and good is acceptable there. The very chiefest of all treasures is the personal love and friendship of God and of Christ. Jesus becomes to us "the fairest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely." He is an unfailing Refuge in every time of need, our daily Joy and Solace and Comfort.

When we have gained this Treasure, we have gained the One that never changes, One whose love never grows cold, One from whom nothing can separate us—"neither death," which to His loved ones will now mean our blessed "change"; "nor life," which means further opportunities for suffering with Him that we may also share His glory, and which permits further works of loving service for Him whom we love; "nor angels, nor

principalities, nor powers," for these cannot harm us who are sheltered in Christ; "nor things present, nor things to come"; for "all things shall work together for our *good*," and in every trial He will direct the issue that we may be able to bear it; "nor height" of temporary exaltation; "nor depth" of trouble or sorrow, for our Refuge and Strength is ever near; "nor any other thing" in creation, for He has promised to "keep the feet of His saints," and that nothing shall touch them as New Creatures in Christ, and that His presence shall go with them wherever they may be.—Romans 8:35-39; 1 Samuel 2:9; Luke 10:19; Exodus 33:14.

Nor will any other creatures either in Heaven or in earth receive such marks of special favor as are and ever will be the portion of the beloved Bride of Christ. Although the whole family in Heaven and in earth will be blessed through Him, His Wife, cooperating with Him in His work, will alone be His companion, His confidante, His treasure. Hear the Lord's exhortation to the *Bride* class: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear. Forget also thine own people and thy father's house [the ambitions, hopes and aims of the children of Adam]; so shall the King [Jehovah's Anointed] greatly desire thy beauty [beauty of character, of heart-loyalty]; for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him." (Psalm 45:10, 11; Canticles 4.) How unworthy we feel of so great honor and love from our beloved Bridegroom! And no wonder! When we look at all our imperfections, it seems that there is little in us to call forth such love and admiration. To think that the angels with all their purity and faithfulness should have been passed by; and that we poor, blemished mortals, should be chosen instead!

Is there not some mistake? Ah, no! We have the infallible words of inspiration to assure us that it is even so. This Bride of Jehovah's Son is to reign with Him in the future over a fallen race; and who could so well sympathize with them in all their weaknesses and frailties as those who have themselves partaken of the same? And who could bear the infinite heights of glory to which the Lamb's Wife will be raised, with such humility as those who realize that it was not through any worthiness of their own that they were chosen to so high an exaltation, but that it was all of Divine grace? Clad in the glorious Robe of our Bridegroom's furnishing, we can stand all complete, even now, in the eyes of Jehovah. And possessing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, the faith that trusts under every condition, the love that delights to do the Father's will, we are lovely in the eyes of our Beloved, our Bridegroom and our King.

Having this confidence, we can with unspeakable joy and gratitude lay hold of the exceeding great and precious promises which are ours through Christ, and without presumption press along the line toward the prize of our High Calling, humbly trusting that He who has begun the good work in us will complete it unto the day of our glorification with our Bridegroom in the Heavenly Kingdom, when we shall be presented before the Father "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing," gloriously complete and perfect, in the most absolute sense, fitted and prepared for the wonderful work which we shall share with our blessed Lord and King.

INCENTIVES TO FAITHFULNESS

Listen to some of the blessed and inspiring promises with which the Father and the Son cheer the Bride: "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." Ye "shall be Mine, in that Day when I make up My jewels." "I will give thee to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give thee a white stone [a precious token of love], and in the stone a new name written [the name of our Bridegroom, henceforth to be our name] which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." "Lo, I am with you alway." "And if I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also [and He *has* come, He is even now present, and will soon receive us unto Himself forevermore]." "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "To Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."—Isaiah 33:17; Malachi 3:17; Revelation 2:17; Matthew 28:20; John 14:3; 15:16; Revelation 2:10; 3:21.

Precious promises are these, wonderful words of life! Let us count them over and over again, that all their sweet significance may sink deep into our hearts and bring forth their blessed fruitage in our lives. May they cheer us in every dark and trying hour and reinforce our waning powers with renewed vigor, courage and zeal, that we may press along the narrow way until indeed our "eyes shall see the King in His beauty." What wondrous treasures do we thus find laid up in Heaven for us, because we have left the world and all its delusive fancies and aspirations and have laid hold upon the things eternal! And while this glorious inheritance is to be the possession of all the faithful, the Apostle intimates clearly that our Heavenly treasure may be augmented by special zeal and faithfulness under the peculiar trials of the present time.

One of the treasures which we may lay up in Heaven will be the marks of just approval and distinction among the good and holy beyond the veil, which patient endurance of affliction, unwavering trust under crucial trials and testings, diligence in the King's business, will secure to us. Treasures of mind and character, too, we shall find laid up in Heaven; for nothing that is good and true and worthy of preservation shall be lost to those who have committed their investments to the Lord. These are incorruptible treasures, which neither the lapse of time nor the exigencies of circumstances will ever wrest from us.

Other treasures will be all the true and noble friendships which have been founded in truth and righteousness here on earth, whether they be on the spiritual or on the natural plane. For instance, one on the spiritual plane will not be disposed to forget or ignore the loving loyalty of a former friend, who from time to time administered the cup of cold water to the thirsty soul battling with the heat and dust of life's desert way, and who did this because the one ministered to was a disciple of Christ.

But especially sweet will be the spiritual friendships begun and cherished here, which will bloom and blossom in still greater vigor when transplanted into Heavenly soil and atmosphere. And what a treasure we shall find in the gratitude and love of those to whom we have ministered here in times of special need, and to whom we have carried the Living water and broken the Bread of Life! Who can measure the joy unspeakable that shall be the heritage of the faithful when we shall find all these precious treasures beyond

the veil! When we view these treasures with unclouded eyes, and realize that they are ours forever, shall we not feel infinitely repaid for any sufferings and hardships we have borne in our brief earthly pilgrimage?

HEAVENLY PILGRIMS NEARING HOME

Then, dear brethren and sisters in Christ, let us keep our eyes steadfastly set upon the Heavenly, eternal things. Let us more and more lay up treasures where "moth and rust cannot corrupt and where thieves cannot break through and steal." (Matthew 6:20.) If our hearts are upon the Heavenly treasures, then the disappointments and afflictions of the present life cannot overwhelm us. Whatsoever things are worthy the aspiration of the spiritual sons of God are our real treasures, and they are the only things that are worth while. What care we for the illusive bubbles of this poor life, so soon to burst and disappear? Then, as sings the poet:

"Let us touch lightly the things of this earth,
Esteeming them only of trifling worth,"

not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, if we faint not by the way, but with our pilgrim's staff in hand shall press along the Heavenly road until we reach the goal of our hopes.

As the sun sinks at the close of each day, and the shadows gather around us, how sweet to sing, "I'm one day nearer Home!" We have nearly reached the mountain-top, and every day multiplies the evidences that the journey is nearing its end. Just how long it will be we cannot know; probably it is best that we do not know. But we believe that it will not be very long.

AUGUST 22

Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?—Luke 2:49.

Should we not all have the Master's spirit, expressed by His words? The Lord's true saints have no business of their *own*, for they gave their all to the Lord at consecration. Their business they manage as trustees for the Lord—not to be turned over at their death, in prosperous condition, to their children or their friends, possibly to their injury. It is to be used by the trustee as wisely as he knows how before death; for then his trusteeship ends, and he must render his account—Z '03, 53 (R 3148).

To the perfect boy Jesus, it was natural to be engaged in matters pertaining to the Lord. Hence it seemed strange to Him that Joseph and Mary failed to see the propriety of His conduct. Here is a lesson for both young and old—the propriety of engaging in matters pertaining to God. Blessed are they who take to this spontaneously; nor need they be surprised if others, even those nearest and dearest to them, fail to understand their conduct and consider them as acting unjustly, or at least thoughtlessly toward them. Let them content themselves with the reflections that some day others will understand, and that in the meantime they will be satisfied with the Master's praise, if others blame—P '35, 117.

Parallel passages: Psa. 40:7-9; Heb. 10:7, 9; John 2:16, 17; 4:31-34; 7:14, 15, 46; 9:4; Matt. 7:28, 29; 10:37; Isa. 50:4; Luke 4:22, 32; Josh. 1:8; Isa. 8:20; Jer. 8:9; Luke 24:27; Acts 17:11; Psa. 1:1-3; 1 Pet. 1:10; 11.

Hymns: 309, 49, 315, 154, 116, 260, 22.

Poems of Dawn, 47: *The Pilgrim*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 30 (R 4957).

Questions: Have I this week studied and spread God's Word? Why? How? With what fruits?

THE PILGRIM

STILL onward through this land of foes
I pass in Pilgrim guise;
I may not stop to seek repose
Where cool the shadow lies;
I may not stoop amid the grass
To pluck earth's fairest flowers,
Nor by her springing fountains pass
The sultry noontide hours.

Yet flowers I wear upon my breast
That no earth-garden knows—

White lilies of immortal peace,
And love's deep-tinted rose;
And there the blue-eyed flowers of faith
And hope's bright buds of gold,
As lone I tread the upward path,
In richest hues unfold.

I keep mine armor ever on,
For foes beset my way;
I watch, lest passing on alone
I fall a helpless prey.
No earthly love have I—I lean
Upon no mortal breast;
But my Beloved, though unseen,
Walks near and gives me rest.

Painful and dark the pathway seems
To distant earthly eyes;
They only see the hedging thorns
On either side that rise;
They cannot know how soft between
The flowers of love are strewn.
The sunny ways, the pastures green,
Where Jesus leads His own;

They cannot see, as darkening clouds
Behind the Pilgrim close,
How far adown the western glade
The golden glory flows;
They cannot hear 'mid earthly din
The song to Pilgrims known,
Still blending with the angels' hymn
Around the wondrous throne.

So I Thy bounteous token-flowers
Still on my bosom wear;
While me the fleeting love-winged hours
To Thee still nearer bear;
So from my lips Thy song shall flow,
My sweetest music be;
So on mine eyes the glory grow,
Till all is lost in Thee.

R4957: "ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS"

"How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"—V. 49.

THE WONDERFUL BABE of Bethlehem "grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him." The *perfect child, the perfect boy*, was of course far in advance of imperfect children. The schooling privileges of today were unknown. The education gleaned by the masses came to them chiefly through contact with their elders; history itself being handed down from generation to generation, except for the scholarly. Jewish boys, however, had an advantage over those of other nations because of the Divine regulation of the temple services and the services in the synagogues every Sabbath day. Those services consisted particularly of readings from the Law and the Prophets by course. Thus all Jewish children had excellent facilities for hearing the Word of the Lord. "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." Few had more opportunities than this—few were able to read; but Jesus was amongst those few—not because of schooling privileges in His youth, but because of His brilliant mind, which retained everything that came to it and to which, therefore, the Bible was continually an open book.

The surpassing abilities of Jesus are attested by the fact that when He entered the synagogue of His home city, Nazareth, His superiority as a reader and an exponent was so generally recognized that the service was usually turned over to Him. (Luke 4:16.) And yet the people marveled, saying, How comes it that Jesus is a man of letters, having never gone to school? And they all bore Him witness and wondered at the grace of His speech. (Luke 4:22.) The explanation of the matter is that Jesus was perfect while all about Him were imperfect.

Our lesson relates particularly to an incident which occurred when Jesus was twelve years old. His "parents" were strict religionists and obeyed the Mosaic Law by attending regularly the Feast of Passover at Jerusalem every year, and on this occasion Jesus was with them. The expression "parents" does not imply that Saint Luke supposed Joseph to be the father of Jesus any more than that Mary so considered the matter when (verse 48) she spoke of Joseph as being His "father." He was the foster father of Jesus—His foster parent, and Jesus was his foster child; the language is in exact harmony with what we would use under such circumstances today and is not a basis for any just criticism.

As might be surmised, the gathering of Jews from all parts of Palestine, yea, from the entire world, meant great crowds of people; on some occasions more than a million. Different families from different localities usually traveled together as one caravan. It was a Jewish custom that a Jewish boy should be considered "a son of the Law" when he had attained his twelfth year. He then became responsible under the Law and thenceforth was required to keep its festivals, etc.

JESUS A GREAT STUDENT

At the time in question Jesus had attained His twelfth birthday. He well knew of His peculiar birth and of the great prophecies which centered in Him, related by Gabriel to His mother, and was on the alert to fulfil His mission—to do the will of the Heavenly Father. He surmised that since at twelve years of age Jewish boys came under the requirements of the Law Covenant, this arrangement might possibly have been made as an indication of His proper course and duty—that that was the time at which He should begin His ministry.

Therefore He resolved to consult the very highest authorities respecting the teachings of the Law upon this subject. From time to time He sought intercourse with the learned Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors. He wished to make no mistake; He was therefore not satisfied with simply their opinion, but desired references to the Law and to the Prophets that He Himself might judge and not rely too implicitly upon the conclusions of others. During a considerable part of the time of the Passover Feast the great men of His nation were engaged in public functions, and hence His best opportunity for conference with them was at the close of the feast, and then as He could gain their attention—coming time and again with new questions, with fresh inquiries about other types and symbols and their proper meaning.

When the time came for the return journey He had not finished His investigations of the Scripture teachings on this point. His parents, thinking that He was in the company with some of their relatives, went a day's journey homeward before they ascertained that He was not in the company. Then they returned, journeying another day, and the third day they found Him in the temple with the learned men discussing the question which to Him was the all-important one of the hour—the time at which public ministry might be begun, according to the Law. Evidently He had just finished His quest and found as His satisfactory answer that, although a boy at twelve became amenable to the Law, none could enter upon a teaching or preaching service until thirty years of age. This matter had evidently been settled just prior to the arrival of His parents.

Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, said nothing, allowing his wife, Mary, to chide Jesus with having been negligent of His duty toward them—causing them trouble, grief, annoyance by not coming promptly with them on the return journey. The words of Jesus may be paraphrased thus: Did you not know that I was twelve years of age; was it not your understanding that I had reached the time when I must become a son of the Law? Did you not know that this might mean to me some great responsibility in connection with my service of the Heavenly Father? Did you not forewarn me that such responsibilities were to be looked for by myself and that I must be diligent to accomplish my mission? Why, then, may I ask, should you be surprised and disappointed in finding that I had tarried behind you? Did it not occur to you that as a son of the Law I might have responsibilities at this time and that I must use every opportunity to be about my Father's business—to do whatever work I should find He has appointed for me? But now I will give you no further trouble. I have ascertained through study and conference with the Doctors of the Law that there is nothing that I can do as a minor in the way of beginning the Father's service. I am therefore ready to return with you to our home, and I assure you that I shall be as loyal and obedient to you as heretofore and that my apparent

neglect of your wishes in the present instance was merely because I supposed that you knew that I would be looking out for my Heavenly Father's business and my privileges in connection with it, and that you would therefore not be necessarily expecting me to return home at this time.

JESUS INCREASED IN WISDOM

In the last verse of our study we read: "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." It was not a boy who was to be the Redeemer, even as it was not a boy who had sinned. Jesus, therefore, to be a corresponding price for Father Adam and the race which lost life in Him, needed first to be developed into manhood.

The verse under consideration covers the period from His twelfth year to His thirtieth. For eighteen years He kept growing in wisdom and in grace of character. He did not grow in the Father's favor in the sense of becoming less sinful and more righteous, but in the sense of becoming more developed—reaching human perfection. Just so a piece of fruit in growing may be as perfect of its kind at the beginning as at the end, but it grows in size and in richness of flavor, and therefore in the appreciation of the owner.

So it was with Jesus. The perfect babe became the perfect boy; the perfect boy became the perfect youth; the perfect youth became the perfect man, and at thirty years of age was ripe and ready to be offered as an acceptable sacrifice of sweet savor to God, on behalf of mankind—"the Just for the unjust."

AUGUST 23

And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love—1 Cor. 13:13.

As love is the most excellent thing, so is it the most enduring ... for will not faith practically come to an end when we shall see and know thoroughly? And will not hope practically be at an end when we shall reach the fruition of all our hopes and be possessors of the fullness of our Heavenly Father's promises? Love, however, will never fail, even as it had no beginning. God is love, and since He was without beginning, so love was without beginning; because it is His character, His disposition; and as He endures forever, so love will endure forever—Z '03, 58 (R 3150).

Faith, hope and love are among the greatest graces. Faith enables us in confidence to apply the promises of God in life's battles; hope enables us to be courageous in doing and daring for the Lord in these battles; and love enables us to have the power to rejoice and delight in the hardships of these battles, making them easy, and turning them into glorious victories. Faith and hope are handmaidens of love, the glorious and beautiful mistress of the house beautiful, a character like God's and Christ's. It is because love is the most Godlike and Christlike of all the graces that it is the greatest of these three graces—P '34, 110.

Parallel passages: 2 Sam. 22:31; Psa. 9:9, 10; 32:10; 34:8, 22; Prov. 3:5; Jer. 17:7, 8; Matt. 21:21, 22; Mark 9:23; John 11:25-27; Rom. 3:19—5:2; 9:31-33; 10:4-10; Gal. 3; Eph. 6:16; Heb. 4:1-10; 11; Jas. 2; Psa. 16:9, 10; 31:24; 33:18; 43:5; 71:5, 14; 119:74, 81, 116, 166; Acts 23:6; 24:14, 15; 26:6, 7; Rom. 5:2-5; 8:24; 12:12; 15:4, 13; Eph. 1:18; Col. 1:5, 23, 27; 1 Thes. 1:3; 5:8; Titus 2:13; Heb. 6:11, 18, 19; 1 Pet. 1:3, 13, 21; 1 John 3:3; John 3:16; 17:23, 26; Rom. 5:8; John 10:11, 15; 13:1, 34; 21:17; 1 Cor. 13.

Hymns: 198, 174, 197, 21, 92, 165, 166.
Poems of Dawn, 110: *The Pilgrim's Wants*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 115 (R 5668).

Questions: Have I exercised faith, hope and love this week? How? Why? Under what circumstances? With what results?

THE PILGRIM'S WANTS

I WANT that adorning divine,
Thou, only, my God, canst bestow;
I want in those beautiful garments to shine,
Which distinguish thy household below.

I want, oh, I want to attain
Some likeness, my Savior, to Thee:

That longed-for resemblance once more to regain,
Thy comeliness put upon me.

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

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

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

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

I want, as a traveler, to haste
Straight onward, nor pause on my way,
No forethought or anxious contrivance to waste
On my tent, only pitched for a day.

I want (and this sums up my prayer)
To glorify Thee till I die;
Then calmly to yield up my soul to Thy care,
And breathe out in prayer my last sigh.

R5668: THE SUM OF ALL GRACES

"And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."—1 Corinthians 13:13.

THE Apostle Paul has just been referring to the various miraculous gifts of the Spirit then granted to all begotten of the Spirit to the new nature. Any one lacking some such special gift at that time would thus manifest to all believers that he had not become a member of the Church of Christ. These supernatural gifts also served to assist the primitive Church in spiritual growth. They did not have the Bible in those days, and if

they had possessed it, but very few could have read it; hence, they needed special assistance which the Church afterward did not need, and which later was taken away.

In this letter to the Church at Corinth, the Apostle, after discussing these various gifts, says, "And yet I show unto you a more excellent way." Then he proceeds to point out the super-excellence of the fruit of Love. Whoever has the Holy Spirit must have a measure at least of this fruitage, whether it be the little flower that contains the fruit-bud or whether it be the partly developed fruit, the fully developed fruit or the ripened fruit. God our Father, who looks upon the heart, knows how His Holy Spirit in the heart is seeking to control the flesh, to guide the mind and all the words and actions. We are not able to judge one another's hearts. The Apostle said that he did not feel able properly to judge even himself, but left judgment to the Lord. He knew that his heart was loyal and that he was endeavoring to be all that the Lord would have him be. Though he was conscious of his inability always to "do the things that he would," he knew that the Master would accept his loyalty of heart; so he would do his best and leave the remainder with God.

Our faith and our hope in the Lord lead us to earnest endeavor to develop the fruitage of love in all its varied and beautiful phases. Gentleness is a part of love; meekness is a part of love; so also are humility and brotherly-kindness. The question at issue with each child of God is not, How tall and well-built am I? or, How fine-looking or well-educated or well-connected am I according to the flesh? or, How many or how fine sermons have I preached? or even, How many have I brought to a knowledge of the Truth? But the vital question is, How much of the quality of love have I developed? How great is the likeness of my character to that of Christ?

LOVE IS THE PRINCIPAL THING

Why is this quality of love made so prominent in the Word of God? We answer, Because it is the *first* thing, the *most important* thing, the *principal* thing. It is the fulfilling of God's Law; and, indeed, the sacrificial love enjoined upon God's saints of this Age goes even beyond the requirements of the perfect law. But *why* is Love put first? It is not because God arbitrarily so placed it, not because He exercised His power of fiat and declared that it should be first. No. It is because no other quality of character is so lovely, so beautiful, so productive of happiness and joy, so great a blessing to all upon whom it operates. It is the very essence of God's character. "GOD IS LOVE!" This quality particularly represents His personality. While God is all-just and all-powerful, we do not say that God is Justice or that God is Power, but that God is Love. He uses His great Power only as Love dictates and approves. He uses His Justice only in fullest harmony with His glorious attribute of Love. Love is the mainspring of all His doings.

Whoever, therefore, would be God-like must be loving, must have love as the dominating quality of his character and his life. Love and righteousness are inseparable. Love is to continue to all eternity; and only those who become the active embodiment of this gracious quality of character will live eternally. Hence we see the paramount importance of its development in every life.

Next to our Lord's marvelous Sermon on the Mount stands this great homily on Love, recorded in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians. Both discourses teach the same lesson, but approach it from different standpoints. As pupils in the School of Christ, all the instructions of the Divine Word and the Divine providences in our lives are designed by the Lord to develop our characters and to influence our conduct in harmony with the requirements of Love. The Master said, "A new commandment I give unto you [the Church], that ye love one another." Since "Love is the fulfilling of the Law," and is "the bond of perfectness" in the child of God, no wonder we are assured from the Scriptures that "God is Love," and that "he that loveth not, knoweth not God!" Our Lord again declared that "this is life eternal—that they might know Thee, the only true God"—the God who is Love.

This noble quality of Christian character cannot be acquired instantly. It is a *growth*; and its development is the chief business, the chief concern, of every spirit-begotten child of God who would know God, who would win the great reward of life on the highest plane of existence and who would see our Father and our Savior face to face and dwell in their presence forevermore.

ALL ATTAINMENTS VALUELESS WITHOUT LOVE

In this wonderful discourse under consideration, St. Paul points out that this crowning grace of Love is the necessary quality to make any service acceptable to God. If Love is not the motive power controlling us, the greatest zeal, the finest rhetoric, or the richest eloquence, on behalf of Truth and righteousness would pass for nothing in God's estimation, and would bring no reward from Him. If love be lacking, great ability in expounding the mysteries of God, much study and great knowledge, would be as naught in winning the approval of the Lord. Even a mountain-moving faith would be valueless, if, looking into the recesses of the heart, the Father could see that love is wanting. The giving of all one's possessions to feed the poor or to spread the Gospel, if done without love as the moving impulse, would be powerless to bring us God's approbation. Death as a martyr would not be acceptable except it was undergone from love to the Lord and loyalty to His Truth.

Why is this? It is because all these things might be done through selfish motives—to be seen of men or to feed pride or to exercise the spirit of combativeness. Love must prompt all our service for God or all will be utterly without value—as "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."

THE SPECTRUM OF LOVE—ITS COMPONENT ELEMENTS

A college professor, commenting upon this word Love, said, "As you have seen a man of science take a beam of light and pass it through a crystal prism, as you have seen it come out on the other side of the prism broken up into its component colors—red, and blue, and violet, and orange, and all the colors of the rainbow—so St. Paul passes this thing, Love, through the magnificent prism of his inspired intellect, and it comes out on the other side broken up into its elements. And in these few words we have what one

might call the spectrum of Love, the analysis of Love. Will you observe what its elements are? Will you notice that they have common names, that they are features which we hear about every day, that they are things that can be practised by every man in every place in life; and how by a multitude of ordinary virtues, the supreme thing, the *summum bonum*, is made up?

"The spectrum of Love has nine ingredients:

Patience—'Love suffereth long.'
Kindness—'and is kind.'
Generosity—'Love envieth not.'
Humility—'Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.'
Courtesy—'doth not behave itself unseemly.'
Unselfishness—'seeketh not her own.'
Good temper—'is not easily provoked.'
Guilelessness—'thinketh no evil.'
Sincerity—'Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth.'"

To the above we add three other ingredients:

Fortitude—Love "beareth all things, ... endureth all things."
Trustfulness—Love "believeth all things."
Hopefulness—Love "hopeth all things."

We cannot agree with the professor that these graces can be practised by every man, in every place, nor that they are ordinary virtues. We must contend that these fruits as a whole cannot belong to the "natural man." He may indeed *put on* some of the gentleness, some of the humility, some of the courtesy, some of the patience, some of the kindness, as men may attach grapes to thorn bushes or figs to thistles; but with the natural man these graces are wholly put on, and not the outgrowth of the inward grace, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Love. They are not an evidence of relationship to God. Where the individual has not been begotten again by the Word of Truth and by the Holy Spirit, his imitation of certain outward manifestations of love will not constitute him a son of God nor bring to him the rewards and blessings of sonship, to which there is only the one Door—Christ Jesus.

And with the Christian a mere outward manifestation of patience, meekness, etc., is not sufficient, either in God's sight or in his own sight. These rich fruits are produced only by the indwelling Spirit of love in his own heart. In civilized countries many of the fruits of the Spirit are recognized by the unregenerate as desirable traits and are imitated, as marks of good breeding. In many cases they are successfully worn as a cloak or mask, covering hearts and sentiments quite antagonistic to the Spirit of Love.

WORLD'S IMITATION OF LOVE AN OUTWARD VENEER

While even an outward imitation of the fruit of Love mitigates to some extent the evils and distresses and frictions incident to man's fallen condition, yet it is only a veneer, as times of stress and trial often manifest in a painful manner. We remember a report which we once read of a conflagration at a certain Charity Bazaar in Paris, which showed that the most polished and aristocratic young gentle-men of the most polite city and nation of earth displayed the ferocity of brute-beasts when face to face with death, and that in their mad rush to escape the flames they knocked down and injured each other, and treated thus even ladies of the first rank in France, to whom they had just before been overly polite. We cannot expect more of a love-veneered, selfish heart—even the strong glue of chivalry will not hold the veneer under such circumstances.

The time is now very near when a far greater and more terrible crisis will make manifest to the whole world that much of the politeness and gentleness of our day is only skin deep, and is not from the heart, not the fruitage of the Holy Spirit of Love. In that great crisis, every man's hand will be "against his neighbor and against his brother," as the Word of the Lord graphically portrays. In that great Day of Vengeance, the masks of formal politeness and chivalry will be discarded, and the world will for a short period get such a revelation of its own hideousness and selfishness as will horrify it and will help to prepare it for the blessed Kingdom of Love then to be established by the great Immanuel, the Messiah of God. And this great Day of Vengeance has already begun.

DRAWN BY LOVE DIVINE

The Scriptures inform us that in our fallen estate unselfish love is foreign to our natures, and must be introduced into them by the Power of God. The Apostle says, "Not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins." As we learn of this great love of God, and accept the conditions which He has made for our return to Him, through His Son, the love of God constraineth us to love in return.

The measure of our appreciation of Divine Love will be the measure of our zeal in conforming our characters to the Divine pattern. A naturally rough, uncouth, depraved disposition may require a much longer time after the grace of Divine love enters his heart, before that grace is manifest in all the words and thoughts and acts of the outward man. Others of more refined nature, of gentle birth and cultured training, might even without the grace of God within have many of the outward refinements, so that as a Christian his outward conduct might be much more pleasing. None save He who reads the heart is competent to judge as to who has and who has not this quality of love well developed in his character. We will now take up the various elements of Love.

ANALYSIS OF LOVE'S COMPONENT ELEMENTS

Love is *patient*—it is longsuffering with the weaknesses and imperfections of those who give any evidence of good intentions. Moreover, it is patient even with those who are out of the way, and who oppose themselves to righteousness and Truth, realizing that the whole world are more or less under the influence of the great Adversary and his

demon host, who blind the minds of the masses. This manifestation of love was very prominent in our Lord Jesus. How patient He was with His opponents! Let us heed the Apostle's words in his Epistle to the Hebrews, "*Consider Him* that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied [in well-doing and patience] and faint in your minds."

Love is *kind* in its methods. It not only seeks to do good, but seeks to do it in the kindest possible manner. In proportion as love is attained the effort of the heart will be to have every word and act, as well as the thought which prompts them, full of kindness. Love is tender, affectionate. It has a real and deep interest in others, especially the brethren in Christ. We do well to remember the motto of the old Quaker: "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again." This sentiment is especially applicable in the Church of God.

Love is *generous*, and has no place for envy, which, on the contrary, springs from a perverted nature—from selfishness. Love rejoices with them that rejoice; it rejoices in the prosperity of every good word and work, and in the advancement in Christian grace and service of all who are actuated by the Spirit of God.

Love is *humble*—it "vaunteth not itself." It does not sound a trumpet before it. Its good deeds are not done to be seen of men, not done to be praised of the brethren, but would be done just the same if no one should see or know but the Lord alone. It is boastful neither of its knowledge nor of its graces, but in humility acknowledges that every good and perfect gift comes from the Father, and returns praise to Him for every mercy received. Love seeks rather to keep self in the background. Some one has truly said, "Love saves a man from making a fool of himself by consequential conduct, and by thrusting himself into positions which betray his incompetence."

Love is *courteous*—"doth not behave itself unseemly." How beautiful is this trait in the child of God! How much pain is caused by the lack of courtesy, of that thoughtful consideration for others which springs from real love in the heart—love that is trained! Pride and selfishness are at the root of most of the unseemly conduct and boorishness so common to those who think themselves somebody, either intellectually or financially. Perfect love, on the contrary, manifests courtesy along with humility. Politeness, courtesy, may be defined as love in the *little* things.

The secret of *real* courtesy is love. A gentleman or lady is one who does things gently, thoughtfully, kindly, lovingly. A true Christian, then, should be a gentleman or a lady in the most real and perfect sense. To ignore the little courtesies of life as unnecessary is a serious mistake in a child of God. A kind greeting, a pleasant smile, little acts of thoughtfulness for others—who has not realized their potency or felt pain from the lack of these?

UNSELFISH, SWEET TEMPERED, SINCERE

Love is *unselfish*—"seeketh not her own," exclusively or pre-eminently. It never seeks to take advantage of others or to promote its own selfish interests. It goes out to others, and seeks to promote their comfort and happiness. It does not desire to grasp the best of everything for self, nor to have the chiefest seats or the most attention or the highest honors, but rather prefers others in honor, and is willing in cheerfulness to take the lower place. Put into practise, this phase of love—unselfishness—has a great influence for good upon all the affairs of life, in the home, in the Church of God, everywhere.

Love is *good-tempered*—"not easily provoked." Among the evils abounding today is that of ill-temper, fretfulness, bad humor, touchiness, quickness to take offense. To whatever extent this disposition is fostered or willingly harbored, and not fought against, it is an evidence of a deficiency and a lack of development in the Spirit of God, of deficiency in likeness to Christ, our Pattern.

Very few of the evidences of a wrong spirit receive as much leniency and as many excuses for its continuance as does this fault. However much natural weakness or nervousness may tend in this direction, every true member of the Body of Christ must surely vigorously oppose this disposition to be irritable, fault-finding and morose. He must fight this tendency of his fallen flesh, must wage a good warfare against it in the strength of the Lord. The imposition of a penalty upon one's self for every outbreak of irritability or of unlovely temper would soon bring greater watchfulness over the tongue and over the unloving impulses of the old nature. Few traits of character more truly glorify the Lord than sweet temper.

Love is *guileless*. It "thinketh no evil"—does not surmise evil. It seeks to interpret the actions, words and manners of others charitably. Being pure and well-intentioned itself, it endeavors so far as possible to view the words and the conduct of others from the same standpoint. It does not treasure up animosities and suspicions, nor manufacture a chain of circumstantial proofs of evil intentions out of trivial matters. "Faults are thick where love is thin," is a wise and true saying. Love makes all possible allowance for errors of judgment rather than impugn the motives of the heart.

Love is *sincere*—"rejoiceth not in iniquity." It is grieved by evils wherever encountered, but is sympathetic toward all who fall into evil through weakness or who are beset by temptations. In this respect love prompts to an opposite course of action from that of Balaam, who "loved the reward of iniquity." Balaam, it will be remembered, feared the Lord, and as His prophet could not think of doing otherwise than according to the strict letter of the Lord's injunction; but he did not have the spirit of obedience and loyalty, the spirit of love; and hence when a reward was offered him if he would curse Israel, he was willing, in order to secure the reward, to conform to the evil proposition, if only the Lord would permit him.

So there are some Christians who have a respect for the letter of the Divine Word through fear, but who lack the Holy Spirit (disposition) of love, and who by reason of a love for wealth or popularity or ease, etc., are willing to engage in various practises

which come as near to injuring the Lord's Cause as possible without being in open opposition to Him. Some of these Balaams are in the ministry; and for the sake of salary and prestige and the friendship of wealthy Balaks, they are willing to preach doctrines which they do not believe, to wink at unholy practises, and in various ways to cast stumbling-blocks before Spiritual Israel, and encourage others so to do. Both our Lord and the Apostles mention these Balaams as being false teachers in the nominal Church. See 2 Peter 2:15; Jude 11; Revelation 2:14.

Every one who is seeking to develop in his heart the Holy Spirit, perfect love, should guard this point of sincerity of motive as well as uprightness of conduct. The least suggestion of rejoicing at the fall of any person or thing that in any degree represents righteousness and goodness is to be deplored and overcome. Perfect love rejoices not in iniquity under any circumstances or conditions, and would have no sympathy, but only sorrow, in the fall of another, even if it should mean his own gain.

Love "rejoiceth in the Truth." However profitable error might be, love could take no part in it, and could not desire the reward of evil and error. But it takes pleasure in the Truth—truth on any subject, but especially the Truth of Divine Revelation, however unpopular it may be, however much persecution its advocacy may involve, however much it may cause the loss of the friendship of this world and of those blinded by the god of this world. The spirit of Love has so strong an affinity for the Truth that it rejoices to share loss, persecution, distress, or whatever may come against the Truth and its servants. In the Lord's estimate it is all the same whether we are ashamed of *Him* or His *Word*; and of such He declares that He will be ashamed before His Father and the angels. Love has no sympathy with hypocrisy or pretense. It is transparent and honest in character.

STRONG, TRUSTFUL, HOPEFUL

Love is *strong*—it "beareth all things." It is both willing and able to endure, for the Cause of God, reproaches, reproofs, insults, losses, misrepresentations, privations, and even death. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith"—the very center and life of which faith is the holy spirit of love to the Lord, to them that are His, and of sympathetic love for the world. Perfect love can bear up under the most trying circumstances and conditions which the Lord shall permit to come upon His children, and by God's grace come off "more than conqueror through Him that loved us and gave Himself for us."

Love is *trustful*—it "believeth all things." It is not suspicious, but on the contrary is disposed to have confidence in others, so far as possible, and to give them credit for sincerity. It acts on the principle that it is better if necessary to be deceived a hundred times than to go through life soured by a distrustful, suspicious mind—far better than to accuse or suspect even one person unjustly. This is the merciful disposition applied to thoughts; and of this disposition the Master said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." The unmerciful mind and heart, ready on every slight provocation or imaginary one to think evil of others, is father to unmerciful words and conduct toward others.

Love is *hopeful*, buoyant—it "hopeth all things." It is not easily discouraged. Hope is the secret of Love's perseverance. Having learned of God, and having become a partaker of His holiness, it trusts in Him and hopes undismayed for the fulfilment of His gracious Covenant, however dark the immediate surroundings. This hopeful element of love forms one of the striking features in the perseverance of the saints, enabling them to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." Its hopeful quality hinders Love from being easily offended or easily stopped in the work of the Lord. Where others would become discouraged and put to flight, the spirit of love gives endurance; for its anchor of hope is fastened securely "within the Veil." It holds firmly to the Rock of Ages, and hence cannot drift into despair.

Not only is Love the greatest of all the graces, but really, as we have seen, it is the sum of all the fruits of the Spirit. It is *everlasting*—"Love never faileth." It is for those who develop this quality to its glorious perfection that eternal life has been provided. And those who possess the sacrificial love which our dear Master possessed, who so love as to gladly lay down their lives for the brethren, will gain the fullest and grandest life of all—Divine life.—2 Peter 1:4.

THE EDITOR'S PROPOSITION

Let us then, dear brethren, more and more cultivate *love*, remembering that whatever else may be our attainments, all will be in vain without this crowning grace. The Editor has a proposal to make to every reader of this journal, which he believes will prove very helpful to each one who shall co-operate. It is this: That during the remainder of this year (if we shall be spared so long in the flesh) each of us pray every morning that the Lord will bless us in the cultivation of *love*, in thought, in word, in deed, throughout the day; and that every evening, in reviewing the events of the day at the Throne of Heavenly Grace, we remember to report to the Lord respecting our measure of success or failure.

Then note the results of your watching and praying; keep on the lookout for all encouraging evidences of growth in this fruitage of the Holy Spirit; and when you write us, if you please, mention your progress in *willing* to love, and in *practising* it. We shall be especially glad to know of your growth along this line.

AUGUST 24

Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are—John 17:11.

As we come to consider this beautiful expression of the Lord's sentiments with reference to the Church, we catch a glimpse of the glory of the blessed oneness of the Divine family. It is a oneness of purpose, a oneness of confidence, a oneness of sympathy, a oneness of love, a oneness of honor, and a oneness of mutual possession. This oneness our Lord described as already existing between Himself and the Father, but so far as His disciples are concerned it was and still is prospective; and its full accomplishment is the ideal goal toward which we are taught to aspire—Z '03, 77 (R 3160).

The Redeemer's prayer for His own is beautiful in its simplicity and comprehensive in its scope. He requests the Father, whose holiness He reverently acknowledges, to use His glorious attributes, plan and works in the interests of His disciples—guiding, directing, restraining, correcting, encouraging and ennobling them to the end that they all might grow into the fullness of the one holy Spirit of God and thus attain the same kind of unity as that which exists between the Father and the Son—not a unity of being, which would imply that all the Lord's people would be one being, but a unity of heart, mind, purpose and will. A glorious family oneness is this and is devoutly to be sought—P '33, 111.

Parallel passages: 1 Pet. 1:5; Jude 1, 24; John 6:39; 17:2, 9, 10, 12-18, 21-23; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 1:10; Gal. 3:28; John 10:30, 38; 14:9, 11, 20; 1 John 1:3; 3:24.

Hymns: 78, 27, 165, 23, 326, 281, 170.

Poems of Dawn, 68: *Bringing Home the Flock*.

Tower Reading: Z '03, 77 (R 3160).

Questions: Have I this week grown into more of the unity of the Divine family? How? What helped or hindered therein? What were the results?

BRINGING HOME THE FLOCK

THROUGH pastures fair,
And sea-girt paths all wild with rock and foam,
O'er velvet sward, and desert stern and bare,
The flock comes home.

A weary way,
Now smooth, then rugged with a thousand snares;
Now dim with rain, then sweet with blossoms gay,
And summer airs.

Yet, safe at last,

Within the fold they gather, and are still;
Sheltered from driving shower and stormy blast,
They fear no ill.

Through life's dark ways,
Through flowery paths where evil angels roam,
Through restless nights, and long, heart-wasting days,
Christ's flock comes home.

Safe to the fold,
The blessed fold, where fears are never known,
Love-guarded, fenced about with walls of gold,
He leads His own.

O Shepherd King,
With loving hands, whose lightest touch is blest!
Thine is the Kingdom, Thine the power, to bring
Thy flock to rest!

R3160: THE ONENESS OF THE DIVINE FAMILY.

"I pray for them ... which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them."—Jno. 17:9, 10.

THERE is a touching pathos in this prayer of our Lord for his disciples as he was about to leave them, which draws us very near to his loving heart; especially when he adds, "Neither pray I for these alone [then present with him], but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one—I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."—Verses 20-23.

As we come to consider this beautiful expression of the Lord's sentiments with reference to the Church, we catch a glimpse of the glory of the blessed oneness of the divine family. It is a oneness of purpose, a oneness of confidence, a oneness of sympathy, a oneness of love a oneness of honor, and a oneness of mutual possession. This oneness our Lord described as already existing between himself and the Father, but so far as his disciples are concerned it was and still is only prospective; and its full accomplishment is the ideal goal toward which we are taught to aspire.

But let us study this exemplified oneness more closely that we may be enabled the more fully to enter into it. In the first place we notice that the one purpose which is common to both the Father and the Son is the Father's purpose, which was gradually

revealed to the Son in due time and order, whose it also became by adoption. Since Jesus himself said, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" only (Mark 13:32), it is manifest that the revelation of that plan to him was a gradual one; and that he was led into the knowledge of its various features as they became due to be worked out through his instrumentality. Thus he was allowed to *grow* in knowledge; and thus, too, he was spared the sad spectacle of subsequent trouble which also lay along the pathway of the divine plan. Thus, while he joyfully worked out the grand plan of creation (John 1:3; Prov. 8:22-31), he probably knew nothing of God's purpose for the subsequent permission of evil and the necessity for the great work of redemption. Before he came to that test of faith in God his confidence in his almighty power, wisdom and love had been firmly established by the experiences of the past. For centuries he had seen his mighty works, marked his wondrous wisdom and experienced his tender love. Could he doubt him, then, when another feature of his plan made manifest the great work of redemption and restitution, and gave to him the privilege of undertaking this work also, for the joy that the Father set before him? No; doubtless he did not at first realize the depths of humiliation and sorrow through which he must pass; but, step by step, along the painful way of humiliation and suffering, his faith in the Father, founded upon his previous experimental knowledge, sustained him, as it is written—"By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many."—Isa. 53:11.

We next notice between the Father and the Son a beautiful oneness of confidence. The Son trusted the Father fully—at first, because it was easy and natural. Created in the likeness of God, trust in the Being who brought him into existence was spontaneous, and experience served but to develop and establish it. And the Father trusted the Son fully—first, because he recognized in him the inherent principles of righteousness and truth and filial loyalty which he himself had given him; and, as the course of time and experience developed and the more firmly established his Son in righteousness, his confidence in him became firmly established. And so strong was the Father's confidence in the subsequent fidelity of his beloved Son, that he did not hesitate to declare the results of his faithfulness thousands of years before he even began the work of redemption. He even declared all the special features of the work, by the mouth of his holy prophets at various intervals for four thousand years before he began the work. And still he declares that the work shall in due time be gloriously accomplished. How wonderful and how beautiful is this mutual confidence!

We further notice a oneness of sympathy between the Father and the Son. The Son glories in the Father's plan, saying, "I *delight* to do thy will, O my God." He delighted in it because he discovered therein the worthy features of his Father's glorious character; and though his faith may have been temporarily tested by the permission of evil, his knowledge of God's character and resources, and of the depth of his wisdom did not permit him to doubt, but held him still in loving trust in his infinite goodness and grace, and, therefore, in readiness to acquiesce fully in the measures proposed for the final triumph of righteousness and truth.

And the Father was likewise in loving sympathy with the Son, not permitting him to be tried above what he was able to bear; and not leaving him to bear any trial alone, but always granting him the light of his countenance and a joyful sense of admiring approval (John 11:42; Matt. 3:17), except when, for our sakes, he permitted him for a moment to feel that he was forsaken; when, in the anguish of his soul, he cried out at this unusual experience, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Now, mark the oneness of love manifested. In every act we have already noted we have seen it expressed. It was mutual love that delighted to manifest and express mutual confidence, that gloried in the same loving and benevolent purposes, that sympathized fully with each other's thoughts and feelings, and that delighted in the close and blessed relationship of Father and Son. The Father did not treat the Son as a servant and hide his purposes from him; but delighted to take him into his confidence in so far as his wisdom and prudence dictated—*i.e.*, as the truth became meat in due season to him. And, in turn, the Son did not serve the Father as a hireling, but as a son with a common interest. The Father declared, "This is my beloved Son;" and the Son said, "I *delight* to do thy will."

How blessed the fellowship! It was a fellowship of joy and a fellowship of suffering—of joy in a common anticipation of the future glory; and of suffering in mutual participation of the preliminary trials to secure that end. The Son suffered in his humiliation and his dying agony; and the Father suffered in giving his only begotten Son—an intensity of suffering which the loving, yearning hearts of devoted parents can best imagine and appreciate.

There was further a recognized oneness of possessions clearly expressed by our Lord, who declared, "All things that the Father hath are mine." (John 16:15.) And the Apostle says, God hath appointed the Son the "heir of all things," and hath "set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."—Heb. 1:1, 2; Eph. 1:20, 21.

And, lastly, we notice a oneness of honor. In honor each seems to prefer the other. The Father says: Let all men honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. (John 5:23.) God has made him the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and exalted him to his own right hand, to the chief seat of power in his kingdom, giving him all power in heaven and in earth.—Heb. 1:2, 3; Matt. 28:18.

In the work of creation he has set him forth in great prominence and glory, saying, "Without him was not anything made that was made." In the work of redemption and restitution God has set him forth so prominently that his name is the theme on every tongue, almost to the eclipse of the Father's own glory, who of necessity is himself greater than the Son (1 Cor. 15:27), and to whom the glory pre-eminently belongs, as the Son also declares, saying, "My Father is greater than I;" and again, "I can of mine own self do nothing;" "the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."—John 5:30; 14:10, 28.

The Son's corresponding anxiety to glorify the Father is most marked in the instance when, realizing that he was approaching the dreadful hour of his dying agony he exclaimed, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name"—even at this cost to me. (John 12:27, 28.) Again we hear him say, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." (John 17:1.) And when the great work of redemption and restitution is accomplished, we see him delivering up the Kingdom to God, the Father, and subjecting himself to his further direction, that Jehovah himself may be universally recognized as all in all. (1 Cor. 15:24, 28.) And we, like him, may surely trust that his purposes for the ages to follow will but the further express and emphasize the same lines of his glorious character—his justice, his wisdom, his love and his power.

Glorious oneness! who could suggest an improvement to its wondrous beauty and completeness? But the wonder and joy increase when we learn that it is also *our* privilege to come into this same blessed oneness with God. What! we inquire—the very same oneness as above described? Yes; undoubtedly it is our privilege to enter into the very same relationship and privileges and blessings. To this end consider the exceeding great and precious promises and see that it is ours to have the same oneness with God—of purpose, of confidence, of sympathy, of love, of honor and of possession.

The same plan of God is presented to and adopted by us, and we also are invited to become coworkers with God in carrying it out (2 Cor. 6:1); and in so doing we are counted in with Christ Jesus as filling up the measure of the sufferings of the anointed body necessary to the accomplishment of that plan. Our heavenly Father also similarly manifests his confidence in us—in the loyalty of our hearts toward him and in the sincerity of our consecration to him—even though he recognizes our inherent weaknesses and our inability to carry out fully our own determinations. But, notwithstanding this, so great is his confidence in our sincerity and integrity of heart, that, on our profession of faith and consecration, he fully accepts us as his sons and heirs, supplementing our weaknesses and shortcomings with the all-sufficient merit of our Redeemer, in whom we humbly trust. And not only so, but as sons, honored and beloved, he makes known to us, also, his secret counsels, which others cannot know (Matt. 13:11), and invites us to confide in him as children, and to speak to him freely of all that concerns us, in full assurance of his loving interest, even in our smallest affairs. (Psa. 103:13, 14.) And then he commits a portion of his great work to us. He gives us certain talents, certain portions of his goods, and tells us to invest them for him according to our best judgment as to the profitableness of the results, not dictating all the minutiae of the management as to hiring servants, but merely submitting to us the general principles which should govern us. Thus, for instance, he gives us his plan as to the work in hand, with such general directions as, not to cast our pearls before swine; to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves; to give meat *in due season*; to do good to all men as we have opportunity, but especially to the household of faith; and to observe the times and seasons, and the character of the work in each—seed-sowing in the spring, and reaping in the harvest time; etc., etc. Thus with general directions he sends us forth—not like machines, to do a monotonous treadmill service, but as intelligent beings, to use our brains as well as our hands and feet. So he counsels us to "*study*" to show ourselves workmen approved, and to

consider and *think*, and not to be "as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle." (Psa. 32:9.) Then, according to our zeal and faithfulness, not only in the use of our hands, but also of our brains, in the Lord's service, his confidence in us increases and we are entrusted with more and more of his goods and given a corresponding sense of our heavenly Father's approval. And the mutual confidence and fellowship of purpose and work, draw our hearts closer and closer to the heart of the Eternal, and the joyful realization of sonship and mutual interest and confidence and sympathy fills our hearts.

We are also assured of the same love from our heavenly Father which he exercises toward our Lord Jesus. The statement seems almost startling; but yet, hearken to our Lord's prayer—"I pray for them ... that they may be one ... that they may be made perfect in one ... that the world may know that thou hast ... loved them *as thou hast loved me.*" (John 17:20-23.) In amazement we inquire, How can this be? Our Lord Jesus was always in perfect harmony with the Father; a son who gloriously reflected his likeness; but it has not been so with us: we were sinners and had nothing in us worthy of love. Yes, but we have been washed and cleansed, and, however imperfect our earthen vessels may still be, our hearts are perfect in his sight who is able to read the heart. And, as he sees us with a perfect heart—a perfect purpose and intention—striving to overcome the weaknesses and disabilities of our imperfect flesh, and with painful, yet determined, effort to do his will, and humbly trusting in the provisions which he has made for our redemption from the fall, God recognizes in us that which is worthy of his love. And so our Lord Jesus gives us clearly to understand that the Father loves us, even as he loved the Son.

And not only is this equality of the Father's love for us as for Christ Jesus thus declared, but it is also manifested; for we are called to be *joint-heirs* with his Son, and partakers of his glory; and even as all things are his, they are also said to be ours.—Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23.

While such is the oneness between the heavenly Father and all his anointed sons, it is blessed also to mark the same oneness between Christ Jesus and his anointed brethren. The Lord Jesus does not selfishly grasp all the glory and seek to retain it for himself, but the rather with admiration he contemplates their acquired worthiness and says, They "are mine and I am glorified in them" (John 17:10); and he would have them all bound up together with himself in the Father's love. He would also have them with him, beholding and sharing the glory which the Father had given him from the foundation of the world—the glory of his mighty creative works, with all the other evidences of his Father's love.—John 17:22-24.

Thus all the divine family are bound together in one bond of love and fellowship and confidence and sympathy and harmony and common interest; and the honor and glory of one are the honor and glory of all. The Lord's prayer abounds with petitions for this oneness. Mark the expression (verse 21)—"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee" [thy spirit or disposition and purposes and aim being common to us all]. Hence, he would have us adopt the same Father's spirit, aim and purpose, and devote

all our powers with zeal and faithfulness to the accomplishment of the Father's will.
Amen, so let it be.

AUGUST 25

We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is—1 John 3:2.

Let the hope that we shall soon experience our resurrection change, and be made like our dear Redeemer, and see Him as He is, and share His glory in the great *epiphaneia*, or shining forth of the sons of God in the glory of the Kingdom, enthuse us—let this energize our hearts, loose our lips and strengthen us for every duty, privilege and opportunity—to serve our Master and the household of faith. If this hope has been an anchor to the Lord's people for so many centuries, how much more does it mean to us who are living now in the very time of His presence, waiting for His full *apokalupsis*—His revealing in the glory of the Kingdom!—Z '03, 151 (R 3191).

By Christ's appearance His manifestation of Himself to the world is meant. This will occur through the afflictions of the Time of Trouble. We were given the assurance, therefore, that before the trouble would be fully over, the whole Church would be glorified with Her Lord. Their appearance with Him will not be in the flesh, just as His appearance will not be in the flesh. They are resurrected like Him—changed from corruptibility to incorruptibility; from mortality to immortality; from humanity to divinity! In this glorious condition they see and are like Him, as well as are with Him! Well may we be content with present unfavorable conditions with Kingdom prospects before our longing eyes!—P '32, 112.

Parallel passages: Psa. 16:11; 17:15; Matt. 5:8; 8:11; 1 Cor. 13:12; Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 15:49; Phil. 3:21; Col. 3:4; 2 Pet. 1:4.

Hymns: 92, 7, 25, 29, 53, 72, 105.

Poems of Dawn, 260: *The World is Old with Centuries*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 61 (R 4973).

Questions: How has this hope affected me this week? What were the results?

"THE WORLD IS OLD WITH CENTURIES"

THE world is old with centuries,
But not for these she bows her head;
Close to her heart the sorrow lies:
She holds so many dead!
Sad discords mingle in her song,
Tears fall upon her with the dew,
The whole creation groans—How long
Ere all shall be made new?

Yet brightly on her smiles the sun,

A bounteous heaven delights to bless;
O! what shall be that fairer one,
Wherein dwells righteousness?
O happy world! O holy time!
When wrong shall die, and strife shall cease,
And all the bells of heaven chime
With melodies of peace.

No place shall be in that new earth
For all that blights this universe;
No evil taint the second birth—
There shall be no more curse.
Ye broken-hearted, cease your moan;
The day of promise dawns for you;

For He who sits upon the throne
Says, "I make all things new."
We mourn the dead, but they shall wake!
The lost, but they shall be restored!
O! well our human hearts might break
Without that sacred word!
Dim eyes, look up! Sad hearts, rejoice!
Seeing God's bow of promise through,
At sound of that prophetic voice:
"I will make all things new."

R4973: THE FUTURE INHERITANCE OF THE NEW CREATION

"If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."—Romans 8:17.

THE DIVINE PROMISE is that the Kingdom of God will be amongst men—"under the whole heavens." The Scriptures state that both our Lord and the New Jerusalem, or glorious Kingdom of Messiah, are to come down from heaven to earth; and they call our Lord, therefore, Immanuel (God with us). During that thousand years God will in this sense dwell with men, walk with men. We already have this to some extent in our experience as Christians. God is with men, and Christ and the Church are with men, more or less contradicting and putting to shame the things of darkness of the present time.

But with all these suggestions it is not necessary for us to suppose that the Kingdom will be earthly. On the contrary, the assurance of the Scriptures is that the Church must become spirit beings before they can inherit the Kingdom: "We shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," while those of this class who have been previously dead will have an instantaneous resurrection; and thus we shall be "forever with the Lord"—not forever with the Lord on the earth, but always in the spirit condition. The

angels are always in the heavenly condition, whether they are in heaven with the Father or on earth, and we shall always be in the heavenly condition—the spirit condition.

Nothing in the Scriptures indicates that there will be a restriction upon the Church, that she should remain in one place more than another. The intimation seems to be that, after she shall have experienced her change, the Church will be for a short time absent from the earth and in the presence of the Heavenly Father. We read in the forty-fifth Psalm that the Bride is to be brought into the presence of the Great King, arrayed in glorious clothing of wrought gold—"in raiment of needlework." The members of the Body of Christ will all be on the spirit plane, whether they are afar off or near the earth. This is what our Lord meant when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you"—in the Divine family. This particular place is one that has never been filled by any others.

The various orders of spirit beings created by the Father occupy each its own sphere. But there is no Church of Christ amongst these. The Church of Christ is invited to occupy a place next to the Lord, next to the Father, higher than all the other planes of spirit beings. At the first advent this place had not been prepared for the Church, although the Lord had it in mind. Our Lord ascended up on high to prepare this place. He did so by making an application of His merit to the Church class, by imputing His merit to them and permitting them to become participators with Him in His sufferings in the present time, that they might also become sharers with Him in the divine nature. Thus He prepared the way to enter into that highest of all spirit planes, the divine.

We are not sufficiently informed respecting the spirit condition to know just how it would be possible for the Lord and the Church to *remain* in the Father's presence and maintain the government of the earth. Perhaps this course is possible. Yet again, such would perhaps not be a wise arrangement. Perhaps it would be necessary for them to be absent from the immediate presence of the heavenly Father and to approximate the earth, just as with Satan and his angels, who are in *tartarus*—cast down, separate because of sin. But Satan is to be bound for a thousand years; and the position which he has occupied is to be vacated. The entire Church is to be "caught up in the air" to be with the Lord forever—not necessarily in *tartarus*, but "forever with the Lord," that where He may be there they may be also, in harmony with the Divine will, to execute the Divine purposes.

Our thought, then, is that The Christ will be very closely associated with our earth, just as Satan's kingdom has been; and that they will be equally invisible to men, who will not see them during the thousand years, just as men have not seen Satan and his fallen angels. But as Satan and his angels have been doing an evil work, so Christ and His Church will be doing a powerful work, a good work, a work on the spirit plane; and associated with them will be various agencies, one of which undoubtedly will be the "great company." The members of Christ are the ones that are mentioned as "kings and priests unto God," who shall reign on the earth.

THE EARTHLY PHASE—INTELLIGENT, WILLING MEN

Then there will be earthly agents of this Kingdom, just as Satan has his agents, who are sometimes under his control through ignorance and superstition, sometimes from mesmeric power, all of which will be removed at that time. But the agents of Christ will be intelligent and willing. At that time the Ancient Worthies will be "Princes in all the earth." All mankind will gradually come into fellowship with the Kingdom and, proportionately, indirectly, become associated with the Kingdom itself. Just as any good man helps a government, so all mankind will be blessed in proportion as they approve and uphold the Divine arrangements.

Thus the Kingdom will be spreading for the thousand years, not only from one individual to another, but gradually bringing them back to full perfection. We read that "of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." It will conquer everything before it. Nothing shall stop it. Every evil thing having been destroyed, every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth will be heard praising God. Every knee will bow and every tongue confess; and His Kingdom will be without an opponent "from the river unto the ends of the earth"—having accomplished its purpose.

The Kingdom will then cease, in the sense that Christ will deliver the authority over to the Father. (I Cor. 15:24-28.) This does not mean that the Law of God will be disregarded, as it has been during the reign of sin and death. To meet the exigencies of the fallen condition of mankind, and to bring back as many as possible into harmony with the Divine arrangements, a special Kingdom will be established—the Messianic Kingdom—which will come in between the Divine government and mankind, because mankind in its weak condition will be unable to meet the requirements of the Divine Law. But when this Kingdom has restored mankind to perfection, it is the Divine purpose for Messiah to relinquish this subordinate Kingdom, which will merge into and become a part of the great Kingdom of Jehovah. *Justice* will then operate. There will be no place for mercy, and the Heavenly Father is not then represented as being a merciful King to His creatures. The Heavenly Father will then have made them perfect, so as to need no mercy, and they will be glad to meet all the requirements of the Divine Government, and will be blessed in so doing.

THE CHRIST TO BE ASSOCIATE RULER OF THE UNIVERSE

Having terminated this work our Lord will not be without an occupation; but, according to the Scriptures, He will continue to be at the right hand of the Majesty on High—next to the Father. He will relinquish the oversight of the affairs of earth, and will assume again the general position as Associate-Administrator of the affairs of the Universe in connection with the Heavenly Father. We are not to suppose, however, that the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus will be kept busy hearing and deciding cases and administering Justice, for the equilibrium will be such that there will be no necessity for such a course. The whole Universe will go on practically without any head; and yet there will be the Head. The Son will be next to the Father in authority; and next to the Son will be the Bride. The work that will thenceforth progress is not revealed to us except in a very indefinite manner.

We understand by the power of telescopes that the suns have each a planetary system. If God made this earth a planet to be inhabited, it is only reasonable for us to infer that all the planets of the Universe will be inhabited, and that The Christ will behold the Heavenly Father and His wonderful Universe. The Power of the Heavenly Father is boundless, so far as we can understand. If after we have considered the hundred millions and more of suns and planetary systems beyond the power of human mind to contemplate—if then we realize that the Heavenly Father has made the position of Christ illimitable, and He has exalted the Bride of Christ with her Lord, then it is reasonable to assume that the work of Christ and the Church will be limitless, and that some blessed work for creatures not yet born is the work of all eternity. We simply wonder in amazement! We wonder at the greatness of His goodness to us, which is to lift us—the faithful few who make their calling and election sure—from our low condition to future glories interminable!

AUGUST 26

Love ... is kind—1 Cor. 13:4.

It is no more obligatory upon the Lord's people to denounce every wrongdoer whom they may meet in the street than it is for them to tell all homely persons they may see of their lack along the lines of beauty. ... Politeness is always a part of Christian character. In the world it may be polish, but in the Christian it is not merely a veneer; rather, it represents the true sentiments of the heart, developed along the lines of the spirit of life, love. Love leads to gentleness, patience, kindness, etc., and even in the case of disobedience it will hesitate to utter an unkind word and will avoid the same so far as duty will permit—Z '03, 153 (R 3194).

The word translated *love* here means disinterested good will in distinction from duty good will. It is the good will which, apart from obligation, but based upon a delight in good principles, delights in giving appreciation, heart's oneness, sympathy or pity, and sacrifice. Appreciating good in principle and character, it delights to advance good in principle and character; sympathizing with or pitying those who are treated contrary to, or who are out of harmony with, good principles, it delights to help them out of these conditions. It is therefore on the alert to plan and do acts of kindness for the blessing of others. It perseveres in this course, sacrificing even unto death in ministering blessings to others. It is kind—P '26, 84.

Parallel passages: Prov. 10:12; 17:19; 19:22; 1 Pet. 4:8; Matt. 5:44, 45, 48; 25:34, 36, 40, 45; Luke 6:35; Rom. 12:10; Gal. 5:6, 22, 23; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12-14; 1 Thes. 4:9; 2 Thes. 1:3; 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Pet. 3:8; 4:8; 2 Pet. 1:7; 1 John 3:16, 17.

Hymns: 23, 21, 90, 95, 165, 166, 198.

Poems of Dawn, 146: *Scatter Seeds of Kindness*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 77 (R 5417).

Questions: Has this week been filled with kindness? What were the circumstances, forms, motives and effects?

SCATTER SEEDS OF KINDNESS

LOVING words will cost but little,
Journeying up the hill of life;
But they make the weak and weary
Stronger, braver for the strife.
Do you count them only trifles?
What to earth are sun and rain?
Never was a kind word wasted,
Never was one said in vain.

When the cares of life are many,

And its burdens heavy grow
For the ones who walk beside you,
If you love them, tell them so.
What you count of little value
Hath an almost magic power,
And beneath that cheering sunshine
Hearts will blossom like a flower.

So, as up life's hill we journey,
Let us scatter all the way
Kindly words, to be as sunshine
In the dark and cloudy day.
Grudge no loving word, my brother,
As along through life you go,
To the ones who journey with you;
If you love them, tell them so.

R5417: THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTAINING BALANCE OF MIND

"Let all your deeds be done in love." — 1 Corinthians 16:14.—Diaglott.

GOD is the very personification of sympathy and love. As the Scriptures declare, "God *is* Love." And all who will be God's children, developed in His likeness, will be *loving* children. As St. John says, "He that dwelleth in *love*, dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John 4:16.) In proportion as we develop strength of character as New Creatures, this quality of love increases. In addition, we should find our judgment also becoming more accurate. Those who are developed in the Spirit of the Lord have better judgment than they formerly had. As the days go by, they know better how to sympathize with the world; how to deal with mankind; they are getting more and more of the wisdom which cometh from above.

CAREFUL PREPARATION FOR KINGDOM NECESSARY

Before we became Christians at all, we may have been under-balanced, or over-balanced—we may not have known how to deal properly with our families or our friends. Out of kindness and sympathy we may have been inclined to give them money, or to yield to their wishes in a way that was injurious to them; or we may have been too severe and unyielding. But as we grow in the spirit of a sound mind, we learn better how to deal with others, so as to be in harmony with the Divine will, the Divine Spirit.

When we shall have experienced our change and have become like our Redeemer, all of our powers will be perfect. Our love, our conception of justice, and also our conception of how to deal with others, will then be perfect. Every one who does not develop this character of love, mercy, justice, etc., will be unprepared for the Kingdom work.

The next Age is to be a time of purification, of purgation, to the world; and those of the Lord's people who do not now have character enough to give necessary stripes are not worthy of a position in which authority must be exercised. On the other hand, those who would give too many stripes would not be fit to deal with mankind. Therefore we all need this balance of mind in order to be ready for the work of the next Age.

PROPER AND IMPROPER OCCASIONS FOR ANGER

As we come to see that the whole race of Adam is fallen—some more, some less—we develop a broad sympathy for mankind. We grow compassionate. We desire to lift them up out of their degradation. We would like to help them as much as opportunity affords. Hence we are far from wishing to render evil for evil. We wish to be peacemakers as far as possible. Therefore, unless it would be injustice to *refrain* from speaking sharply, we should be careful that our words are kind and loving. However, even though our words might not be angry, there are times when sharp utterances might be helpful, but even these should be tempered with love; tempered with the spirit of the Master.

"BE YE ANGRY AND SIN NOT"

There is a difference between anger that would be righteous indignation and anger that would be unloving, unkind, unjust. We know that God is angry with the wicked, for the Scriptures so tell us. (Psalm 7:11.) This fact shows us that anger of itself does not necessarily imply a sinful condition; for God has no sin, and He judges Himself by the same regulations under which He judges His creatures. Therefore anger in itself is not sin.

In God's case there is no danger that He will make a mistake and be angry with the right or approve the wrong, or that He will be lenient with the wrong and thus oppose the right. His knowledge is perfect; therefore His conduct is perfect. In our case, however, if we feel that anger is proper for us, we should use a great deal of discretion. As the Apostle Paul says; "Be ye angry and sin not."—Ephesians 4:26.

In a case where an innocent person is suffering wrong, and we have full knowledge of the matter, then it might be our duty to manifest anger, righteous indignation. It would be proper to manifest a certain degree of anger if we saw even a dumb brute mistreated. If we saw the principles of righteousness being outraged, it might become necessary to manifest some anger, some indignation.

But these cases would probably be very rare, for the circumstances would not often be a matter of our business. As St. Peter remarks, we are none of us to suffer as busybodies in other men's affairs.—1 Peter 4:15.

If we see a parent doing to his child something that is not right, we should not interfere unless the child's life is endangered. If it is merely a case of switching or a box on the ear, we must not interfere. It is not our business. Let us as the Lord's children, ambassadors of

the King of Heaven, seek more and more to exercise the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of love and reasonableness.

AUGUST 27

Henceforth know we no man after the flesh—2 Cor. 5:16.

The Apostle did not mean that we should pay no attention to the shortcomings of the flesh, either in ourselves or in other disciples of Christ. All fleshly weaknesses should be striven against, and they may frequently demand rigorous treatment in the interest of the new heart, mind and will; but nevertheless, we are to differentiate distinctly between it and the weak mortal body, and are to love and sympathize with the brother or sister, while it may be necessary for us, in his or her interest, and also in the interest of the Church, to reprove or rebuke or otherwise correct the wrong course. The Apostle's definition as to how we are to know the two classes apart is that the unregenerate will mind the things of the flesh, while the regenerate will mind the things of the Spirit—Z '03, 170 (R 3200).

To know others after the flesh is to think of and to appreciate them from the standpoint of human nature. He knows others after the flesh who esteems and treats them according to something in their humanity, such as beauty, sex, wealth, strength, position, reputation, affiliation, *etc.* If we find ourselves more favorable toward some of the brethren for these and similar advantages than we would be if they lacked them, we know them according to the flesh. Our esteem of others should be based upon their relation to the Lord and His Truth. The more Christlikeness we see in them, the more we should esteem them; the less Christlikeness we see in them, the less we should esteem them, thus knowing them according to the Spirit—P '36, 95.

Parallel passages: Deut. 33:9; 1 Sam. 2:29; 1 Tim. 5:21; 2 Cor. 11:22; Gal. 2:11-14; Matt. 10:37; 12:48-50; John 2:4; 6:63; 15:14; Gal. 2:5, 6; 5:6.

Hymns: 170, 230, 6, 105, 78, 23, 21.

Poems of Dawn, 307: *Not Really Growing Old.*

Tower Reading: Z '13, 300 (R 5325).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? What were the results?

NOT REALLY GROWING OLD

THEY say that I am growing old—
I've heard them tell it times untold;
They think that I have lost my youth,
But I am glad I know the truth:

This frail old shell in which I dwell
Is failing fast—I'm not the shell;
With hopes eternal, still unsung,
My "inward man" is really young.

My "outward man" may feeble be,
And that is all the people see;
Inside I'm young and bright and gay,
I'm growing stronger every day.

What if my hair is turning white
And I am weak? I still can fight
The fight of faith, nor suffer loss,
For I'm a soldier of the cross.

What if my eyes are growing dim?
I still can see to follow Him
Who sacrificed His life for me
Upon the cross at Calvary.

My hearing may not be as keen
As in the past it might have been,
Still I can hear my Savior say,
In whispers soft, "I am the way."

My legs may bow, my back may bend,
As I approach my journey's end,
But in His strength I walk upright—
To do His will is my delight.

What though I falter in my walk?
What though my tongue refuse to talk?
I still can walk the righteous way,
And run the race, and praise, and pray.

Why should I care if time's old plow
Has left its furrow on my brow?
Another house, made by God's hand,
Awaits me in my promised land.

These few short years can't make me old;
Eternal ages will unfold
The glorious life He'll give to me—
The best of life is yet to be!

R5325: ARE WE ACTUAL OR RECKONED NEW CREATURES?

**"If any man be in Christ, he is a New Creature; old things are passed away;
behold, all things are become new."—2 Corinthians 5:17.**

OUR information on this subject of the New Creature comes from the Word of God. It is the Spirit of the Truth that bears the witness. "If any one be in Christ, he is a New Creation; the *old* things have passed away; behold! they have become new." [*Diaglott* Translation.] Apparently, then, if old things *have* passed away from us, and we *are* New Creatures in Christ, we are now receiving the blessings. There is nothing said about being *reckonedly* New Creatures. The change is *actual, bona-fide*. When God accepts the human *will*, He does not hold the New Creature responsible for any of the deeds done *previous to consecration*. The whole account is a new one.

We are New Creatures in the sense that God has begotten us of the Holy Spirit. God has given us Heavenly promises instead of earthly promises. We are no longer striving to see whether we can attain a higher position in the world. We have new ambitions. Our aim is to live pleasing to God. And in every way this change of sentiment indicates a transformation of mind.

Transformation means to *form over again*, across, different, in an opposite way. So we have been changed by reason of this change of our *will*. God has made us the promise that, if we make this change, or transformation, He will no longer *count* sin to us, that we shall have *standing* henceforth no longer as sinners, but as holy ones. The world does not know that we are children of God. They do not realize how fully we have given up the earthly hopes and are seeking a different prize from that which the world seeks.

The fact that this change is merely in the *mind* and not in the *body* does not alter this matter at all. According to science, every seven years a complete change takes place in our bodies, the new matter coming on as the old matter sloughs off. But one is not a new *man* because his *body* has changed. If this were so, we would have had several changes by this time. So far as the mind is concerned, personality is not changed. If we had lost a hand, we would still be the same personality; or if we were to lose a hand and a foot, the loss would not change our personality.

Our personality would not change in this event, because the personality is the mind, the ego. And so when the ego, the mind, is changed, that New Creature is distinctly separated from the other. The fact that it does not yet have a spirit body does not matter. The New Creature is the New Creature, only now he is the New Creature under adverse conditions; whereas by and by he will be the New Creature who has entered into that condition which God has promised—the Divine nature and everlasting joy—and in which he will abide forever.

OUR STANDING FROM GOD'S VIEWPOINT

We are now spirit beings in human bodies. The Apostle says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." It is not the *body* that is risen, but the New Creature. It was not the New Creature that *died*, but the old creature. It is not the life of the *old* creature that "is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3), but the life of the New Creature. The Apostle declares, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the

Spirit of God dwell in you." He says also that we are not only to reckon ourselves *dead*, but to reckon ourselves as though we had been *raised from* the dead. "Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"—Romans 6:11.

The body is not the New Creature, but it *belongs* to the New Creature. It is the *servant* of the New Creature. The New Creature is the only one that God recognizes at all; for He knows us not after the flesh. And we should live in the Spirit, and view ourselves and all of our affairs from this standpoint. We should "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:4.) Our viewpoint should be this: As New Creatures, we merely *inhabit* these bodies for awhile.

These bodies are our slaves and we are to use them as our slaves. The environment is unfavorable for the New Creature at the present time. But it is the New Creature that God is looking at. "If any man be in Christ, he is a New Creation; the old things have passed away; behold, they have *become new*." If he now fails to make good his consecration, fails to be an overcomer, he will have no resurrection; for all his *earthly* rights have been abrogated.

"Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit." We do, as New Creatures, have the fleshly bodies. But the flesh is not *we*; that is, not our kind, not our nature. It is only as the New Creature that we can inherit the Promise. Jesus was put to death in the flesh; that is to say, He sacrificed the flesh—He gave up His claim on the flesh at His consecration. And it was on the basis of His giving up His rights that the Father begat Him to the new nature. Therefore He said, My will is to do My Father's will. The Cup that My Father hath poured for Me, I will drink!—John 18:11.

Jesus would not stand for His earthly rights. His dying was not merely at Calvary. It was begun at Jordan three and a half years before. In the type, the high priest slew the bullock, which represented the Man Jesus. Our Lord gave up His life completely—His human life. The High Priest was another person. He went inside and ministered in the Holy while His human nature was sacrificed upon the altar, and His body burned outside the camp, but in sight of the camp.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOUL AND NEW CREATURE

Every New Creature is a soul. The word *soul* is used in the Scriptures, in a very broad manner indeed, as signifying *any* sentient being, any being that has sensibility, intelligence. A fish has intelligence; therefore the Bible describes a fish as *being* a soul (See Genesis 1:20, margin). A dog, a cow, a horse, is each a soul. An angel is a soul, or being. God is a soul, or being—the Bible says so. The Scriptures say that "If any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Hebrews 10:38)—this means *God's* soul.

This broad use of the word, therefore, in connection with any kind of sentient being, assures us that as New Creatures all of us are souls—intelligent beings. We might be

understood to be double souls in the sense that we were human souls to begin with, but that God has through Christ made a special arrangement for us whereby we are begotten again to be New Creatures. This begetting is of the mind; and only in this way are we New Creatures now.

This New Creature is not yet perfected. This new soul has not yet reached that condition which God intends that it shall have. The Apostle tells us that we have this treasure of the new mind in the old body—the earthen vessel. The new mind must do the Father's will, irrespective of the will of the body, or of the friends of the body, and what they might desire it to do. The new mind is to do God's will under all circumstances.

A spirit-begotten child of God may speak of himself as already possessing eternal life, which he does possess by faith. But the New Creature, the new soul, is not yet completed. God's promise is that when this new soul shall have been completed, we shall have a body like Christ. We shall be like Him. We shall see Him as He is and share His glory. We shall be souls on the Divine plane, whereas formerly we were souls on the human plane; now we are reckoned as in the transitional state.

DUAL SOULS—NOT DUAL MINDS

When we speak of being dual *souls*, we do not mean that we are dual-*minded*; for that would be a reprehensible condition. We are *single-minded*. Our duality consists in the fact that we have the mind of one nature and the body of another. A perfect soul results from the union of life-principle with an organism. It is thus with a fish, a dog, a horse. There is an organism, and there is vitality, a spark of life, before there can be a soul. The Lord's people were human souls, or had the powers common to all mankind, to begin with. Then they were begotten again. And the new will, the new mind, has at present an organism not adapted to its needs.

In the resurrection the New Creature will have an organism fully adapted to its requirements. But now it is a soul that is neither perfect in the flesh nor perfect on the spirit plane. And since the nature goes properly with the mind, the will, therefore the flesh is counted as being that of the New Creature, and the New Creature is held responsible for this flesh.

The Apostle suggests to us that not only our old minds, or wills, are dead, and that we reckon also our bodies dead, but that we go further, and reckon our bodies quickened, or made alive, from their dead and sin-disposed condition, that they may be fully our servants as New Creatures, that they may serve our purposes—"quickened by the Spirit of God that dwelleth in you." That is to say, so long as the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit is ruling in our hearts and minds, it controls and energizes the physical body.

THE SECRET OF SELF-CONTROL

God deals with us as New Creatures from the time we are begotten of the Holy Spirit. He has no dealings with the flesh. The flesh is under condemnation. God dealt with the

flesh of Father Adam, condemning it to destruction. Then He provided a way in Christ by which the race may be rescued from destruction. The Church's relationship to God is purely as New Creatures. From the time, then, that we become New Creatures, accepted of God, He takes these mortal bodies of ours, which are consecrated to His service, as a part of the New Creature. So if we suffer, it is the New Creature that suffers. And in this sense God takes cognizance of our flesh from the time of our consecration. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

Because our human bodies are vehicles for His service, God takes note of them. In proportion as we become strong in the Spirit of the Lord, we have the power to make the mortal body do what the new mind wills. But we are weak in ourselves. We cannot properly control our mortal bodies. God, therefore, gives us of His Truth. And the more we receive of the Truth, of the Spirit, the more fully sanctified we should be, the more fully in harmony with the Father's will, and the greater control we should have of our mortal bodies.

AUGUST 28

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season—2 Tim. 4:2.

This cannot mean that we are to violate the laws of reason and decency by intruding the good tidings upon others at times inconvenient and unseasonable to them; but it does mean that we are to have such a love for the Truth, such an earnest desire to serve it, that we shall gladly accept the opportunity to do so, however inconvenient it may be for ourselves. It is the chief business of our lives, to which life itself even is subservient, and hence, no opportunity for service must be laid aside—Z '03, 189 (R 3210).

The Word of God consists of the thoughts that God has revealed in the Bible. These consist of doctrines, precepts, promises, exhortations, prophecies, histories and types. To preach the Word means to make these known to others. We may do this in our language, in the language of others, as literature distributors; and in helping others to preach in these two ways. We should do it in season and out of season; always in the other's season, regardless as to whether it is in or out of our season. Our convenience is to be disregarded, if it is in the season of others. So only will we lay down our life unto death for the Lord's cause. If we consult our own season, we will fail to sacrifice—P '30, 110.

Parallel passages: Psa. 40:8; 96:2, 3; Eccles. 11:6; Isa. 6:8; 61:1-3; Jer. 20:9; Matt. 5:14-16; Luke 24:47-49; John 18:37; Acts 1:8; 8:4-6, 31, 32, 35; 10:42; Rom. 10:14-18; 12:6-8; Eph. 4:15; 1 Thes. 1:8; 1 Tim. 2:6, 7; 4:13.

Hymns: 70, 116, 210, 260, 275, 309, 18.

Poems of Dawn, 293: *Endure As Seeing Him Who is Invisible*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 140 (R 5893).

Questions: Have I this week preached the Word? Was it in or out of season for me? If I failed, what caused the failure? What contributed to success? What were the results to others and to myself? What lessons can I learn from the week's experiences on this line?

ENDURE AS SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE

ENDURE as seeing Him who is
Invisible. He'll point the way,
And solve thy deepest mysteries,
And turn thy darkest night to day.
Though storms may break on every side,
Though lightnings crash and thunders roar,
We have in Him a constant guide—
Just lean on Jesus more and more.

Endure in Him! He cannot fail!
Press firmly on! The goal is near!

Ascend the mountain! Breast the gale!
Look upward, onward—never fear!
Why shouldst thou faint? God smiles above,
Though clouds and storms may intervene;
That Sun shines on, whose name is Love,
Serenely o'er Life's shadowed scene.

Endure! Though many times thy feet
Slip back and stumble, rise again;
Succumb to neither cold nor heat;
Fear not the threats or jeers of men,
But run with patience; look not back;
True victory comes if we faint not.
He fails indeed whose pace is slack,
Whose zeal is neither cold nor hot.

Endure, though oft misunderstood;
Thy sacrifice is not in vain.
Remember, all things work for good;
Eternal joy is born of pain.
Oft 'mid the forest's deepest gloom
A bird sings from some blighted tree,
And 'mid the thorns the roses bloom—
Thy joy springs from Gethsemane.

Therefore endure as seeing Him
Who is invisible; for He
With cherubim and seraphim
And heavenly hosts will fight for thee.
Fear not! Press on! And reach the goal;
Rejoice in His unfailing grace.
Victory to the steadfast soul!
Eternal life in His embrace!

R5893: PREACHING THE GOSPEL A NECESSITY

"Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel."—1 Corinthians 9:16.

WOE is a word not so often used today as formerly. It was a common word in the old English; but there is a meaning attached to it at present, we think, that was not in the original word. Nearly all who read the parable where the Lord speaks of "weeping and gnashing of teeth" seem to have the thought that it means eternal torment. *Woe*, when used in the Bible, means the same to some minds. So these construe our text to mean, "I shall go to eternal torment if I do not preach the Gospel." This is because of the creeds,

traditions and customs that have come down from the Dark Ages, when the people were forbidden the Bible.

We understand the Apostle to mean here: "I should be very unhappy if I could not preach the Gospel; it would be a cause of great distress to me. In view of my former course of persecution, and the Lord's great mercy to me, it would mean a loss of His favor and blessing should I refrain from proclaiming His Message." The context seems to bear out this thought. So it should be a great distress to those to whom the Lord has granted the illumination of His Truth, if the opportunity of preaching this glorious Gospel were taken from them.

From one standpoint, the Apostle's words would apply only to the public ministry of the Word. From another standpoint, any one of God's consecrated people is a minister, ordained to preach; for ordination means commission, right, authorization. This commission to preach the Gospel is mentioned by the Prophet Isaiah. (Isaiah 61:1-3.) There the Church is brought to our attention through the great Head of the Church, Christ Jesus, who is represented, primarily, as the speaker. We read: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the Day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that He might be glorified."

MANY WAYS OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL

Here the commission of the Holy Spirit to Messiah was prophetically announced, long in advance. The Body members of the Messiah, who have received the same anointing through Him, have also received this commission to preach the Gospel. If the disciple of Christ properly appreciates the privilege of being a messenger of God, an ambassador for God, it would be a woe indeed to him if he could not proclaim the Message, to the extent of his ability and opportunity.

There are some who have the thought that there is no way to preach except by a public discourse from the platform. But this seems not to be the Bible thought of preaching. Jesus talked to the people by the seaside, and along the way; sometimes He sat upon the edge of the well and preached the Message of salvation; He preached to His disciples up in the mountain; sometimes He journeyed with them and talked. And so with us. Whatever way or time we may have for preaching the Good Tidings we should use.

The word Gospel means glad tidings, good news. We are to tell the "good tidings of great joy." This may be done in the daily walk of our life, as we meet the butcher, the baker and the grocery man, or our neighbors and friends. It may be done by literature sent through the mails, or by handing out a tract, a book, or by preaching from the platform. All of this is preaching the Gospel, making known the Good Tidings; for preaching

means merely to make known, and does not relate to the manner in which the knowledge is imparted.

BASIS AND SUPERSTRUCTURE OF THE GOSPEL

Many tracts contain no Gospel; they contain tidings of great misery. These we would not wish to circulate; for the more we spread such tidings the less preaching of the Gospel we would do. We are to remember that our Lord Jesus especially identified the *Gospel* with the Kingdom. Therefore we should preach the Good Tidings, the Gospel of the Kingdom. This has been God's method for gathering the Church, and is to be the witness to the world. We still have the opportunity for making known this good Message of the Kingdom. The Basis of this Gospel is the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as a Sacrifice for sinners, His resurrection and His ascension to the right hand of the Father. Its superstructure is the salvation of the Church and of the world—"whosoever will." The blessings of God are all through Christ.

The rich blessings of the Lord for both Church and world are to follow the Second Coming of Jesus. Then the Church is to be glorified and exalted; and the world will enter upon the Era of Blessing God has promised shall come with the full establishment of His Kingdom.

Whoever, therefore, understands this real Gospel, and appreciates his own ordination to preach it, must necessarily feel unhappy if he should be hindered from preaching it. Some can preach in several ways. Others can preach in nearly every way. Some can preach in very few ways; but *all* can preach in *some* way. The more we do, the more happy we should be. So we thank God that we have so many helps in our day—books, free literature, Bible Concordances, etc. We greatly appreciate all these and are seeking to make good use of them to the blessing of others as well as for our own upbuilding.

AUGUST 29

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss—Jas. 4:3.

Let us learn to pray aright, as well as to labor and to hope aright; and in order to do so let us be swift to hear, slow to speak, swift to hearken to the Word of the Lord and to the lessons which He has already given us, and to His method of instructing us and guiding us and blessing us. Let us be slow to tell Him what our preferences are; indeed let us seek to attain that development of Christian character which will permit us always not to seek our own wills, but the will and way of our Father in heaven—Z '03, 204 (R 3216).

Prayer offered in harmony with the Scriptural conditions is always answered, even if the answer may be long delayed. The conditions are that we abide in Christ and His Word abide in us. Many prayers are offered in disregard of these conditions. Such praying is asking amiss, and therefore is unanswered. It is not in harmony with the Divine will to answer such petitions; nor is it to the real interests of the petitioner to receive answers to them. Before requesting anything of the Lord we are to consider whether the petition is in harmony with our consecration and with the controllership of the Word over our desires and conduct—P '35, 117.

Parallel passages: Psa. 27:8; 66:18; 84:11; Prov. 1:28-30; 8:17; Isa. 59:2; Heb. 4:16; 11:6; John 14:13, 14; 15:7; 16:23, 24; Jas. 1:5, 6; 5:16, 18; Gen. 32:26; 1 John 5:14, 15; Luke 18:1; Jer. 11:11; 14:12; 15:1; 29:13; Ezek. 8:18; Mic. 3:4; Rom. 8:26, 27; Matt. 7:7-11.

Hymns: 323, 35, 69, 56, 239, 274, 183.

Poems of Dawn, 95: *My Hymn*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 182 (R 5707).

Questions: Have I prayed aright or amiss this week? Why? With what results?

MY HYMN

I CANNOT think but God must know
About the thing I long for so;
I know He is so good, so kind,
I cannot think but He will find
Some way to help, some way to show
Me to the thing I long for so!

I stretch my hand: it lies so near.
It looks so sweet, it looks so dear!
"Dear Lord," I pray, "oh, let me know
If it is wrong to want it so!"
He only smiles; He does not speak;

My heart grows weaker and more weak
With looking at the thing so dear,
Which lies so far and yet so near.

"Now, Lord, I leave at Thy dear feet
This thing which looks so near, so sweet;
I will not seek, I will not long;
I almost fear I have been wrong.
I'll go and work the harder, Lord,
And wait till by some loud, clear word
Thou callest me to Thy loved feet
To take this thing so dear, so sweet!"

R5707: PRAYER—ITS USE AND ABUSE

"And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint." "Pray without ceasing."—Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

IN THE first text under consideration, we see that our Lord used a parable to point out the lessons He designed to give. A parable is a word-picture designed to illustrate some truth, but is not necessarily a statement of facts. On the contrary, it seems very rarely to be a statement of facts, but is merely a suppositionary case. More than this, in a parable the thing *said* is never the thing *meant*, literally. The wheat and the tares of one of Jesus' parables were not literal wheat and tares, but were the children of the Kingdom and the children of the Adversary. So the parable here is of an unjust judge, who had no appreciation of justice. Notwithstanding this, a poor widow came to him again and again importuning for help. To get rid of her he finally gave her the relief desired.

The Lord uses this parable as an illustration of our coming to the Heavenly Father—not that the Heavenly Father is an unjust Judge nor that the Church is a widow, but that the parable is merely an illustration of the reward of importunity in prayer. The woman's persistency in continually coming to the judge illustrated what Jesus wished to emphasize. In concluding the parable, He says that if an unjust judge would grant this poor widow her petition because of her continued asking, what might we expect of our Heavenly Father? When His children cry unto Him day and night, He is sure to hear their prayers. This implies that the prayers are proper ones for the Lord to answer. We cannot think that God would do anything but that which is just and right and proper, and in harmony with this thought the instruction to the Lord's people is that in coming to the Lord in prayer we should make sure that we ask only for the things pleasing to Him. Therefore Christians who live near to God are the best qualified to offer prayer that would be acceptable and would be answered.

"ABIDE IN ME, AND I IN YOU"

Our Lord Jesus was thoroughly informed regarding proper prayer. We have His own testimony, "I know that thou hearest Me always." He never had a refusal, because he always asked the things in harmony with the Father's will. There must be two conditions met in order that our prayers may be answered. We must first have accepted Jesus as our Savior, and then have made a consecration to God in His appointed way. These steps must both be taken before we can be in Christ at all. When accepted of the Heavenly Father in Christ Jesus, we become New Creatures in Him. It is to the New Creature that all God's promises apply. Whoever has not become a New Creature by being begotten of the Holy Spirit is outside of all these promises—but not outside of hope; for we see that, in God's Plan, there is a broad hope for all the world. But in this "acceptable time," none can offer acceptable prayer except in this special appointed way.

There is but one sheep-fold in the present time. Only those who are in this fold are in God's favor. These have a right to pray. But there is a second consideration, after consecration has been made; namely, Are these *abiding* in Christ or are they going out of harmony with Him? God's Word must *abide* in us—not merely that we should once have read the Bible through, or that we read so many verses or chapters each day—but the Word must *remain* in us, its teachings and principles must be assimilated and incorporated into our lives. Thus we shall be able to see what God's mind is, what is pleasing to Him, what we should ask for and what we should not ask for, under His terms. All who thus abide in Christ, and in whom His Word abides, may ask "what they will." They may ask anything that is guaranteed in God's Word, and this means that they may ask whatsoever they will; for His Word dwells in them richly, and they would not think of asking anything not authorized therein.

BLESSINGS EASILY GAINED NOT APPRECIATED

Our lesson teaches continuity in prayer—not merely that we pray once, and then say, "I have prayed about this matter, and now I will leave it." But the question may arise, "Why *continue* to ask? God knows every need. Why not leave the entire matter with Him?" The Scriptures seem to answer this question by showing us that we need to ask for our own benefit, that we may be ready to appreciate the answer when it comes. If we get things without our realization of our need of them, they would come to us so easily that in our fallen condition they would be unappreciated.

Indeed it is true that the majority of people receive daily many, many blessings that they are never thankful for; they do not appreciate them. God sends the sunshine and the rain, as our Lord Jesus told us, upon the evil and the good; and He intimates that these are great blessings from God. Yet how few people really appreciate the rain as a blessing from God! How few, when they see the sunshine, appreciate the blessing God is sending to them through the sunshine! Because these blessings are very common, and come without the asking, they are very little appreciated by the majority.

But the Christian, having the eyes of his understanding opened, appreciates more and more all these blessings as from the Lord. Therefore as he comes to realize his needs, and what is promised in the Lord's Word, he knows that he may advantageously go to the

Lord in prayer that these needs may be supplied. His heart has come into that receptive attitude where he is ready to receive God's blessings thankfully and profit by them.

What, then, should we ask for as God's children? What do the Scriptures tell us to ask for? In the first place, they tell us *not* to use "vain repetitions." How should we understand this? Our Lord explains that we should not use vain repetitions "as the heathen do," who think that they will be heard on account of the number of times they repeat the prayer. The Chinese, for instance, have praying wheels, by which they can say a hundred prayers a minute. Thus they save time, voice, etc. But such prayers are only vain repetitions. Many professed Christians, we believe, practise vain repetitions; they say many prayers, which we fear often do not come from the heart, but are said over and over from an imaginary sense of duty or obligation.

NOT FOR OLD CREATURE, BUT FOR NEW

The proper heart condition would be one in which we would feel the need of the Lord's blessing and assistance, and would go to Him in a trustful attitude, presenting our petition, and waiting for His time and way to answer. As to the things that we should ask for, the Master points out in one of His discourses that the heathen, the people of the world in general, all not believers, ask for earthly blessings—"What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" So might a child pray for these earthly things in its innocence of mind. But children of God should pray for earthly blessings only to the extent that they would minister to the growth or usefulness of the New Creature.

As the Christian grows in grace and in knowledge he should come to realize more and more that he is a *New Creature*, and that the New Creature is to pray for itself and not for the old creature. The New Creature must take into consideration the needs of the mortal body which is its tabernacle and its servant, but must ask for this body only what will be necessary that the New Creature may properly develop, and may accomplish the work given him to do by the Lord. He may ask nothing merely that the old creature may be gratified; for the old creature is reckoned as dead. He may ask the Lord to supply his real needs according to His unerring Wisdom.

We should pray for strength to overcome the flesh, for wisdom to know how to deal with ourselves, for strength of character and for the development of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. We should pray for spiritual food, for grace and wisdom to keep our garments unspotted from the world and to put on the whole armor of God. We should ask for wisdom as to how to understand the Word of God, and how to appreciate the Spirit of the Truth. All these things would be proper subjects of prayer, because they are part and parcel of what goes to make up the New Creation.

In these prayers for the higher things, we are not ignoring the body and its needs, though we are not to seek after the things that the Gentiles seek (the name Gentiles including all those who are not in covenant relationship with God). Those who are in this covenant relationship with God should not ask as do those who are not in such

relationship. God does not hear the prayers of those who have never come into His family. They have not been instructed to pray. And we are to pray for things different from those for which they would pray. In all the words that Jesus spoke there is no suggestion that His disciples should pray for better shoes or dress or better home or how to pay off the mortgage. Jesus and the Apostles never prayed for such things. What they prayed for is a suggestion of what we should pray for.

We are to distinguish between prayer, petitions to God, and adoration. *Any one* may worship God, may bow down and adore Him. But in the matter of prayer there is a *limitation*. Only certain persons may pray to the Lord with any assurance of being heard. And these are they who have become His people by a definite covenant. Any who have come into such covenant relationship with God have the privilege of prayer. This was true of the Jews under the Law Covenant arrangement; and it is true of us who have made a Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord through Jesus Christ. But even when privileged to pray, we must note the conditions of acceptable prayer. The conditions are that we should pray in harmony with the Divine will and not seek to bend the Divine will to ours. This would lead us to study the Word of God to find out the things which the Lord has promised us, and we should not ask outside of the Divine promises.

BODY CARED FOR AS PROPERTY OF NEW CREATURE

We should appreciate the fact that throughout the Gospel Age the Lord deals with His children as New Creatures in Christ, and that all His promises to us are to the New Creature. The New Creature is interested in the old body, because this body is its property. The body's interests are ours as New Creatures only in so far as these interests are beneficial to us in making our calling and election sure to our Heavenly inheritance, in so far as their consideration will in no wise interfere with our spiritual interests—but no farther. We are not, therefore, to tell the Lord what we prefer, but are to take what He sees best to give; for this will be what is for our best interests. This does not mean that we are not to mention to God our bodily needs. But we are to do so in the way that our Lord indicates to us in His sample prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread," our daily provisions, acknowledging that the daily food comes from Him, whether it is fine or common, bountiful or not. It will all be for the best interests of the New Creature.

The prayer of one who asks only in harmony with the Lord's Word is certain to be answered. Good earthly parents are pleased to give good gifts to their children, gifts that they see are for their children's real interests. But if they see that the child is unappreciative of favors received, they might the next time withdraw the favors until proper appreciation is manifested. And so it is with our Heavenly Father. In bestowing His best gifts He waits for us to become really hungry for them. He does this that His blessings may do us the more good when they are granted.

PRAYER FOR SPIRIT-BEGETTING UNNECESSARY

In respect to the giving of the Holy Spirit some people have a wrong conception. Many not consecrated pray that the Lord would give them the Holy Spirit; but they have

not studied the Scriptures enough. The Lord gives the Holy Spirit without our asking for it specifically, just as with the disciples at Pentecost: they presented themselves before the Lord and waited. They were praying, but they did not know enough about the Holy Spirit to pray for it. But the Lord gave the proper thing at the right time. And so it is with us, irrespective of prayer for the Spirit, provided we meet the required conditions. When we make our consecration to God through Christ, we do not need to *ask* for the begetting of the Holy Spirit—no more than a child in its natural conception. The child does not ask for its own begetting. How could it? But after we have received the spirit-begetting, we should pray that we may have God's sentiment, God's mind, God's will, as our sentiment, our mind, our will.

God loves righteousness and hates iniquity. So we, realizing that we are surrounded by evil and selfishness, need to cultivate the spirit of love, that we may have that spirit which would appreciate and love righteousness. We are to learn gradually to love righteousness and to hate injustice and iniquity in large things and in small. We are to hate unrighteousness so much that we would scorn to do an injustice or an injury knowingly to anybody. The New Creature sees these things but dimly at first—what are just and what are unjust things, what are righteous and what are unrighteous things. We wish to have the Lord's sentiment as our sentiment in everything. Thus by studying the Lord's character as revealed in His Word, and striving day by day to be conformed thereto, we are "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord." And thus we become more and more filled with the Spirit.

EVIDENCES OF POSSESSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

As the child of God develops, the possession of the Holy Spirit is more and more evidenced in his meekness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. These are the elements of character, of disposition, that God wishes us to have. These are to rule in our hearts, in our thoughts, and more and more in our outward lives. Anger, malice, hatred, strife, evil-speaking, envy, jealousy, all these are evidences of the unholy spirit, the spirit of the world and the Adversary, which we as children of the Heavenly King are to put away. They are the works of the flesh and the Devil.

Since all of us have a measure of the unholy spirit in our flesh, some more and some less, it is right to pray daily for a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, more and more of the spirit of harmony with His perfect will. But we must *cooperate* with these prayers; for the Lord never arbitrarily fills any heart with His Spirit, even after the begetting has taken place. By coming to the Lord in sincere prayer for these blessings continually, by asking along these lines, we shall be preparing ourselves to look for the evidences of the Holy Spirit in our life. We shall be enabled to see whether we have more meekness than we once had, or whether we still lack in meekness. We shall perceive whether we are more gentle and more patient, whether we have more self-control, and in what respects we especially need to develop more in spiritual fruitage. Undoubtedly all of these qualities are lacking to a greater or less extent; but as we watch and pray, we shall learn to find the answer to our prayers; and as we grow in knowledge, in love, in Christlikeness, we grow in likeness also to our Father in Heaven.

IMPROPER VIEWS OF PRAYER

Prayer, as we have shown, is very essential, absolutely indispensable, to Christian growth, yea, to spiritual existence. Yet we have never thought of praying in the extreme way that some do. We have never thought of telling the Lord all about His Plan and of our wishes as to how He shall govern the Universe, and when and how to bring to pass our own will. We think there is far too much praying along this line. The sooner it is stopped the better. In answer to the request of His disciples, the Master gave them a sample prayer, which was surely very different from the prayers that the majority of people offer, who seemingly do not heed the example at all.

The proper thing is to hearken to the Word of the Lord and not do too much speaking to Him. We are to do a great deal of listening, while He speaks to us. The poet has well expressed this important thought:

"Master, speak! Thy servant heareth,
Waiting for Thy gracious Word,
Longing for Thy voice that cheereth,
Master, let it now be heard!
I am listening, Lord, for Thee!
What hast Thou to say to me?"

We understand that the Bible is the Divine presentation of the Divine will, purpose, plan, concerning us as His children. It is the Truth that the Lord designs shall sanctify us. "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." So declares our Master. He does not say, Sanctify them through prayer! The Master's prescription is that we study the Word and become sanctified thereby. And who is wiser than He? If we have not written a volume on prayer, it is because we find no Scriptural authority or precedent for so doing.

While prayer is absolutely indispensable to the Christian, as we have said, yet it is the Word of God which teaches us God's will and Plan and which points out the way for us to go. We believe it is the failure to see this that has been largely responsible for the great want of faith of many professed children of God. No amount of praying will make up for a neglect of the study of the Lord's Word, which is the only Lamp to our feet given us as our Guide in this long, dark night in which sin has reigned in the world. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."—Psalm 119:105.

We are to "pray without ceasing." We are to do this in the sense of not being discouraged when the good things promised us and asked for do not come quickly. We are to remember that the Word of Promise is sure. We are to rest in these promises and to continue to ask and to wait for their fulfilment—patiently, hopefully. Thus we pray unceasingly, "Thy Kingdom come," not by repeating the words every moment or every hour, but by continuing the thought, the expectation, the waiting for it, and by laboring in the interests of that Kingdom and in the preparation of our characters in order that we may have a share in it. We have known some to fall into difficulty by supposed

communion with God—remaining on their knees for some time beside an empty chair on which they tried to imagine the Lord to be seated, etc., etc. We believe that they were in danger of falling into a snare of the Adversary by such unscriptural proceedings.

For our part we feel that the Lord has already granted so many blessings that we would be ashamed to ask for many more. Our own requests, therefore, must be few. The Editor's presentations at the Throne of Heavenly Grace are thank-offerings, praise-offerings, indications of his devotion to the Lord and trust in Him, petitions for wisdom and grace to guide in life's affairs. We recall the Divine promises all the time, and not merely when on our knees. We seek to live in harmony with our prayers, and would encourage others to do the same. However, we are not all constituted alike; and having stated the matter from the Bible viewpoint, as we believe, also as viewed in the SCRIPTURE STUDIES and in other WATCH TOWER articles, we must leave it, trusting that the Lord's providence will guide His people aright.

THE HOLY SPIRIT THE SPECIAL OBJECT OF PRAYER

The reason why the prayers of so many Christians are unanswered is that their prayers are for things God has not told us to pray for or that they were not offered in sincerity. They have asked for wealth or temporal blessings, or perhaps for the conversion of a specified number of souls at their revival meeting, or something else unauthorized, or they have not really desired what they asked for, if it was for spiritual blessing. The Lord *might* grant a request for some temporal thing to a babe in Christ who prayed in his ignorance, not being properly instructed. But it would be different with an advanced Christian. The little child at the table might ask for something improper and violate the rules of etiquette without blame; while a person of mature age, advanced in education and in knowledge of etiquette, should know better. The things for which the Lord's children should especially pray are specified in His Word. The Holy Spirit is the special gift of God to His children.

When we come to know that the Holy Spirit is the influence, the disposition of God, then we know what we are praying for. We want more and more of the Holy Spirit of God, that it may make us more gentle, more kind, more loving; we want more and more of the mind of Christ (mind and Spirit being used here interchangeably). We realize that we must strive to have this mind of Christ. If we day by day cultivate the spirit of the Devil, we cannot expect ever to attain the mind of Christ. If we determinedly cultivate the Spirit, the mind, of Christ, then the spirit of the Adversary can gain no entrance into our hearts; and we shall become more and more sound in mind. We come to know more and more the perfect will of God as we are filled with His Spirit. Thus we are being prepared for an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom.

PRAY IN FAITH, NOTHING DOUBTING

The Lord in the lesson under consideration, tells us that we must not "faint," the word faint being used in the sense of faint-heartedness—"Consider Jesus, ... lest ye be weary and faint in your minds"; "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." We may ask

for more of the Holy Spirit, feeling that we need grace along some particular line. For instance, we may feel that we need more patience. While praying for patience, we should not say, "I shall never be patient; I was not born that way!" But we are to expect our prayer along this line to be *answered*. We are to ask and then wait for the patience, continuing our petition, knowing that the patience will come, if we strive for it in harmony with our prayers. An excellent and practical way to assist in this is to impose a punishment upon ourselves for every outbreak of impatience.

The Lord's people have long been praying, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth." This prayer has been offered for more than eighteen hundred years, and God's children have not yet seen His Kingdom established. Shall we cease to pray? Ah, no! We are assured that it will indeed come. Even now it is at the very doors! God's Kingdom shall be fully set up; and the time will come when there will be no disloyalty in all the earth, as now there is none in Heaven. Our prayers will not bring God's Kingdom one minute sooner than He has planned, but we pray by way of assuring the Lord that we are waiting for the Kingdom and expecting it in harmony with His sure promise. By so praying and not fainting, the children of the Lord are strengthening themselves. God's glorious Kingdom will be manifested—and *soon!* Then all who have attained the character-likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be exalted to reign with Him in this Kingdom.

AUGUST 30

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven—Matt. 5:16.

Not only shall it be true that the Lord's Anointed One shall be head and shoulders above all others, "the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely," but it should also be true to a considerable extent that all those who have been intimately associated with the members of the Body of Christ in the present life—before He is proclaimed King of the whole world—should have been able to recognize the largeness and grandeur of character in those whom the Lord has chosen for this place of honor in the affairs of men. They should have been able to take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus, should have seen their largeness of heart, their moral heights should have discerned in them the spirit of a sound mind—Z '03, 206 (R 3218).

Our light is the Truth and its resultant Spirit and acts. To let them shine before men would mean to bring these to the attention of others as instruction by precept and example. Our motive therein should not be to make ourselves shine in others' estimation; but rather that thereby credit may be reflected upon the Lord, who is the Author of all our good. With great carefulness should we seek to keep our own selves in oblivion; and with greater carefulness should we endeavor to cause the Lord's glory to shine before and upon others through our teachings, spirit and acts. Thus we will accomplish the purpose of our call—P '34, 110.

Parallel passages: Prov. 4:18, 19; Isa. 58:8-10; 60:1-3; Rom. 13:11-14; Eph. 5:8; 1 Thes. 2:12; 5:5-8; 1 John 1:5-7; 1 Pet. 2:12; John 15:8; 1 Cor. 14:25.

Hymns: 249, 154, 196, 230, 260, 297, 315.

Poems of Dawn, 138: *Instant in Season*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 96 (R 4992).

Questions: What have been the week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

"INSTANT IN SEASON"

IF while I walk the busy mart,
I find there one whose fainting heart
By some kind, sympathetic word
To new life might be stirred,
Lord, help me say it *now!*

Or, if upon the thorny road
I meet another 'neath a load
Of *sorrow*, which my tears might share,

And thus the burden bear,
Lord, help me shed them *now!*

If any ointment, rare and sweet,
I long to pour upon "His feet,"
To rest and soothe them by the way,
My hand let nothing stay,
Lord, help me bring it *now!*

R4992: "YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. 5:16.

WE NOTICE that our Lord's statement in this text draws a particularly sharp line of demarcation between the Church and the world. He is not *their* Father, but *our* Father; it is not *their* light, but *our* light. The Lord was addressing the Apostles in particular and all the "overcomers" of that time. But He gives us elsewhere to understand that we who believe the testimony of the Apostles are counted in as the *same class*, so that these words are applicable to us also today. This statement implies that the class which the Lord acknowledges as His disciples have some special light that marks them out as light-bearers. This light that has come to us is the illumination referred to by the Apostle Paul in other places. This illumination that we have received is the light of the Holy Spirit.

One does not receive this light when he says, "I will lie no more; I will cheat no more; I will blaspheme no more." If anyone were in a state of alienation from God it would be very proper for him to turn from these sins. But turning from sin would not make one a child of God. We know a great mistake is generally made in the world by thinking thus. There is *only one way* of coming into this relationship of sons, and that is the way that the Scriptures set forth—faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, full confidence in the Divine arrangement of which He is the Center, a faith which *works*, a faith which would lead us to the point of full consecration—*baptism into His will*. It is the strait gate and narrow way.

THE LIGHT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT

No one is in the family of the Lord at the present time unless this person has entered through the *strait gate* into the *narrow way*. Such begin to be marked by the Holy Spirit, which illuminates their hearts and minds, giving them a clearer light on things in harmony with righteousness. This illumination, this light which is in us, the Lord says we should be careful lest we lose it. If that light should go out, we would be in greater darkness than we were before.

In another place it is written, "Quench not the Spirit." (I Thess. 5:19). It could be extinguished entirely. We are, therefore, to keep it as an evidence that we are children of

God. And if this light be in us we should not keep it secret, not put it under a bushel. We should not say, "We know not the Man"—we know not Jesus. For if any one is ashamed of Him, He will withdraw the light from such a one. One who is ashamed of Him and His cause is ashamed of everything that is right. Such have no right to be in the Church; for the Church are to be the Body of Christ and joint-heirs in the Kingdom of glory and in the work of judging and uplifting mankind.

So, then, we must not be ashamed and hide our light from the masses of men. We have a new illumination. We are to set our light upon a candlestick that all within the house—our own family, our own household, our neighbors—may see it burning; that they may all know that we have a light upon the character and Plan of God; that we see the difference between sin and righteousness, justice and injustice.

OUR LIVES SHOULD CONFORM TO OUR PROFESSION

Whoever holds up a light must of necessity confess the light he is holding. Of some our Lord said that they confess with their mouths, but deny in their lives. We are to let our light so shine that it will bring honor to the Father's name. This means that our whole lives are to be in conformity with the professions we are making, so that others will see and say, "Well, that man believes what he preaches. It is good that such a person lives in our neighborhood." They may not always prefer us for companions, for wherever the children of the light go, it has a reproofing influence.

Let us not be surprised, then, if when our neighbors have a reception and entertainment they say, "We will omit their names, for we shall have some wine and some good times, and we do not want them in." We are not to expect the world to love us. We are not to marvel if it goes to the other extreme. Yet not all of the world will hate us. Some will criticize and find fault; others will notice a consistency and say, "It looks to me as though this is genuine."

We are living epistles, "known and read of all men." (2 Cor. 3:2.) The light is conspicuous because the darkness is general. We are not to consider this text as being in conflict with that which says we are not to let our left hand know what our right hand does, nor do our good deeds to be seen of men. There is a difference between doing our good deeds to be seen of our neighbors, and in doing them to be seen of our Father. The person who is doing his good deeds to be seen of men will be noticed by people in general, who will say, "Well, I do not believe that he means half he says. He is a hypocrite."

But the person who is living to glorify the Father will not do good to win applause for himself. Whatever he does in the way of charities, or in visiting the sick, etc., he will prefer to do it in an unostentatious manner, making as little show about his good deeds as possible. Consequently, the result will be beneficial to himself and to the person to whom he ministers, for he does these things for the glory of God.

HOW THE WORLD CAN GLORIFY GOD

The latter part of the text says, "and glorify your Father which is in heaven." It was not the Master's expectation that the little light which the disciples would let shine would have a convincing effect upon the world, and that they would all fall down and bow before the Father. Even if the whole world knew about the narrow way, only a few would be willing to undertake to walk in it. Therefore the Lord hides these things from the world, and reveals these secret things respecting the great "high calling" to the meek, to the humble, to those to whom the knowledge would be most advantageous.

How do the world, then, glorify the Father which is in heaven? How would men glorify our Father? We answer that there is a difference between vicious, worldly people and well-meaning worldly people. We are inclined to believe that the majority of mankind, who are in alienation from God and who have no ear to hear the message of the "narrow way," have, nevertheless, an appreciation of righteousness. And if without too much cost they could be righteous, just, generous and all that would be noble, as represented in perfect humanity, they would like to be so. Many of the world have an appreciation of nobility in others. They would like to have it themselves. The difficulty is that the cost of righteousness is more than they are willing to pay.

This class say, "We approve the righteous way, but at the present time it is too difficult. To walk in it would mean the blighting of all our hopes and prospects. We would have to consider whether we could make such transactions as would bring us prosperity. These things are too difficult now. If there was just as much reward to do right as to do wrong, we would prefer it. We honor God. We honor the principles of righteousness. We see some of the principles of righteousness exemplified in these peculiar people. They are of God. We appreciate these things. Indeed, it is the ideal life. They glorify God. Evidently God is a righteous God; and we hope He will not do too much harm to us. But we cannot let go of the things of this world. Perhaps we may become saints before we die. Who knows?" So they have the idea that they will be neither too saintly, nor too bad!

ST. PAUL'S LIGHT SHONE BEFORE RULERS

The influence of light is christianizing, civilizing, uplifting and produces a regard for right, an appreciation of right and wrong, a respect for God. But we are not to think that the building of cathedrals, etc., has had an enlightening influence in the world, nor that the members of these institutions have the light. They admit, themselves, that they are not saints. Only a small number in the world have been saints.

But this minority has had an influence all down through these eighteen hundred years—and it is having an influence today. Look at Jesus and the Apostles! See how the light from their lives and conduct has had an enlightening influence upon the world in leading men to honor our Father! Every one of the Body of Christ all down the Gospel Age has had light, has had influence to some extent and has had something to do with scattering the darkness and inculcating reverence for the Heavenly Father.

We see an illustration of this in the Apostle Paul, who was suffering for righteousness' sake. He was before the Roman Governor; and as St. Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance and the coming judgment, or retribution, Felix trembled. He apprehended; he was convinced. He said, "Here is a man who is living in harmony with these principles of righteousness. The life of this man Paul shows what right is, and that my life is wrong. And if the Lord is to reward right-doing and punish wrong-doing, this Paul will get good things from God. But what shall I get?" So he trembled.

There is a natural dread in mankind because they know that they deserve punishment. The Scriptures tell us that there will be a righteous recompense of reward. St. Paul's words were a great blessing to Felix, for that light which was shining out of Paul's life and words led Felix to see his wrong condition. He might have thought, "It will be altogether right for God to give me some punishment for my sins."

Again, as the Apostle was reasoning before Agrippa and Festus, Agrippa said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." St. Paul said, "I would to God that, not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." (Acts 26:28, 29.) Having the thought pass before his mind, however, did not make Agrippa a saint. But he had heard the things which led him to appreciate his own fallen condition. He saw that St. Paul was suffering for right-doing and that he was suffering for wrong-doing. He saw that God is a God of justice.

GOSPEL AGE THE CHURCH'S DAY OF VISITATION—THE MILLENNIUM THE WORLD'S

Another Scripture somewhat along the same line reads, "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles that ... they may glorify God in the day of visitation." (I Pet. 2:12.) This shows us a distinction between the day of their visitation and the day of our visitation. This Gospel Age, the present life, has become the day of our visitation, when in the Divine favor it is the time of forgiveness of our sins and of our being brought into relationship with the Father.

No one can have these blessings now except he can exercise faith; otherwise he does not have his day of visitation now. "We who believe" and "enter into rest" are having our "day of visitation." God has come to us now, and has adopted us into His family. And His Plan is that if it so be that we are willing to suffer with our Lord, we shall also reign with Him in glory. This is our visitation day of honor.

Will the remainder of mankind have a day of visitation and honor? Most assuredly so; they will have opportunity to avail themselves of the redeeming work of our Savior. If their ears are not open now to hear and their eyes to see, the day will come when this will be so; if not now, in the blessed opportunity we have, then it will come by and by. But if we have our day of visitation and neglect these things; if after having put our "hand to the plow" and having received of the good Word of God, we look back; and "if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more

sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" of the Lord.—Heb. 10:26, 27.

But those who do not share in this "day of visitation" will have an opportunity of coming into harmony with God later. If they cannot be reached by the gentle methods mentioned and the visitation by which God is calling out the special class now, they will have an opportunity in the next Age, when judgment will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet; when all the righteous recompense of reward will be brought to bear, to give each one according to his course.

AUGUST 31

If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up—Dan. 3:17, 18.

The answer of the Hebrews to Nebuchadnezzar, "Our God whom we serve," is worthy of note. They not only acknowledged God and worshiped Him, but they additionally *served* Him, according as they had opportunity. ... Let us resolve, dear brethren, as did the three Hebrews, that we will worship and serve only the Lord our God, that we will neither worship nor serve sectarianism, in any of its many forms, nor mammon, with its enticements and rewards, nor fame, nor friends, nor self. God "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth," is the declaration of our Lord and Head—Z '99, 172 (R 2494).

Whenever threats are made to God's servants to influence them to the wrong or to restrain them from the right, let them remember that it is their part to persevere in well-doing and leave their deliverance or non-deliverance to the Lord's will and power. Let them have the full assurance of faith that He is able to deliver them, if He will; and even if He does not deliver their humanity, which at most is devoted to death, let them remember that if they are faithful, their new heart, mind and will, receiving no harm, will by the fiery furnace be freed from the cords that bind them to earth, as in the type He delivered the three Hebrew youths—P '33, 111.

Parallel passages: Gen. 32:11; 50:20; Num. 20:16; Deut. 23:4, 5; 2 Kings 19:16, 19; 1 Chron. 5:20; 2 Chron. 14:11; Esth. 7:10; Psa. 31:1-4, 9, 14-17; 50:15; 105:14, 15; 146:8, 9; Prov. 16:7, 9; Rom. 8:28; Phil. 1:12.

Hymns: 67, 56, 57, 216, 313, 330, 333.

Poems of Dawn, 206: *Wait Upon the Lord*.

Tower Reading: Z '99, 168 (R 2494).

Questions: Have I this week trusted the Lord in trouble? How? Why? With what results?

WAIT UPON THE LORD

WHEN clouds hang heavy o'er thy way,
And darker grows the weary day,
And thou, oppressed by anxious care,
Art almost tempted to despair,
Still wait upon the Lord.

When friends betray thy loving trust,
And thou art humbled in the dust,

When dearest joys from thee have fled,
And Hope within thy heart lies dead,
Still wait upon the Lord.

When Death comes knocking at thy door,
And in thy home are sorrows sore,
Though age comes on and eyes grow dim,
Still look to Christ, still trust in Him,
And wait upon the Lord.

Whate'er thy care, believe His word;
In joy or grief, trust in the Lord.
Good courage He will give to thee,
And strong, indeed, thy heart shall be,
By waiting on the Lord.

R2494: IN THE FIERY FURNACE.

—Dan. 3:14-28.—

"Our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us."

PROBABLY twenty years elapsed after Daniel and his companions reached Babylon in captivity before the scenes of this lesson were enacted. Meantime Daniel had been raised to a very high position in the empire, as king's counsellor, while his three companions had been made magistrates in the provinces of Babylon. We know that their prosperity did not tend to make them careless of their duties and responsibilities toward God, for otherwise they would not have been able to stand the severe test recounted in this lesson, and which proved a great blessing to them because of their fidelity to the Lord.

King Nebuchadnezzar just before this had won some great victories over surrounding nations—Egypt, Syria, etc.—as he had previously done with Judah, and as the Lord had predicted in the dream which Daniel had interpreted for the King, which showed the Babylonian Empire as the golden head of earthly dominion. His great success no doubt had tended to feelings of pride and a desire for display. Yet these were probably not the only motives which led to the program of the great festival in honor of his victories, and the erection of the great image which all were commanded to worship. Nebuchadnezzar's thought evidently was to unify his empire, and as a step in this direction he desired to unify the religious views and worship of the various peoples under his sway. In this his example was frequently followed subsequently, for all rulers have seemed to grasp the thought that man's mental organization is such that obedience can be best and most lastingly secured through the acquiescence of the religious organs of his mind. In other words, since man is a religious animal, no government of him can be secure and permanent which does not have, directly or indirectly, the support of his veneration.

Hence it was that Nebuchadnezzar and others endeavored to associate the Creator and the king together in men's minds, that venerating the One they should respect and serve the other as his representative.

It was no doubt with a view to thus unifying the religious sentiments of his empire that this great feast was arranged, of which the very center of attraction was the great image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. This image, with its pedestal, was ninety feet high and nine feet wide. It was of gold, probably either made hollow or on a base of clay cement. It was located in the Plain of Dura, about the center of the walled enclosure twenty-four miles square, known as the city of Babylon. As it is a level country, and as the structures were comparatively low, the image could probably be seen from every part of the great city.

The appointed time for the festival having come, leading representatives, judges, treasurers, governors, sheriffs, etc., from all the divisions of the empire, clad in the gorgeous garments of the East, were present. A great band had been prepared, composed of all the musical instruments popular at that period, and the command of the king had gone forth that when the musicians should play upon their instruments all the vast concourse of people, representatives of his whole empire, facing the image which he had set up, should fall down and worship it, and thus indicate their loyalty, not only to King Nebuchadnezzar, but also to his gods who had given him the wonderful victories which they were celebrating.

As magistrates of the empire, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were necessarily in the great throng, tho it is quite probable that they, representing different departments, may have been at a distance from each other, each surrounded by his secretaries, assistants, servants, etc. Undoubtedly the object of the festival was clearly discerned by these intelligent men, and the question arose before their minds respecting their duty to God and the conflict of this with the probable requirements of the king. It was a crucial test for them, for they knew that the king's powers were autocratic, and that to cross his will meant death in some form. Nevertheless, they decided that they must be true to God, whatever the cost. It might be that their refusal to prostrate themselves before the image would pass entirely unnoticed by others, or it might be that, even if noticed, the incident might never reach the ears of the king, but such circumstances could make no change in the matter of their duty; whatever others might do, they must not bow the knee to any but the true God. Daniel is omitted from mention here, possibly because, occupying a different position as one of the king's personal staff and household, his conduct would not come so directly in contrast with the general conduct.

Finally, the hour of trial came, when the great king of Babylon was recognized not only as civil but also as religious ruler, and the image which he had set up was worshiped by the various representatives of his empire—except Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. Their neglect to bow was quickly brought to the attention of the king, for no doubt these, like all good men, had their enemies: some enemies through jealousy and rivalry for the king's favor; other enemies because, perhaps, they had been interrupted or hindered in dishonest practices and contracts with the government. The matter seems to have

astounded the king, and hence his inquiry, Is it true, can it be true? Surely, no sane men would be so foolhardy as to oppose my decree, and that in my very presence, and upon such a fete-day as this? Not waiting an answer as respects matters of the past, the king voluntarily proposed for them a fresh test of loyalty and submission, nothing doubting but what, now that the matter had come to his attention, they would be moved by fear, not only in respect to their degradation from office, but by the danger of death in the fiery furnace, to render prompt obedience.

Perhaps the king's mind shot a glance backward fifteen years, to the time when the God of the Hebrews, through Daniel, had told and interpreted his dream, a matter which none of the other gods of his wise men could do; and as tho he had this in mind, and wishing to impress the matter upon these three Hebrews who had dared to challenge his power, he made the boast, "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" In his arrogance of mind and under the flush of his mighty victories over the greatest nations and mightiest kings, Nebuchadnezzar felt prepared to have a contest even with the unseen and to him unknown invisible powers. He would not be backed down in his own capital city; he would demonstrate his power to inflict a penalty, regardless of what any of the gods might do in retaliation. He would show that he, at all events, had the power in the present time, and in this respect at least was more powerful than any of the gods of whom he had knowledge.

The answer of the three Hebrews was a wise one; seeing from the king's mood that the discussion of the subject would be useless, they did not attempt to retaliate by threatening him with divine vengeance; neither did they attempt to convert the king to Judaism, knowing well that the provisions of the Jewish covenant were not for Gentiles. They simply responded that they were not anxious to avail themselves of the opportunity to argue the matter with the king. They assured him of their full confidence that their God was able to deliver them from the fiery furnace, and out of the hand or power of even the greatest king of the earth; but they answered, While our God is thus all-powerful we are not by any means certain that he will deliver us; nevertheless, "O king, be it known unto thee that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Angered that his great festal day should be thus marred by even the slightest opposition to his will, the king did not wait to give another opportunity wherein the Hebrews might relent. He saw that it was useless, that they were men of character and determination, and he resolved that he would make an example of them before all the people. The form of his visage or his countenance changed toward these men; whereas once he had admired them, as amongst his ablest counsellors and magistrates, and an honor to his empire, now he hated them, as opponents whose course, if not interrupted, might introduce disorder into his empire, and lead to more or less sedition, if copied by others. In his rage he commanded that the furnace be heated seven times, or to its utmost capacity. The furnace, already heated for the occasion, may have been the one used in melting the gold for the image, and must have been of immense size.

Probably as a mark of his great authority, and to show that even the very greatest of his subjects were subordinate to his supreme authority, the king commanded that these three recalcitrant officials be cast into the fiery furnace by prominent officers of his army—no doubt to teach a lesson respecting the power of the army, and the willingness of its chief representatives to serve the king, as against everybody else.

The Hebrews, bound in their official garb, were evidently cast into the furnace from the top, because it is stated that they fell down bound, while the heat was so intense that it even killed those who cast them into the furnace, possibly by the inhalation of the flames, which might kill them instantly.

The king seemed to be having matters his own way, as usual; even the mighty God of the Hebrews had not delivered these men from his power. And yet the king was solicitous and eyed the furnace, and to his surprise beheld those who had been cast into the furnace bound, walking about free in the flames—seemingly uninjured. More than this, he saw a fourth person there, of most remarkable appearance, which caused the king to think and speak of him as one of the gods. No wonder he was astonished; he was evidently contending with a God of whose powers he had been ignorant.

Nebuchadnezzar showed himself to be a man of broad mind—in his acceptance to the Babylonian college of the brightest youths out of all the peoples taken captive; in his readiness to acknowledge the God of Daniel, when he had received the evidences of his power; so now, realizing that he had made a great mistake in attempting the destruction of three of his most eminent magistrates, and that he was thus defying the great God, Nebuchadnezzar was prompt to make acknowledgement, and approached the furnace, calling out, "Ye servants of the most high God, come forth and come hither." In the presence of the king's courtiers they came forth, and all beheld them that the fire had done them no injury, not even having singed their clothes or their hair. This was indeed a stupendous miracle, and doubtless was valuable in its influence, not only upon the Gentiles, but also upon the Hebrews residing throughout Babylon, who would thus hear of the power of Jehovah in delivering those faithful to him. Whether this had a bearing on the subject or not, we know well that, while idolatry had been one of the chief sins of the Israelites before this captivity, there was comparatively little of idolatry in its crude forms in that nation afterward.

Nebuchadnezzar's acknowledgement of the God of the Hebrews, who sent his messenger and delivered his servants that trusted in him, is very simple and very beautiful. He rejoiced in the noble character of these men, and at once made a decree "that every people, nation and language which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be a dung-hill; because there is no other god that can deliver after this sort." And furthermore, he promoted these faithful men to still higher positions, for they had still more of his confidence respecting their integrity. Men who would thus hazard their lives for conscience' sake could be trusted in the most important positions.

It is not necessary that we determine this incident to have been a type and look for correspondencies to its every feature. Without so determining, the Lord's people may readily find in it many valuable lessons and suggestions. Not all of God's people are in such prominent positions as were these Hebrews; and not many have testings of exactly the same kind as were theirs, with a literal fiery furnace before their eyes. Nevertheless, there are trials before the Lord's people to-day that are fully as severe. Who will not agree that questions respecting a public acknowledgement of an idol and thus a public disavowal of the true God would be a point more quickly and more easily decided by nearly everyone than some of the subtle temptations of our day? For instance, various idols are set up all over Christendom, each of which, it is claimed, represents the true God, and each of which demands worship in honor and substance.

Babylon the literal was in ruins long before the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos was shown in prophetic vision the mystic or symbolic Babylon "which reigneth over the kings of the earth" to-day. The provinces of Babylon to-day are the various civilized nations—really "kingdoms of this world;" but deluded into calling themselves and thinking themselves kingdoms of Christ—"Christendom." And parallels to the king and the image are also presented in Revelation—they are religious systems symbolically described as "the beast and his image."—Rev. 13:15-18.

Without at present examining the symbols in detail we note the fact that worship of this symbolic beast and his image are to be the great test or trial upon professing Christians in every province of symbolic Babylon in the end of this age: indeed, the testing is even now in progress. And we have the same inspired record as authority for the statement that only those who refuse to render worship to those powerfully influential religious systems (symbolized by "the beast and his image") will be counted by the Lord as "overcomers" and be made his joint-heirs as members of his elect Church.—See Rev. 20:4.

As already pointed out, the "beast" represents not Roman Catholics (the people) but the Roman Catholic *system*, as an institution: and the image represents not Protestants (the people) but the consolidation of Protestant *systems*, as an institution. We have pointed out that the first step in the formation of this symbolic image of Papacy was taken in A.D. 1846 in the organization of the Evangelical Alliance, and that the second step must come shortly in an active *living* cooperation of Protestants as one system; and that this infusion of *life* will result from the Episcopal Church or Church of England joining or affiliating with other Protestants under some general arrangement similar to the Evangelical Alliance.

While the severest testings will follow the giving of life to the consolidated image, in the near future, the testing has already commenced with many, for "Churchianity" is more and more demanding reverence and support, and those who absolutely refuse to worship its images are already exposed to fiery trials;—social ostracism and financial boycotts. Prominent amongst these is the Roman Catholic idol; that church sets itself as the representative of God, and demands worship, obedience and contribution to its funds. It is one of the most popular as well as one of the most arbitrary of idols. The Greek Catholic

Church is another idol: the Anglican is another; and the Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc., etc., all similarly demand worship, obedience and revenue. They have "pooled their issues," to a certain extent, so as not to war upon each other's devotees, but they unite in warfare *against all who do not bow the knee to some such idol* (who reverence and worship *only* the Almighty God, and recognize his only begotten Son as the *only* Head and Lord of the true Church, whose names are *only* written in heaven—not on earthly rolls of membership.)—See Heb. 12:23.

All who refuse to worship before any of these images are threatened with a fiery furnace of persecution, and the threat is generally carried out as thoroughly as circumstances will permit. In the "dark ages," when Papacy had a monopoly of the "church" business, it meant torture and the stake, as well as social ostracism. To-day, under a higher enlightenment, and especially because of competition for worshipers, matters are not carried to the same extreme, thank God! Yet in many instances there are evidences that the same spirit prevails, merely restrained by changed circumstances and lack of power. Still, as many are witnesses, there are methods of torture which serve to intimidate many who would scorn to bow the knee to a literal visible idol. Thousands to-day are worshipping at the various shrines of Christendom who in their hearts long to be free from the sectarian bondage of fear—who fain would serve the Lord God only, had they the courage. And there are some the world over who, with a courage not less than that of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, declare publicly that the Lord God alone shall have the worship and the service which they can render. None, perhaps, know better than the writer the various fiery experiences to which these faithful few are exposed—boycotted socially, boycotted in business, slandered in every conceivable manner, and often by those of whom they had least expected it, who, according to the Lord's declaration, say "*all manner* of evil against them falsely."—Matt. 5:11, 12.

But with these, as with the three Hebrews of our lesson, the chief trial is in connection with their faith; after they have taken a firm stand for the Lord and his truth they may indeed be bound and have their liberties of speech and of effort restrained, and they may indeed be cast into the fiery furnace, but nothing more than these things can be done to them. As soon as they have demonstrated their fidelity to God to this extent, their trials and troubles are turned into blessings and joys. As the form of the Son of God was seen with the Hebrews in the fiery furnace, so unseen, the Lord is present with those who trust him and who, because of faithfulness to him and to his Word, come into tribulation. How beautifully this is expressed in the familiar hymn,

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

And sometimes even the worldly can realize that the Lord's people in the furnace of affliction are receiving a blessing, and sometimes thus our Heavenly Father's name is glorified in the world, as in Nebuchadnezzar's experience. Sometimes the Lord's people who are bound, restrained of liberty to proclaim the truth, find, as did those Hebrews, that

the fire burns the cords and sets them free, and really gives them larger opportunities to testify to the glory of our God than they could have had by any other course.

The Lord's providences vary, and it is not for his people to decide when shall come remarkable deliverances, and when they shall apparently be left entirely to the will of their enemies without any manifestation of divine favor on their behalf. Note, for instance, the fact that, while the Lord interposed to deliver these three Hebrews from the fiery furnace, he did not interpose to prevent the beheading of John the Baptist, altho of the latter it is specifically declared, "There hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist." We remember that, while Peter was delivered from prison by the angel of the Lord, James was not delivered, but was beheaded. We remember also that Paul's life was miraculously preserved on several occasions, and that the Apostle John, according to tradition, was once cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, but escaped uninjured, while on other occasions dire disaster came upon the Lord's faithful ones, and that quickly, as in the case of Stephen, who was stoned.

It is not, therefore, for us to predetermine what shall be the divine providence in respect to ourselves; we are to note the point of right and duty and to follow it regardless of consequences, trusting implicitly in the Lord. This lesson is most beautifully set forth in the language of the three Hebrews, who declared to King Nebuchadnezzar that their God was entirely capable of delivering them from his power, but that, whether he chose to do so or not, they would not violate their conscience. It is just such characters that the Lord is seeking for, and it is in order to their development and testing that multiform evil is now permitted to have sway.

While such testings have been in progress to a considerable extent throughout this entire Gospel age, the Scriptures clearly indicate to us that in some special sense all of the Lord's people will be tested in the "harvest" or closing time of this age. Our Lord speaks of it, likening our Christian faith to a house, and represents the trials in the end of this age as a great storm which will beat upon every house, with the result that all that are founded upon the rock will stand, and all founded upon the sand will collapse. The Apostle Peter speaks of this trial-time, saying, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as tho some strange thing happened unto you." (1 Pet. 4:12.) We are to expect a testing in the end of this age, just as there was a testing of the Jewish nominal church in the end of its age. As in that testing there was a thorough, complete separating of the "wheat" from the "chaff," so here the separating will be complete between the "wheat" and the "tares," as our Lord declares. (Matt. 13:24-30.) Throughout the age the "wheat" and the "tares," by divine arrangement, have been permitted to grow side by side; but in the "harvest" the separation must occur, that the "wheat" may be "garnered," received to the Kingdom.

The Apostle Paul, also, speaks of this time of fiery trial, and, likening the faith and works of a zealous Christian to a house built of gold, silver and precious stones, he declares that the fire of this day, in the end of this age, shall try every man's work of what sort it is, and shall consume all but the genuine faith and character structures. (1 Cor. 3:11-15.) But we are to remember that such loyal characters grow not suddenly, in a few

hours or days—mushroom-like,—but are progressive developments, fine-grained and strong like the olive-tree.

Looking back, we cannot doubt that the step of self-denial recorded in our previous lesson,—taken for conscience' sake by the Hebrews,—had much to do with the development in them of the staunch characters illustrated in this lesson. Likewise we who have become "new creatures," reckonedly, in Christ, know that we are to be tested (if our testing has not already commenced), and should realize that only as we practice self-denials in the little things of life, and mortify (deaden) the natural cravings of our flesh in respect to food, clothing, conduct, etc., will we become strong spiritually and be able to "overcome."

Many deal slackly with themselves in respect to little violations of their consecration vow, saying,—“What's the use” of such carefulness and so different a life from that of the world in general? Ah! there is great use in it, for victories in little things prepare for greater victories and make them possible: and on the contrary, surrender to the will of the flesh in the little things means sure defeat in the warfare as a whole. Let us remember the maxim laid down by our Great Teacher—that he that is faithful in the things that are least will be faithful also in the things which are great. And this is the operation of a law, whose operations may be discerned in all the affairs of life.

Our Lord expresses the same thought, saying,—To him that hath (used) shall be given (more), and from him that hath not (used) shall be taken away that which he hath. If we start on a Christian life ever so weak in the flesh and weak in spirit, we will find that faithfulness in the little things will bring increasing strength in the Lord and in the power of his might. But it is in vain that we pray, "Lord, Lord," and hope for great victories and the "crown of rejoicing," if we fail to do our best to conquer in the little affairs of daily life. In other words, our testing is in progress from the moment of our consecration, and the little trials are but preparations for greater ones which, when faithfully attained, we will be able to reckon with the Apostle as light afflictions which are but for a moment, and which are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. 4:17.

The answer of the Hebrews to Nebuchadnezzar,—“Our God whom we *serve*,” is worthy of note. They not only acknowledged God and worshiped him, but they additionally *served* him, according as they had opportunity. And so it will be found today: those who have the necessary strength of character to refuse to worship human institutions and thereby to "suffer the loss of all things," counting them but as loss and dross, that they may win Christ and be found finally complete in him, as members of his glorified body, and joint-heirs in his Kingdom, not only practice self-denials, but gladly serve and confess the Lord in their daily life. Rightly appreciated, a profession of love for the Lord would always be a profession of service to his cause. Whoever is not rendering some service to our King in the present time of multiplied opportunities has at very most the "lukewarm" love that is offensive to the Master.—Rev. 2:4; 3:16.

Let us resolve, dear brethren, as did the three Hebrews of this lesson, that we will worship and serve only the Lord our God—that we will neither worship nor serve sectarianism, in any of its many forms, nor mammon, with its many enticements and rewards, nor fame, nor friends, nor self. God "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth," is the declaration of our Lord and Head.—John 4:23, 24.

SEPTEMBER 1

But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel—Acts 9:15.

It is because we see Jesus to be the Father's choice that we unite ourselves to Him; it is because we see the Father's character manifested in Him that we leave all to follow Him. Similarly, if we lend our aid, our support to any human being in connection with the Divine Plan and service, it should be simply upon this ground—not merely a personal magnetism or favoritism, but because our hearts are touched by the Lord with a realization of the leader's being of His appointment—Z '03, 206 (R 3218).

Expressive is the figure here used. As a vessel is used by one to convey some blessing to another, so the servants of God are instruments for conveying the Lord's blessings to others. As a choice vessel would be used to convey the highest blessings, so Paul, a choice vessel in every way, has been used by the Lord to confer some of the richest blessings of Truth ever offered by the Almighty. As he ministered to Jews, Gentiles and even kings, so he left a permanent blessing, whose sweet odor permeates even to our times. His service has been of the largest fruitfulness. Like Paul we should seek to be choice vessels—P '32, 136.

Parallel passages: Acts 13:2; 22:21; 25:22, 23; 26:1, 17; Rom. 1:1, 5; 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 15:10; Gal. 1:15; 2:7, 8; Eph. 3:7, 8; 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11.

Hymns: 44, 70, 116, 164, 210, 260, 309.
Poems of Dawn, 164: *My Heart's Desire*.
Tower Reading: Z '01, 182 (R 2823).

Questions: Have I this week testified to the Truth? How? Why? With what results?

MY HEART'S DESIRE

DEAR Master, long I've sought
A grain of "wheat" to find,
My heart's desire has been,
Just one with truth to bind!

Perhaps Thou canst not trust
Thy servant with this work,
Because some earth-born pride
Within my breast doth lurk.

If thou dost find this, Lord,
Oh, send affliction's fire,
Burn out the dross, the gold refine,

And grant my heart's desire!

Perhaps I've sought a path,
Thou hast not marked for me,—
Forgive, I only thought
Some work to do for Thee!

I own no will of mine,
The place I would not choose,
But simply give mine all
To Thee as Thou canst use.

My thoughts, my words, my deeds,
Dear Lord, make pure by fire,—
Ah, *then*, I know that Thou
Canst grant my heart's desire!

R2823: PAUL'S HEAVENLY VISION.

—Acts 22:6-16.—

"I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."—Acts 26:19.

WHILE waiting at Jerusalem for the Pentecostal blessing promised, the eleven apostles overlooked the fact that they were not to begin their work, nor to consider that they had the proper endowment of wisdom or authority from on high for any part of it, until they should receive the promised blessing. Their selection of Matthias to fill the place of Judas, as the twelfth apostle was, therefore, a blunder; for altho they cast lots, to give the Lord a choice, and the lot fell on one of the two they had decided upon, they were in this doing something beyond their authority. The Lord had his own choice for the one who would take the place of Judas, and this one already had been undergoing special training and discipline "from his mother's womb."—Gal. 1:15; Acts 9:15; Rom. 1:1; 11:13; 1 Cor. 1:1; 9:1.

The name of the Lord's choice for the twelfth apostle was, in the Hebrew language, Saul, and in the Greek, Paul. Under divine supervision, and with a view to his future work, without, however, interfering with his will, the Lord had carefully guided, in respect to the birthplace, opportunities, education, etc., of this one whom he foresaw to be his chosen vessel to bear his message to the Gentiles. He was well-born, well educated, inheriting the valuable right of a Roman citizen; was of a very religious cast of mind, a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee.

Paul, like others of his countrymen, was zealous for the Law, and for the promises made to Israel. He was not a wicked man in any sense of the word, but, on the contrary, was moral, upright, religious, having a religious zeal which led him to persecute Christ

and his followers as heretics against the Mosaic institutions. He himself tells us that he persecuted the Church "in all good conscience," and yet he freely admits that in his language respecting Christians he blasphemed the holy name, and was an injurer of the saints and a persecutor. In his religious zeal, he tells us, he was "exceeding mad against" the Christians, and "delivered into prisons both men and women."—Acts 22:4; 26:11; 1 Tim 1:13; Phil. 3:5, 6.

It was because Paul of Tarsus was not a bad man, but a good man, laboring under blindness and misapprehension, "an Israelite indeed," fighting the truth ignorantly, that our Lord favored him in the miraculous manner related in this lesson. Indeed, we may suppose that the Lord in some manner favored all "Israelites indeed," as we note, for instance, that he favored Nathanael, who at first was skeptical respecting his Messiahship, but was granted convincing evidence because of his sincerity. Similarly we may suppose that some of those who were converted by the miraculous manifestations of the day of Pentecost and shortly afterward (numbering thousands), may have been amongst the very ones who, but a few days previously, had thought of and perhaps had spoken of Jesus as an impostor, and his disciples as shallow-minded dupes. The Lord had mercy upon Nathanael, and assisted him in one way, while he assisted others, at Pentecost, in another way, through manifestation of the spirit; and now in a still different manner he arrested the attention of Saul, convincing him speedily that he was doing the very opposite thing from what he intended to do.

The heart of Paul being in a right attitude,—of loyalty toward God, of zeal for God, he merely needed to be set right; and we see that immediately the same zeal and fervency of spirit which once persecuted the Church was enlisted on behalf of the Church;—that he gladly forsook all to follow Christ, as soon as he recognized his true character. These things being true, those who refer to the Apostle Paul's "*conversion*," and who compare it to the conversion of an ordinary evil-doer, show that they are laboring under a serious misapprehension of the facts. Had Saul of Tarsus been a wicked man we could not suppose that the Lord would have been interested in him in any such manner, nor that any such miraculous means would have been used to bring his attention to his wrong course of action.

God's time for dealing with the unbelieving world is not in this age—that work is left for the Millennial age. He is dealing now only with those who are "Israelites indeed," honest at heart; and it is for this class, and this class only, that the Lord's providence and drawing and convincing power is exercised. In other words, God never proposes to change a man's *will*, but where his will is right and his ideas, his conceptions of proprieties, are wrong, it is in accord with every principle of righteousness for the Lord to favor such, and to open the eyes of their understanding: and this same rule holds good now, as the Prophet has declared: "None of the wicked shall understand—but the wise shall understand"—the truly wise. If any of the wicked gain a partial knowledge of the truth we may be sure that they will lose it, for, as the Scriptures again declare, "Light is sown for the righteous: truth for the upright in heart." (Psa. 97:11.) God has abundant provisions for dealing with other classes in the future, "in due time"—such as will be best suited to their cases.

Our lesson shows us Saul on his way to Damascus, armed with authority for the apprehension of the Lord's followers, accompanied by others who seemingly were under his command as a police force. All who know anything respecting the exceeding clearness and brightness of the noonday sun in Palestine, glaringly brilliant, will note the force of the statement respecting the great light which suddenly shone upon Saul from heaven about noonday. It must have been an exceedingly bright light; but apparently it affected Saul alone, and not those that were with him, tho they saw it and noted its effect upon Paul, who was blinded by it, as he fell to the ground. If he were afoot this might mean that he immediately prostrated himself, as one would be said to fall down before a king; if he were on horseback it might mean that he dismounted and prostrated himself;—but we do not incline to the thought which seems to be the common one, that he fell from his horse as in a faint. Rather, instead of being stunned or in a faint condition, Saul seems to have been fully possessed of his senses, and to have realized that he was the subject of a miracle. The voice which he heard was one, not of approval, as he might have expected, since he was supposedly in the divine service, but one of reproof: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Paul's clearness of mind is manifest in his inquiry, "Who art thou, Lord?" He recognized at once that the one who had thus power to arrest him in his journey was a lordly one, a powerful one, yet he wished to make no mistake, he wished to know who it was who thus reproved him, that he might benefit the more. The answer must have been a surprise to him, almost a shock: "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest."

Our Lord's answer shows us how intimately he stands related with all those who are truly his; those who touch his saints touch him, for are they not, as the Apostle declares, "members in particular of the body of Christ?" He is indeed, "the Head of the Church, which is his body," and the ascended Head feels for and cares for and is interested in even the weakest and humblest of those whom he recognizes as truly his. If we remember this it will be a great help to us in the midst of trials and persecutions—the thought that we are "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ," that "as he was, so are we in this world," and that while we are in the flesh, Christ is in the flesh, and that this will continue until the last members, even the feet members of the body, shall have suffered and have entered into glory. Let us remember this also, and specially, if at any time we are tempted to deal harshly or speak rudely or think unkindly of any of the "brethren." Let us consider that as we, with all our weaknesses and unwilling imperfections, are the Lord's members and subjects of his interest and care, so also are all of the brethren; and that inasmuch as we do, or do not do, to one of the least of his brethren, we do, or do not do, to him. If this thought of the intimate relationship between the head and the members could be always fresh before our minds, how favorable would be the influence; how often we would improve the opportunity, not only of suffering, as the body of Christ, but of suffering with the fellow members, and assisting in bearing their burdens. "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:16; Heb. 2:11; Col. 1:24.

We are told that Paul's companions also saw the light, but heard not the voice. Elsewhere it is stated that they heard the voice, but saw no man. The statements are not to

be supposed to be contradictory, but can be understood to be harmonious by remembering that the expression "hearing the voice" is sometimes used in two different ways. We may say to a friend, "I did not hear what you said." And again, speaking of the same matter, we might say, "I heard a voice or sound, but did not distinguish the words." The two statements might seem to be contradictory, but are really quite in harmony; and so with these two records of the Apostle's words. The voice was heard by all, but the message by Saul only.

Paul was an intensely practical man, and as soon as he understood who it was that had thus arrested him in his course of error he immediately inquired, "Lord, what shall I do?" This meant a great deal; it meant: I am anxious now to undo what I have been heretofore mistakenly doing; I am anxious to be your servant; I appeal to you for orders; I am ready to obey. "He, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6.) This, the language and the attitude of all sincere souls, meant full surrender. It meant, I am not more sincere now than I was a moment ago, but the eyes of my understanding have been opened, tho it has cost me the loss of my natural sight. Let me demonstrate, O Lord, that my crime against thee was not of heart, but merely of misapprehension of head; let me lay down my life in thy service.

And similar seems to be the attitude of the Lord's true people today: those who have been blinded for years with misconceptions of the divine character and plan, and who have blasphemed God's holy name ignorantly, in misrepresenting him and his plan; and who have persecuted Jesus by opposing his truth, and those supporting it—these, when now the eyes of their understanding are opened, feel as did Saul, that the remainder of life is only too little and too short to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light;—of him who had mercy upon us, and who graciously shined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord. (2 Cor. 4:4.) Those who do not feel their hearts burn, and who feel no desire to pledge themselves to the service of the Lord and his truth, have not the spirit of the Apostle,—have not the spirit which is best pleasing to the Lord and most esteemed amongst those who have the mind of the Lord. And if we have this spirit or disposition in any measure let us cultivate it, by thinking what great things the Lord has done for us, and by considering how little we are able to do in return to manifest the appreciation which we feel and ought to feel.

The Lord's answer, sending Paul to Damascus, and informing him that "there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do," shows us that Paul was in the divine mind and plan beforehand. The Lord knew that he was honest, and one who, when the truth would shine into his heart, would not be disobedient to the heavenly vision, but would be prompt to consecrate his life, his all, in the service of the Lord and of the brethren. Verily, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." The same thought is brought to us in noting the Lord's answer to Ananias, when the latter was fearful to go to Saul. The Lord said, "Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Such language could not be used by the Lord in connection with one whose heart was not already fully consecrated to the divine will

and service, however ignorantly it had been misused. So today we may have more hope of some who are outspoken in their opposition and enmity to the truth and its servants than for some who are its very cold and indifferent friends. The former may be truly consecrated, but blind, and if so the Lord's due time will come for their mental eyes to be open, and then we may be sure that they will be amongst his most faithful followers.

The wonderful light which flashed upon his eyes destroyed his sight. "Saul arose from the earth, and when his eyes were open he saw no man, but they led him by the hand and led him into Damascus, and he was three days without sight, neither did he eat or drink." We may be sure, however, that during those three days he did a great amount of thinking,—endeavoring to grasp, so far as possible, the lessons of his wonderful experiences. He tells us that he realized his experience to be nothing else than his seeing of Jesus. We need not suppose that he saw our Lord's spiritual body in its wonderful glory, for we are to remember the Scriptural statement that our Lord now is the express image of the Father's person; and we remember, too, that it is declared that no man can see God and live; that he dwells in a light no man can approach unto. And since our Lord Jesus is his express image and likeness, the same thing must now be true of him. Saul was but a man, and could not, therefore, have seen that which no man could see, and live. What, then, did he see? We answer, that he saw a representation of Jesus' glory. Since he could not see the fulness of that glory and live, he was permitted only to see a part of it, and that part destroyed his eyesight. This demonstrates to us the truth of the statement that the divine glory, if fully revealed to man, would cause death. Nevertheless, such an appearance of the Lord's glory to Paul made him as really a witness of Jesus' resurrection as were the other eleven apostles, for neither did they see Jesus, in reality, in his glorious spirit person; they saw him as he appeared in bodies of flesh, assumed for the very purpose of appearing and instructing; Paul saw him partially; that is to say, he saw some of the light from his glorious presence, sufficient to give him absolute assurance that Jesus was no longer, as he had supposed, the dead Nazarene, but the resurrected, glorified, heavenly Lord, a quickening spirit.

Let us note how the Lord chose a devout man amongst the disciples, when he would send a message to Paul, the record being that Ananias was esteemed amongst the Jews as a good man; and so we should always expect that those whom the Lord would choose as his special messengers would be good men, devout men, pious men,—not frivolous, not worldly, not immoral. And should we ever find any, claiming to be the ministers of the truth, of immoral character, we would have good reason to doubt them; or to suppose that if the Lord even had used them once, he would no longer use such after they had departed from the ways of righteousness. Nevertheless, we are to remember that we must not judge any hastily upon the testimony of the worldly, and especially not according to the witness of enemies of the truth, however religious those enemies may claim to be, but should remember our Lord's word, "They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake."

Altho the Lord, at the hands of Ananias, performed a miracle on the eyes of Saul, so that scales fell from them, and he was able to look upon Ananias, nevertheless, we have every reason to believe that his eyes were never restored to their former strength, and that

it was for this reason that the Christian brethren would have gladly plucked out their own eyes for him (Gal. 4:15); for this reason, also, that, altho a learned man, he wrote very few of his own epistles, and was largely dependent upon his companions, tho himself invariably the chief speaker and writer. This was the "thorn in the flesh," which the Lord was not pleased to remove entirely, and which the Apostle learned to rejoice in ultimately, when he came to know that through this God's mercy and grace would abound toward him the more.—Gal. 6:11; 2 Cor. 12:7-9.

And so with us: we might be inclined to think that if we had greater talents and abilities, or we were relieved of certain weaknesses of the flesh, it would be better for us and for the Lord's cause; yet we are to remember the Master's words again, that we are to "seek first the Kingdom of heaven," and that all things needful of an earthly kind will be added to us. Our desires and prayers are not to be for the earthly things after which the Gentiles seek, but are to be chiefly for the spiritual things. We are to remember that as respects our earthly interests they have all been committed to the Lord, and that he knoweth what things we have need of before we ask him, and that he has promised to do for us in every matter exceeding abundantly better things than we could ask or think, as viewed from the standpoint of our spiritual and eternal interests. We surely would not want temporal blessings which would in any degree hinder our attainment to the exceeding great and precious promises—the spiritual things which God hath in reservation for them that love him.

Let us note carefully the message God sent to Paul through Ananias. "The God of our fathers hath *chosen thee*, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that just one, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth." Ah! how few indeed realize the truth of the Master's statement, "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me *draw him*." How few realize that God, during this present time, is not attempting to gather the world into his arms, but merely, as the Scriptures abundantly declare, is taking out from amongst the people a peculiar people, a little flock, to constitute the Bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir. If all who have heard the voice of Jesus speaking to them through his Word, and who, with the eye of faith, have seen him, and into whose hearts the light of the glory of God, above the brightness of all earthly light, has shined, could but realize how great a favor has come upon them, it would indeed be a great stimulus to their appreciation of the privileges thus put within their grasp. They would see that all this signifies that we are called to be coworkers together with God, to be fellow-sufferers with Jesus in this Gospel age of sacrifice for righteousness' sake, and to be fellow-heirs with him in the coming age, in which the reign of righteousness shall prevail to the blessing of all the families of the earth, and the subjugation of Satan and sin.

This was the thought conveyed to Paul: that the meaning of the experience which had come to him was, that he had been found of such condition of heart as to be worthy to be a witness for God and for Jesus respecting the things he had seen and heard. And so with each of us; we are not to attempt to tell to others things which we have not seen and have not heard ourselves; but first of all the eye of appreciation and faith must be opened, and the ear of understanding unstopped, and then out of that which we ourselves hear from the Lord, through his appointed agencies and ministers, we are in turn to repeat to

others—dispensing the divine favor according to our capacity for appreciation and for utterance.

The Lord's declaration to Ananias respecting Paul was, "He is a chosen vessel unto me ... I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:15, 16.) Thus it is with all of the Lord's chosen ones, like the Captain of our salvation, Jesus, each and all must learn and prove their obedience and loyalty to the divine plan by suffering in this present time, that they may be thus fitted and prepared for the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom. And to be chosen to suffer much implies qualification for the higher glory hereafter. Thus it was with our Lord and with the apostles: and thus it is written, for our encouragement, that the sufferings of this present time work out "for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17.

Let us also note and apply the words of Ananias, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." There is a directness in this address that is worthy of being copied by all who have an influence upon others, and who are seeking to bring them along in the right way. Urge them to promptness, to full and complete obedience, to a full confession of the Lord and the truth. If they are not inclined to promptly obey after their eyes of faith have seen the Lord, and after their ears have heard his voice, they will be much less likely to be ready to make a consecration after a while, when the world and the flesh and the devil will say to them, Do not be an extremist, now; be moderate; do not make a full consecration of yourself to the Lord. Your neighbors and friends will think you beside yourself, and it will interfere with your hopes and prospects, and turn your friends into enemies. It will cost you too much; go slowly. The right course for every one who would give instruction is that of Ananias, to favor prompt obedience. "The time past of our lives sufficeth us" to have misrepresented the Lord, his character and his plan *to any extent*. The remainder of life is far too short to show forth the praise of him whom we now see to be the glorious one, the author and finisher of our faith.

The baptism of John, which was instituted for Jews, was a baptism unto repentance and remission of sins—not original sin, but sins against the Jewish covenant, and sins against Jesus, the Messiah who fulfilled that Covenant. This was John's baptism, the one that was appropriate to the Jews; for every Jew who was in harmony with his God and with his covenant had his original sin covered under the arrangement of the Mosaic Law, in the sacrifices which took place year by year continually, until the great sacrifice came, the antitypical one, which superseded all others. Every true Israelite, therefore, who was in Moses under the Jewish Law Covenant, by virtue of Christ's work in taking the place of Moses, and in substituting the New Covenant for the Law Covenant, was, so to speak, transferred from the Old to the New; from Moses into Christ; and the *typical* covering of original sin became *actual* in Christ. Therefore the Jews were everywhere called upon to repent and to be baptized for *the remission of their sins against their covenant*; that thus they might be in full accord with the Lord. This baptism for the remission of sins, John's baptism, was for the Jews only, and not for the Gentiles, who were not under the Mosaic covenant nor in Moses (baptized into Moses—1 Cor. 10:2), and hence in the transfer of the Mosaic institution into the Christian we were not transferred into Christ. Baptism to

the Gentiles means an admission into Christ—into the body or Church of Christ, as the Apostle explains.—Rom. 6:3-5.

Noting that the Apostle Paul was so faithful a follower of the Lord Jesus, and that his enlightenment in many respects so clearly illustrates our own spiritual enlightenment in this harvest-time, let us lay well to heart the Golden Text, the Apostle's words, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Let us, dear brethren and sisters, who have seen in the light of this harvest-time the light of the Lord's presence (*parousia*), shining above the brightness of all earthly light, giving a light of the knowledge of the glory of God, showing us something of the divine character and plan—let us not be disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but faithful to our privileges and opportunities in letting the light that has shined into our hearts and minds so shine out to others in our words, and in the living epistles of our lives, that men may glorify our Father which is in heaven.

SEPTEMBER 2

Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently—1 Pet. 1:22.

Knowledge is to be highly esteemed in the Church and is to be regarded as an evidence of progress, of growth; for none can grow strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, in grace, unless he grows also in knowledge. We properly esteem more highly those whose love for the Lord and for His Truth are evidenced by zeal in the study of His Word, and whose favor with God is evidenced by their being guided more and more into the deep things of God. Nevertheless, as in the earthly family we love and care for the babes and immature, so also in the household of faith the little ones and the dwarfs are to be cared for and loved and helped that they may grow strong in the Lord and in the power of His might—Z '03, 207 (R 3219).

Whenever the Truth is received through the Spirit, it is obeyed; and whenever it is obeyed, it effects a cleansing of our minds and hearts, ridding them of sin, error, selfishness and worldliness. But it does more than this: it builds up in every good thought, quality, word and deed. It incites us to remain dead to self and the world, and in remaining alive to God, to grow in knowledge, watchfulness, prayer, service, character building and endurance of evil. Especially does it fill the heart with love to God and man, and enable us to render both duty love and disinterested love to the brethren in Christ—P '26, 125.

Parallel passages: Acts 15:9; 2 Cor. 7:1; John 17:17; 15:3, 12, 17; Eph. 5:2; 1 Thes. 4:9; 1 John 2:9, 10; 3:11, 23; 4:21; Rom. 12:9, 10; 1 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:17; 3:8; 4:8.

Hymns: 105, 170, 201, 165, 166, 23, 208.
Poems of Dawn, 297: *The Arrow and the Song*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 57 (R 4766).

Questions: What experiences of the week exemplified the cleansing power of the Word unto duty love and disinterested love for the brethren? What were the successes or failures therein? What were the lessons learned thereby?

THE ARROW AND THE SONG

I SHOT an arrow into the air:
It fell to earth, I know not where,
For so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air:

It fell to earth, I know not where,
For who has sight so keen and strong
That it can follow the flight of a song?

Long, long after, in an oak,
I found the arrow still unbroke;
And the song from beginning to end
I found again in the heart of a friend.

R4766: THE LOVE TO BE DESIRED

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."—1 Peter 1:22.

THE word "souls" in this text stands, as usual, for the *being*, and not merely for the *physical* being, which is included. The purifying, therefore, refers to a thorough cleansing of the heart (the mind, the will, the actuating intentions, or motives), as the effect of such purification will be manifest in the outward life and conduct.

We purify our souls—that is, our souls are purified (have been purified if we are saints)—by obedience to the Truth through the spirit; that is to imply that it is necessary for us to know the Truth; not necessarily that we know *all* truth, but necessary for us to know the great truth on this subject—the truth that God condemned sin; to know the truth that the whole world of mankind came under this condemnation; to know the truth that God has provided a way of escape from the condemnation that is upon the world; to know the truth that there is but one particular way in which any can avail themselves of this Divine provision, namely, that of being justified by faith in Christ, and taking up the cross and following in his footsteps. When we presented ourselves in spirit and in truth, through faith, our sins were forgiven; we were accepted as New Creatures in Christ; our souls were purified; we were started in a new career.

In our text the Apostle proceeds to say that, having had this glorious transformation of character, through the knowledge of and obedience to the spirit of the Truth, we have learned to love the brethren with an "unfeigned love," a love that is genuine, without pretence—not merely an outward profession, to have a smile upon the face or to give a cordial grasp of the hand, but that through this spirit we have recognized that all who trust in the precious blood and are consecrated to the dear Redeemer, and are seeking to follow his leadings, are "brethren," regardless of race or color or education or poverty or homeliness. We have reached the point where our hearts are so full of the Spirit of the Master that we can truthfully say we love all the brethren with a love which is sincere and not at all feigned.

Now, having gotten along thus far in the good way, the Apostle shows us that there is yet an advance step of love, and states what next we must do in order to keep our hearts

pure: "See that ye love one another with a pure heart *fervently*." We must not only regard them as brethren and give them "unfeigned love," but should recognize the principle underlying *our* relationship to the Lord and *their* relationship to the Lord; how they, like ourselves, are New Creatures in Christ; and this should give us great sympathy and a desire to do everything we can to encourage them, to help them.

DISINTERESTED LOVE—STRONG AND INTENSE

This love is different from the other love—brotherly love. It is disinterested love; so warm, so intense, that we should be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren. This love is the kind exemplified in our Heavenly Father. While we were yet sinners he loved us. So the love of Jesus is unselfish, pure, benevolent; a love which undertakes to do good for us for our own sakes, not from a hope of getting anything from us.

The Apostle proceeds to say that we should not only have this love, but that we should have it with fervency, warmth, ardor; not with a semi-indifference, but with a real interest in each other's welfare—the rich as well as the poor; the educated as well as the ignorant. Our love should go out to these as we see any lack in them that we could supply—rendering assistance of any kind; using always, of course, discretion, for love learns to be wise, and to take into consideration our motives while we endeavor to do them good.

The Apostle suggests that we see to it that this is our own experience; not merely that it is a principle which we recognize, but that we should give heed to ourselves that this should be accomplished in us, in our own lives. It would not be natural to have that benevolence of mind which would practise forgiveness of those who trespass against us. But when we think of the fact that the whole race is fallen and degraded through heredity, it should make us sympathetic; if some are more depraved, we should have the more sympathy for them. As we think sympathetically along those lines, our sympathetic love will increase; as we practise sympathetic love the New Creature develops.

Our Lord Jesus says, "Love one another, as I have loved you." Set this standard before you. Our love for the brethren might, at first, be merely obedience in following this command; but as we follow on, obeying the Divine command, our love increases, our sympathy expands. The Apostle says we must see to it that we do not neglect this. If we fail to heed this admonition we are not of the kind that the Father is choosing; for the Apostle also tells us that he predestinated that all those who should be members of the Body of Christ should be copies of him; copies in having an unfeigned and fervent love.

STRENGTH IN THE LORD PROPORTIONATE TO KNOWLEDGE OF HIM

No one can grow strong in the Lord unless he grows also in knowledge. We properly esteem most highly those whose love for the Lord and for his Truth are evidenced by their zeal in the study of his Word, and whose favor with God is manifested by their being guided more into the deep things of God.

Nevertheless, the weaker ones of the household of faith are to be cared for and loved and helped that they may grow strong in the Lord. And just here the Apostle offers another word of counsel, saying, "We, then, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." (Rom. 15:1.) This does not imply that we should not expostulate with such a one and endeavor to help him get rid of his infirmity. This we should do, in the spirit of meekness and kindness, while we endure with gentleness the trial of our patience, not seeking to please ourselves, but rather to help a weaker brother or sister. "Let every one of us," as the Apostle enjoins, "please his neighbor [brother] *for his good, to edification*"—i.e., not by simply ignoring his fault as though we considered it all right, but, while kindly urging him to strive against it, still humbly and patiently submitting to the discomfort it brings to us.

If this spirit prevails among the members of the Lord's Body, the members will all have a mutual love and a mutual care one for another—a care which seeks to encourage and strengthen all that is good and to discourage all that is unbecoming, and a love which throws its mantle over a deformity and endeavors to conceal a fault, rather than to expose the weaker brother to the reproach of others.

For such self-sacrificing love how necessary is the spirit of humility and gentleness and patience and faith! How forceful are the Master's words, "Except ye be converted [from the spirit of the world to the Spirit of Christ] and become as little children [in meekness and teachableness], ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven."—Matt. 18:1-6.

SEPTEMBER 3

I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings—Hosea 6:6.

He who gives his will, his heart, to the Lord, gives all; he who gives not his will, who comes not in obedience of heart unto the Lord, can offer no sacrifice to the Lord that could be acceptable. "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice" is a lesson which should be deeply engraved upon the hearts of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. To have the spirit of obedience is necessary, too, and whoever has the spirit of obedience will not only obey the Divine will but also will seek to know the Divine will more and more that he may obey it. It is of this class that the Scriptures declare, "His word was found and I did eat it"; and again, in the words of our Lord, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart"—Z '03, 220 (R 3224).

Mercy is compassion relieving the unfortunate. Sacrifice and burnt offering in this passage are a feverish activity contrary to the Truth and its Spirit. The knowledge of God is the Divine Truth. We are not to understand the Lord to mean that He does not desire our service; rather the thought is that the Lord prefers by far to have us keep the Truth and its spirit of sympathy in our hearts even apart from service, rather than to have us serve ever so diligently contrary to the Truth and its Spirit. A merciful and intelligent saint is more pleasing to the Lord than an active and ignorant worker who is unsaintly in his character. Mercy, service and knowledge blended are the ideals to be sought—P '36, 109, 110.

Parallel passages: 1 Sam. 15:22; Psa. 50:7-15; Eccles. 5:1; Isa. 1:10-20; 58; Matt. 12:7; Mic. 6:6-8; Jer. 7:21-28; Dan. 4:27; Amos 5:21-26; Matt. 5:7; 9:13; Prov. 21:3; Mark 12:33; Hosea 4:1; 6:6; 1 Chron. 29:9; Jer. 22:16; 1 John 2:3; 3:6.

Hymns: 154, 22, 49, 160, 134, 299, 326.

Poems of Dawn, 160: *Cumbered With Much Serving.*

Tower Read Z '13, 275 (R 5309).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What did they result?

CUMBERED WITH MUCH SERVING

CHRIST never asks of us such arduous labor
As leaves no time for resting at His feet;
This waiting attitude of expectation
He oftentimes counts a service most complete.

He sometimes wants our ear, our rapt attention,
That He some sweetest secret may impart;

'Tis always in the time of deepest silence
that heart finds fullest fellowship with heart.

We sometimes wonder why the Lord has placed us
Within a sphere so narrow, so obscure,
That nothing we call work can find an entrance;
There's only room to suffer—to endure.

Well, God loves patience; souls that dwell in stillness,
Doing the little things, or resting quite,
May just as perfectly fulfill their mission,
Be just as useful in the Father's sight,

As they who grapple with some giant evil,
Clearing a path that every eye may see;
Our Savior cares for cheerful acquiescence
Rather than for a busy ministry.

And yet He does love service, where 'tis given
By grateful love that clothes itself in deed;
But work that's done beneath the scourge of duty,
Be sure to such He gives but little heed.

Then seek to please Him, whatso'er He bids thee,
Whether to do, to suffer, to lie still;
"Twill matter little by what path He leads us,
If in it all we sought to do His will.

*R5309: MERCY AND TRUTH COMPONENT ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN
CHARACTER*

"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee; bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart." "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Prov. 3:3; Micah 6:8.

MERCY and Truth are great principles of righteousness. Truth and righteousness are, we may say, synonymous. That which is *right* is *true*, and that which is *true*—firm, faithful, steady, genuine—is usually *right*. The record does not say that we shall bind justice about our neck. Justice is a quality which we are not permitted to exalt too highly, except in our hearts and minds, as a principle of the Divine standard. We are to remember that there is none righteous, no, not one—none perfect. Hence *our* course in respect to Justice cannot be the same as that of our Heavenly Father. He recognizes no lower standard than justice, up to which everything must measure.

GIVE MERCY AND TRUTH PROMINENT PLACE

If we are acceptable to the Father, it can be only by righteousness. And if we have not righteousness, it must be obtained from Christ; for God receives nothing short of perfection. Though imperfect in ourselves, we are to come up to the standard of justice as nearly as possible in our own personal conduct, but we are not to exact full justice from mankind. Since they have no one to *make good* for them, it is our duty to be benevolent toward them, and thus emulate the character of God, who is merciful. While He keeps the two qualities, Justice and Mercy, distinctly separate in His dealings, it is not for us to do so.

For one to keep the principles of truth and of righteousness before his own mind, is to be a thoroughly upright man or woman, one in whom truth, purity, goodness, will be in control. But a person who has merely these principles in control should cultivate more and more the quality of *mercy*. We should bind these about our neck. The thought is that of a necklace, or ornamental band. As a man puts around his neck a cravat, with a jewel in it as an ornament, placed where it will be displayed, so these qualities of character are jewels. Give them a prominent place; for they will help to make you better, help to make you more acceptable to the Lord.

The preferable place for the display of a jewel is the neck. There a jewel is especially conspicuous and ornamental. So we should fasten these noble qualities of character where they will be manifest in all the affairs of life. Whether we buy or sell, or whatever we do, we should wear these ornaments. They will show what is the character of the man or woman—right on the outside, in the very front. They should be seen as we meet others. There should be nothing mean, nothing contemptible, nothing niggardly about us.

RE-WRITING MERCY AND TRUTH UPON THE HEART

More than this, we are to write mercy and truth in our hearts. We are to remember that originally God wrote the Divine Law in Adam's heart. We know that in the Divine heart, the Divine character, are the qualities of Truth and Mercy. God is merciful, kind and loving. And as God has these traits of character, so when He made man in His own image, His own likeness, man was created with these qualities in his character. Man was not created an unrighteous, an untruthful being.

But man fell from his original perfection. With the centuries of falling and imperfection of mind and body, and with every interest pressing for self-gratification at the expense of others, these principles of mercy and truth have become largely effaced from our hearts, just as the constant dropping of water, and the general wear and tear of the weather would tend to efface the original inscription on a stone. In time one could scarcely discern the characters. So we see in mankind that some have apparently lost all sense of justice, all sense of mercy, nearly all sense of patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness and love. All these qualities that belong to the heart, as originally placed there by God, have been more or less effaced—in some more than in others.

PURPOSE OF GOD'S PROVIDENCES

Under the terms of the New Covenant and through the ministrations of Christ's Kingdom, God purposes to re-write upon the heart of man the original character which was in his heart, and which has been effaced by selfishness. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah. ... I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." (Jer. 31:31-33.) "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."—Ezekiel 36:26.

God's Law is the Law of truth and mercy. Truth would include everything righteous, toward God and toward man. Mercy includes all the graces of character. The Millennium will be the time for the re-writing of these qualities in the character. And this work of re-writing the Divine character in the heart, which will progress in the world by and by, for a thousand years, is already begun in the Church. We write these qualities within our own hearts. The entering the School of Christ is voluntary, not compulsory. In the next Age mankind *must* write these qualities in their hearts, through the assistance of the Mediator. There will be stripes to bring mankind to righteousness. And if they are intentionally unwilling to obey the Laws of righteousness, they will be destroyed.

But now obedience is a voluntary matter. We declare that we desire to have these lessons written in our hearts; and to attain this end, we enter the School and submit ourselves to the great Teacher. Then, by the various providences of our lives, He shows us where we have not yet engraved these qualities within our hearts. As we pray for patience, He gives us lessons of experience that will engender this quality in our hearts, and that will strengthen it more and more. As we pray for love, He gives us tests of love. As we pray that we may develop mercy, we find more opposition, which will develop mercy. Thus God gives us opportunities for the writing of truth and mercy in our hearts.

We must attain to that condition of heart where we shall *love* truth and righteousness, and where we shall *hate* iniquity and unrighteousness. As the people of God, we have the first opportunity now to develop these traits. And the Lord tells us that if we prove faithful in learning our lessons, it is His intention to use us during the Millennial Reign, His intention to make us judges of the world—its rulers, teachers.

THE JEWISH LAW HELPFUL TO CHRISTIANS

The words of our second text were addressed to the Hebrew people and not to Christians; for there were no Christians at that time, of course. The words do not seem to be prophetic, but an exhortation to the people. Apparently the Jews thought that the Lord was asking too much of them; and since this was so, they felt that they should not take the Law too seriously. The Lord seems to bring the matter down to a specific statement: What is required of thee but three things; namely, to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? This would seem to be the sum total of the Law.

The Lord was looking to see Israel live as nearly up to the requirements of the Law as possible. And He purposed to bring them, in due time, the promised New Covenant, which would take away the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, thus making them tender-hearted. But if now they would walk as nearly as possible in harmony with the requirements of this law, doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with their God, they would be blessed accordingly.

While this Law was given to the Hebrews alone, nevertheless the principles inculcated therein are applicable to the whole world. Everybody who would have any standing with the Lord, is required to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly. Therefore every statement of the Law, in that it gives the Christian a conception of God's standards, is helpful to the Christian; it shows him the standards of perfection. But the standard of a Christian goes higher than that of the Law. The Law is merely an amplification of the Golden Rule—Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you. Deal justly with others, if you would expect them to deal justly with you; and be merciful to others, if you would expect them to be merciful toward you.

In thinking of these qualities and considering which should be put first, we decide that in our conduct toward another, we could not think for a moment of giving anything less than *justice*. Additionally we might be as merciful as the circumstances would permit. But nothing *less* than justice should be thought of. In our requirements of others, however, we are—as before stated—not to expect full justice. Remember that the whole human family are imperfect. If by the grace of God we are able to be more just or more merciful than the average, it is through God's Spirit.

GOD'S STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUS CONDUCT

To walk humbly with the Lord would imply that we were in that condition of mind in which we could be taught of Him, could appreciate His goodness and our own insignificance; that we were receiving whatever instructions He was sending. While God made our race in His image, we have largely lost that image. Therefore we should be very humble and teachable in all things.

Comparing God's requirements of Israel, as given in the text, with His requirements of the Church, we would say that God *requires* nothing more than this from the Church. This is as much as justice could require from any creature. The peculiarity of the position of the Church is that it is not one of *requirement*, but of *privilege*. But we see operating in the Church a still higher principle than that of Law; namely, that of *sacrifice*. As Jesus loved the Father and loved righteousness, and sacrificed His earthly will and earthly ambitions and privileges, so He set us an example that we should walk in His steps. It was not required of *Him* that He should do more than justice, but He was *permitted* to do more. And so with the Church. *We* are not required to do more than justice, but are permitted to do more. If we present our bodies living sacrifices, and are faithful to the end, the Lord will count us among those to whom He will be pleased to give, very soon, the glorious Kingdom, the Kingdom for which we pray.

VARIOUS DEGREES OF LOVE

After we came voluntarily into this condition of sacrifice, it became a bondage to us in that we had taken vows to this effect, and we are bound by *our own vows*. We vowed that we would lay down our lives in harmony with the invitation: "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." Still the Lord is not requiring more of us than justice. But He is waiting and watching to see to what extent we will be faithful to the agreement of our Covenant. If we are joint-sacrificers with Jesus, then we shall become joint-heirs with Him. At our consecration, we took His yoke upon us. Could we go back and take up the privilege of Restitution? No; this we gave up entirely! The only thing for us is to fulfil our Covenant of Sacrifice; and rebellion against that Covenant would mean the Second Death, everlasting destruction.

There are various degrees of love. That degree to which we have consecrated ourselves is the sacrificing love, which goes beyond what would be *just* to a brother, a neighbor or an enemy. This is the Love of God, which is an all-absorbing, an all-comprehensive love.

That the requirements of the texts are very reasonable will be conceded by all. That God could not require less from those whom He is educating for the future judging of the world, is evident, and yet all of these qualities specified through the Prophet are comprehended in the one word—*Love*. Love requires that we shall deal justly with our neighbors, with our brethren, with our families, with ourselves; that we shall seek to cultivate our appreciation of the rights of others—their physical rights, their moral and intellectual rights, their liberties; and that, appreciating these, we shall in no sense of the word seek to abridge or deny them. But, additionally, Love leads us to have the spirit of sacrifice that gladly lays down life itself for the brethren.

SEPTEMBER 4

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment—1 John 4:18.

Mighty, imposing and terrifying indeed is the influence of fear, except upon those who have learned to know the Lord through previous experiences, and to trust Him even where they cannot trace Him. The giant of fear and despair must be met with the pebble from the brook, "It is written." The sling of faith must propel the word of promise with such force as to slay the Adversary and to deliver us from his domination. ... Thus armed only with the Word of God, and trusting in His rod and staff, we may well be courageous and answer imposing sectarianism as David answered the Philistine, "Thou comest to me with a sword and a spear and a javelin: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of ... Israel, which thou hast defied"—Z '03, 329 (R 3230).

Love delights in and feels with God. It is conscious of its oneness with God and feels the spirit of sonship toward Him coursing through its possessor's heart. Such a love is based upon an intimate acquaintance with God through His Spirit, Word and providence. In its communion with Him it finds Him thoroughly reliable, hopeable, lovable and obeyable; therefore, while it reverences Him as supremely perfect in person, character, plan and works, it does not stand in dread of Him. Dread of God would work such a restraint Godward in our hearts as would cast out love for Him. Reversely, love for Him rids us of such a dread of Him—P '30, 151.

Parallel passages: Deut. 20:8; Judges 7:3; Prov. 28:1; 29:25; Isa. 51:12, 13; Matt. 8:26; 26:69-74; Rom. 8:15; 1 Cor. 13:4-7; 2 Tim. 1:7; 1 John 4:16, 17.

Hymns: 95, 87, 12, 284, 288, 261, 307.

Poems of Dawn, 134: *Be Strong*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 188 (R 4841).

Questions: Have I succumbed to or overcome the spirit of fear this week? How? Why? What did love do in the experience?

BE STRONG

BE strong to bear, O heart of mine,
Faint not when sorrows come.
The sum of all these ills of earth
Prepares thee for thy home.
So many burdened ones there are
Close toiling by thy side,
Assist, encourage, comfort them,
Thine own deep anguish hide.
What though thy trials may seem great?

Thy strength is known to God,
And pathways steep and rugged lead
To pastures green and broad.

Be strong to love, O heart of mine,
Live not for self alone;
But find, in blessing other lives,
Completeness for thine own.
Seek every hungry heart to feed,
Each saddened heart to cheer;
And when stern justice stands aloof,
In mercy draw thou near.
True, loving words and helping hands
Have won more souls for Heaven
Than all the mixed and various creeds
By priests and sages given.

For every grief a joy will come,
For every toil a rest;
So hope, so love, so patient bear—
God doeth all things best.
Be strong to hope, O heart of mine,
Look not on life's dark side;
For just beyond these gloomy hours
Rich, radiant days abide.
Let hope, like summer's rainbow bright,
Scatter thy falling tears,
And let God's precious promises
Dispel thine anxious fears.

R4841: "LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR"

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment."—I John 4:18.

BETTER expressed could have been the thought of the text by saying, "There is no *dread* in love." We do not dread that which we love. In one sense, however, the more we love, the more we fear. We would not be so careful about pleasing a person whom we do not thus love. This is not the kind of fear, however, that the Apostle wishes us to cast out. On the contrary, it should be much enhanced. Consequently, the word *dread* would more accurately express the thought of our text.

The Scriptures speak of some who have "no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. 3:18.) Evidently these are unregenerate. Often, among men, there is a thoughtlessness in respect to God and the future. The Apostle in this text does not intimate that all hearts

have fear; but that if any heart has fear, perfect love will cast it out. As the knowledge and love increase, the fear diminishes. We may say that those of the world who have a reverential fear are such as are in a preferable attitude of mind; they are in better condition than the thoughtless. In life, certain conditions which surround us call for reverence; and man's brain is so constituted that reverence will be a part of his mental attitude if he be not depraved. Hence, the Scriptures say that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 9:10.) The fear of the Lord, the *reverence* of the Lord, will bring a blessing. *This* fear of the Lord rather increases as the child of God comes to know His Maker; but it is a gradual process.

There is a certain kind of fear which comes as the result of imperfect knowledge. We do not credit the Adversary with producing all the evil thoughts of the human mind, yet we believe he has very much to do with the evil influences which surround our race. People may be without fear of God; and we think that even after they have come to the Lord, and are learning to reverence Him and to know something about Him, they may lack the right kind of fear. Then the Adversary's plan will be to plant dread in their minds.

So we find with all heathen peoples. As soon as they have any knowledge of God, the Adversary seems to conjure up slavish fear which crowds out *love*, and produces *dread*. We read that "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." (2 Cor. 4:4.) We think that this evil influence is accountable for many of the things which seem so remarkable to us. It explains the fact that the heathen have devilish doctrines mingled with dread of God; and that all the worldly who have knowledge of God, both Jews and Christians, have fear also—*dread*. Yet Christians have much greater light upon God's character than have others, and so should have correspondingly less fear than the heathen.

A CERTAIN KIND OF FEAR PROPER

Evidently our text is not intended to signify that a Christian should have no sense of fear. This fact is shown by the experience of the first Christian, our Lord Himself, in the Garden of Gethsemane. He there feared, as the Apostle tells us in speaking of this occasion, and He was heard in that He feared. He offered up strong cryings and tears to Him who was able to save Him out of death. (Heb. 5:7.) If the Master feared, so should His followers. The Apostle says, "Let us, therefore, fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1.) How shall we harmonize these fears with our text. The text is, evidently, not intended to contradict the great lessons otherwise taught. Our Lord Jesus appealed to the Father who, He knew, loved Him; but He knew also, that the Father was absolutely perfect, righteous, just; and he feared lest He might have come short in fulfilling some of the requirements.

So with us. Let us know that "God is love" (I John 4:8), but let us fear *respecting ourselves*, and have such a carefulness, such a desire to please God, that we should feel fearful lest in any degree we should come short. Ignorance begets fear; but love for God will enable us to cast out that fear, and will also enable us to come to God with great confidence. So let us "Draw nigh unto God" (James 4:8) with full confidence that He will

bless us. This thought is the very opposite to that in the heathen mind. Their conception of a *god* is that of a *demon*. The Christian, on the other hand, who is walking in the footsteps of the Master, learns to love his God and to wish to do the Father's will only. Nothing is acceptable in the nature of a sacrifice that is not prompted by that love. "The Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth."—John 4:23, 24.

FACE TO FACE WITH TROUBLE

"You are face to face with trouble,
And the skies are murk and gray;
You hardly know which way to turn,
You are almost dazed, you say.
And at night you wake to wonder
What the next day's news will bring;
Your pillow is brushed by phantom care
With a grim and ghastly wing.

"You are face to face with trouble;
A child has gone astray;
A ship is wrecked on the bitter sea;
There's a note you cannot pay;
Your brave right hand is feeble;
Your sight is growing blind;
Perhaps a friend is cold and stern,
Who was ever warm and kind.

"You are face to face with trouble;
No wonder you cannot sleep;
But stay, and think of the promise,
The Lord will safely keep,
And lead you out of the thicket,
And into the pasture land;
You have only to walk straight onward,
Holding the dear Lord's hand.

"You are face to face with trouble;
And did you forget to look,
As the good old father taught you,
For help to the dear old Book?
You have heard the Tempter whisper,
And you've had no heart to pray,
And God has dropped from your scheme of life,
For—oh, many a weary day!

"Then face to face with trouble;

It is thus He calls you back
From the land of dearth and famine
To the land that has no lack.
You would not hear in the sunshine;
You hear in the midnight gloom.
Behold, His tapers kindle
Like stars in the quiet room.

"Oh! face to face with trouble,
Friend, I have often stood,
To learn that pain has sweetness,
To know that God is good.
Arise and meet the daylight;
Be strong and do your best!
With an honest heart, and a childlike faith
That God will do the rest."

SEPTEMBER 5

Jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame—Song of Solomon 8:6.

Jealousy is one of the great foes that confront every Christian. It should be slain on sight as an enemy of God and man and of every good principle; and to the extent that its presence had defiled the heart even for a moment, a cleansing of the spirit of holiness and love should be invoked. Jealousy is not only a cruel monster of itself, but its poisonous fangs are almost certain to inflict pain and trouble upon others, as well as to bring general woe and, ultimately, destruction upon those who harbor it. Jealousy is sin in thought, wickedness in thought, and is very apt to lead speedily to sin and wickedness in action. The mind, if once poisoned with jealousy, can with great difficulty ever be cleansed from it entirely, so rapidly does it bring everything within its environment to its own color and character—Z '03, 330 (R 3231).

Sheol, the death state, is cruel in the sense that it feelinglessly destroys its victims, and thereby remorselessly afflicts those that love them. It is an enemy of mankind that has been triumphing over the race. Nor will anything short of its destruction free its victims from its grasp. Jealousy is *sheol*-like. It destroys the happiness of those against whom it exercises itself, as well as frequently destroys them. If we have this quality in our hearts, we may be sure that we are wronging others and injuring ourselves. Against this evil we should wage a relentless warfare until we have destroyed it, or it will surely destroy us beyond deliverance—P '35, 117.

Parallel passages: Prov. 6:34; 27:4; Eccles. 4:4; Ex. 20:5; 34:14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Dan. 6:3-5; Jas. 3:14, 16; Gen. 4:5, 6, 8; 37:4-11, 18-28; 1 Sam. 18:8-30; 2 Sam. 3:24-27; Luke 15:25-32.

Hymns: 183, 333, 139, 167, 172, 195, 322.

Poems of Dawn, 200: *Lean Hard*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 93 (R 4789).

Questions: What have been the experiences of this week in line with this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered amid them? What were their effects?

LEAN HARD

CHILD of My love, lean hard.
And let Me feel the pressure of thy care.
I know thy burden, child; I shaped it,
Poised it in Mine own hand, made no proportion
In its weight to thine unaided strength;
For even as I laid it on, I said,
"I shall be near, and while she leans on Me,
This burden shall be Mine, not hers:

So shall I keep My child within the circling arms
Of Mine own love." Here lay it down, nor fear
To impose it on the shoulder, which upholds
The government of worlds. Yet closer come;
Thou art not near enough; I would embrace thy care,
So I might feel My child reposing on My breast.
Thou loves Me? I know it. Doubt not then;
But, loving Me, *lean hard*.

R4789: PROPER AND IMPROPER JEALOUSY

"Jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame."—Song of Sol. 8:6.

JEALOUSY of another is always an evil quality; as the text states, it is "cruel as *sheol*," which engulfs all mankind; it is unreasoning and insatiable. One has said of it, "Jealousy is really—whether so recognized or not—a thirst for blood, life; at any moment, when reason is a little weaker than usual, jealousy is ready to kill the thing it *hates* or the thing it *loves*." It signifies either apprehension of being displaced in the affections of another, or of being outdone by a rival in matters of favor or popularity with others.

The jealousy mentioned in our text is the most vicious kind of cruelty, committed in the name of love, or through envy; it is one of the great foes which confront every Christian and is closely allied to hatred, malice, envy, strife, and should be slain on sight as an enemy of God and man, and of every good principle; and to the extent that its presence has defiled the heart even for a moment, a cleansing by the spirit of holiness and love should be invoked. It is not only a cruel monster of itself, but its poisonous fangs are almost certain to inflict pain and trouble upon others. The mind which is once poisoned with jealousy so rapidly brings everything within its environment to its own color and character that it is with great difficulty that it can be entirely cleansed from it.

"I, THE LORD THY GOD, AM A JEALOUS GOD"

Nevertheless, love, wisdom, hatred, jealousy, are attributed to God and should all be in us. We read, "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God." If man could have his hatred and his jealousies along the same lines as God, it would be all right. We, as God does, should hate sin, but not the sinner. God's jealousy is just and is sure to bring to the sinner a just punishment. He tells us that when we have other gods, we must consider *him* jealous; but the impropriety of jealousy is when it leads to bitterness and other like qualities to which the fallen human mind is subject and liable. When the Lord announces himself as a jealous God, he means us to understand that he wants all of our affections, all of our confidence, our entire trust. He wants that we should be so fully in accord with him that his will shall be supreme in all the affairs of life.

This is not to be considered selfishness on the part of the Almighty; because this, under his overruling providences, means to his creatures the largest amount of happiness, the largest amount of success in the duties and affairs of the present life, and the fullest preparation for the blessings which God has prepared for, and promised to, those who love him.

"I AM JEALOUS OVER YOU WITH A GODLY JEALOUSY"

When St. Paul wrote, "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy" (2 Cor. 11:2), we cannot understand that he was actuated by a mean jealousy, but that he was jealous *for*, or in the interest of, the *Corinthians*; he was jealous also for the things that were right and that they should be in accord with them. His jealousy, therefore, was an earnest, anxious solicitude and vigilant watchfulness, a godly jealousy for the best interests of the Lord's precious Truth. This, of course, is a jealousy such as we all should feel in the Church. If we see a condition such as that to which the Apostle refers, a departure from the simplicity and purity which is in Christ, we should feel, "This is all wrong," and should do all in our power and in reason to correct this difficulty. So, if we see anything in one member of the Church that would be likely to cast a reflection upon the Lord's cause, we should feel it proper to put forth efforts to correct that one, lest harm be done.

When we have that jealousy in the Lord's cause, it is different from a jealousy in our own interest. Very few get too jealous in the Lord's cause; however, it would be well, even in his cause, to scrutinize our words, deeds, etc., properly; and while we should be very zealous, very jealous in the Lord's cause, yet we must be very sure that it is not a private matter; and should consider whether or not we are "busybodies." Then, too, we should consider whether it may be a proper thing for the elders to deal with, and whether or not it would be *our* duty to go to the *elders*. We should all have a great deal of jealousy for the Lord's cause and the Lord's work, but be very careful that it is not the bitter kind mentioned in the text; in other words, we should be very sure that it is not jealousy *of* another, but jealousy *for* another, for his interests and best welfare.

SEPTEMBER 6

There shall no evil befall thee—Psa. 91:10.

Nothing shall by any means hurt us. Things may interfere with our fleshly interests or comfort or course of affairs; but when we remember that we are not in the flesh but in the spirit, that it is to the new heart, mind and will that the Lord has promised the Kingdom in His due time, we can realize that no outside influence can interfere with our real interests, our spiritual interests, nor hinder our attaining to the glories of the Kingdom which the Lord has promised to His faithful ones. Only our loss of confidence in the Lord and our unfaithfulness to Him could separate us from His love and His promises—Z '03, 331 (R 3231).

The general Biblical teaching on consecration, as well as the experience of Jesus, Paul, Timothy, Epaphroditus and every other faithful child of God, proves that this verse does not refer to earthly evils. Manifestly, therefore, it refers to spiritual evils, against which God protects His Own. All things work together for good to the spiritual lives of the faithful. God's promises and our experiences abundantly prove this. And what saint has not repeatedly rejoiced in this fact? The security of the faithful is a Scriptural, comforting and experiential doctrine. It may well make us brave and joyful in every experience, be it toward or untoward—P '34, 128.

Parallel passages: Job 17:9; Psa. 37:24; 138:8; Matt. 24:13; Mark 4:3-8; Luke 10:42; 22:31, 32; John 6:39; 10:28, 29; 15:4, 7, 9; Rom. 8:33-39; 1 Cor. 1:8, 9; Eph. 6:13; Col. 1:22, 23; 2 Tim. 4:18; Heb. 12:11-13.

Hymns: 120, 99, 63, 110, 293, 294, 328.

Poems of Dawn, 218: *The Bridegroom's Dove*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 58 (R 4767).

Questions: What were this week's experiences regarding this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

THE BRIDEGROOM'S DOVE

CANT. 2:14

"MY DOVE!" The Bridegroom speaks to whom?
Whom think'st thou, meaneth He?
Say, O my soul! Canst thou presume
He thus addresseth thee?
Yes, 'tis the Bridegroom's voice of love,
Calling thee, O my soul! His dove!

The Dove is gentle, mild and meek:
Deserve I, then, the name?
I look within in vain to seek

Aught which can give a claim:
Yet, made so by redeeming love,
My soul, thou art the Bridegroom's Dove!

Methinks, my soul, that thou mayst see,
In this endearing word,
Reasons why Jesus likens thee
To this defenseless bird;
Reasons which show the Bridegroom's love
To His poor, helpless, timid Dove!

The Dove hath neither claw nor sting,
Nor weapon for the fight;
She owes her safety to her wing,
Her victory to flight.
A shelter hath the Bridegroom's love
Provided for His helpless Dove!

As the poor Dove, before the Hawk,
Quick to her refuge flies,
So need I, in my daily walk,
The wings which *faith* supplies
To bear me where the Bridegroom's love
Places beyond all harm His Dove!

My soul, of native power bereft,
To Calvary repairs:
Immanuel is *the rocky cleft*,
The secret of the stairs!
Since placed *there* by the Bridegroom's love,
What evil can befall His Dove?

My soul, now hid within a rock,
(The "Rock of Ages" called)
Amid the universal shock
Is fearless, unappalled.
A cleft therein, prepared by love,
In safety hides the Bridegroom's Dove!

O happy Dove! Thus weak thus safe;
Do I resemble her?
Then to my soul, O Lord! Vouchsafe
A dove-like character.
Pure, harmless, gentle, full of love,
Make me in spirit, Lord, a Dove!

R4767: CAN EVIL BEFALL THE NEW CREATURE?

"There shall no evil befall thee." (Psa. 91:10.) "Pilate took Jesus and scourged him. ... They crucified him and two others with him; on either side one, and Jesus in the midst."—John 19:1, 18.

SUCH combination of Scripture, apparently contradictory, is quite a stumbling-block to worldly people; and some of those who have inclinations toward the Lord, but have not much knowledge of his Word and Plan, experience all kinds of trouble in a vain attempt to reconcile them. To these God's Word is apparently proven to be untrue. Only from the standpoint of faith can it be recognized as always true and harmonious. Yet the standpoint of faith may not always be exactly the same. We might use the word "thee" in the text, as applying to the Lord (the New Creature) and the members of the Body (the New Creatures) and consider that the flesh is the great enemy, the great opponent, to be gotten rid of. Or we might think of the flesh as their earthly tabernacle for the time, and take the matter in a more figurative way.

We, however, prefer to consider the New Creature entirely apart from the flesh. "No evil shall befall thee." Applying this to our Lord, we see that no evil befell him as a New Creature. All the things that happened to him were necessary. Without these he could not have fulfilled the calling that was given him. Similarly we, as New Creatures, as his followers, could never have attained to this calling except by the crucifixion of the Lord. "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth."—Col. 3:5.

Our Lord's followers have to some extent lost the esteem of their friends and neighbors; they have been counted as the offscouring of the earth. They have been tested in every possible manner. These things were necessary for them; therefore, they were not evil.

"THE CAPTAIN OF THEIR SALVATION MADE PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERINGS"

Our Lord asked, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26.) To be fitted for the priestly office to which he was called, our Lord must be proved beyond all peradventure. His loyalty was put to the extremest test in the Garden of Gethsemane. Possibly he himself did not realize the strength of his righteous character until brought face to face with this last trial. There he was tried and proved to the uttermost, and under the trial his character—always perfect to the full measure of its testing—gained, by Divine grace, its glorious perfection of completeness.

Thus, through suffering, he learned obedience to the perfect will of God, down to the lowest depths of self-abnegation; and God permitted it so to be, because such proving was necessary, both for the development and the manifestation of that perfection of character which would be worthy of the high exaltation to which he was called.

And so we also must suffer if we would be footstep-followers of the Lamb. Character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant; at first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love; frequent watering with the showers of his grace; much cultivating through the applied knowledge of his character, as a foundation for faith and an inspiration to obedience. Then, when thus developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. And little by little, as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, more beauty, more grace, until it is finally fixed, developed, established, perfected through suffering. Thus we learn to realize that "All things work together for good ... to the called according to his purpose," to those who are to be members of his Body.—Rom. 8:28.

DELIVERED OVER TO THE ADVERSARY FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FLESH

But some one may ask, "We see how these experiences of life are working out good for the New Creature; but is there no way in which experiences could work out evil things that would be bad for them?"

We are to recognize that there are two classes of spirit-begotten ones, and that our text has reference to only one class of these. There is the Body of Christ, representing the priestly order, the antitypical Melchisedec—Jesus the Head and the Church his Body. They have kept nothing back of their love and devotion; things may happen disastrous to their fleshly interests; but they remember that they are "not in the flesh, but in the spirit," and realize that no outside influence can mar their real interest as New Creatures, nor hinder them, if faithful, from attaining to the glories of the Kingdom with their Lord and Head. They have entered into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and do not withdraw; they "abide in the secret place of the Most High"; they will continue unto the very end. It is to this class, and to all the things that may befall them, that the assurance is given—"There shall no evil befall thee."

As for the other of the two classes—the "Great Company"—some evils do befall them. They will be put into great tribulation. It was an evil on their part that they neglected the Lord's Word and the privileges of the "high calling." This coolness brought them into a condition which must be made right. They loved "father or mother or houses or lands," or something else, to such an extent that they failed to keep their covenant of sacrifice, and will be accounted unworthy of a share in the Kingdom, and will, instead, be subjected to the great time of trouble—"the day of wrath." It will be necessary that these evils come upon them to bring destruction of the flesh.

SEPTEMBER 7

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new—2 Cor. 5:17.

These new creatures in Christ Jesus know each other not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. In each other's spirits or new minds there are the noblest sentiments, the highest aspirations, that which is good, true, noble, pure, whatever may be their weaknesses according to the flesh. They love each other from the new standpoint of intention, will, harmony with God, and their friendship for one another grows increasingly as they perceive each other's energy in fighting the good fight of faith against the evil influences of the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Nor tongue nor pen can properly express the love, the friendship, which subsists between these new creatures in Christ Jesus, to whom old things have passed away, and all things have become new—Z '03, 333 (R 3232).

To be in Christ Jesus implies deadness to self and aliveness to God, as a member of the Body of Christ. Such a one is a new creature, because spiritual capacities have been given to every organ of his brain, fitting him to exercise his various faculties of mind and heart on appropriate spiritual objects. Therefore he detaches his affections from the things prized by the natural man and attaches them to the things prized by the spiritual man. Accordingly his former ambitions, desires and aspirations are given up. He now has a new set of desires, ambitions and aspirations, and he bends all his powers, physical, mental, moral and religious to attain the things on which these are fixed, and he finds them decidedly superior to the former objects of his affections—P '33, 147.

Parallel passages: 2 Cor. 5:16; Gal. 5:6, 16-24; 6:1, 2, 7, 8, 14-16; Col. 3:1-17; Rom. 8:4-16; Heb. 12:1, 5, 9-16; Rom. 12:2, 9-21; 1 John 2:15-17, 20, 27; 5:4, 5.

Hymns: 201, 20, 117, 192, 312, 170, 204.

Poems of Dawn, 248: *All Things New*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 300 (R 5325).

Questions: What were this week's experiences connected with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

ALL THINGS NEW

THERE is something in the sunlight
Which I never saw before;
There's a note within the robin's song
I did not hear of yore;
There's something—ah! I know not what!
But something everywhere
That makes the world this morning seem
Most marvelously fair!

I awakened very early
And I watched the sun arise,
And it seemed to me that heaven
Must be dawning in the skies;
For a glory and a gladness,
Passing words of mine to show,
Flashed from out the eastern portals
On the waking world below.

All the water gleamed with gladness;
Every streamer in the sky
Seemed the arms of little children
Flung in joyousness on high;
All the birds on all the bushes
Joined their melody to pour—
Surely never was a morning
Ushered in like this before!

Is it fact or is it fancy?
Doth the secret in my heart
Unto everything it shines on
Spurious joyousness impart?
Or hath the world grown gladder,
As it seems to me today?
Is it true or is it seeming?
Who shall tell? I cannot say.

Ah! I care not! Doth it matter?
'Tis enough for me to know
that the world to me is gladder
Than it was a year ago.
That on earth and sky and water
Lies a radiance, false or true,
That shall never fade or falter,
Never be less strange or new!

If my heart thus gilds creation
Well it may, for it is glad,
Past the power of shade or shining
Any more to make it sad.
Never yet on earth or heaven,
Never yet on land or sea,
Shone the light of that great gladness
Which my God hath given me.

R5325: ARE WE ACTUAL OR RECKONED NEW CREATURES?

"If any man be in Christ, he is a New Creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—2 Corinthians 5:17.

OUR information on this subject of the New Creature comes from the Word of God. It is the Spirit of the Truth that bears the witness. "If any one be in Christ, he is a New Creation; the *old* things have passed away; behold! they have become new." [*Diaglott* Translation.] Apparently, then, if old things *have* passed away from us, and we *are* New Creatures in Christ, we are now receiving the blessings. There is nothing said about being *reckonedly* New Creatures. The change is *actual, bona-fide*. When God accepts the human *will*, He does not hold the New Creature responsible for any of the deeds done *previous to consecration*. The whole account is a new one.

We are New Creatures in the sense that God has begotten us of the Holy Spirit. God has given us Heavenly promises instead of earthly promises. We are no longer striving to see whether we can attain a higher position in the world. We have new ambitions. Our aim is to live pleasing to God. And in every way this change of sentiment indicates a transformation of mind.

Transformation means to *form over again*, across, different, in an opposite way. So we have been changed by reason of this change of our *will*. God has made us the promise that, if we make this change, or transformation, He will no longer *count* sin to us, that we shall have *standing* henceforth no longer as sinners, but as holy ones. The world does not know that we are children of God. They do not realize how fully we have given up the earthly hopes and are seeking a different prize from that which the world seeks.

The fact that this change is merely in the *mind* and not in the *body* does not alter this matter at all. According to science, every seven years a complete change takes place in our bodies, the new matter coming on as the old matter sloughs off. But one is not a new *man* because his *body* has changed. If this were so, we would have had several changes by this time. So far as the mind is concerned, personality is not changed. If we had lost a hand, we would still be the same personality; or if we were to lose a hand and a foot, the loss would not change our personality.

Our personality would not change in this event, because the personality is the mind, the ego. And so when the ego, the mind, is changed, that New Creature is distinctly separated from the other. The fact that it does not yet have a spirit body does not matter. The New Creature is the New Creature, only now he is the New Creature under adverse conditions; whereas by and by he will be the New Creature who has entered into that condition which God has promised—the Divine nature and everlasting joy—and in which he will abide forever.

OUR STANDING FROM GOD'S VIEWPOINT

We are now spirit beings in human bodies. The Apostle says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." It is not the *body* that is risen, but the New Creature. It was not the New Creature that *died*, but the old creature. It is not the life of the *old* creature that "is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3), but the life of the New Creature. The Apostle declares, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." He says also that we are not only to reckon ourselves *dead*, but to reckon ourselves as though we had been *raised from* the dead. "Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"—Romans 6:11.

The body is not the New Creature, but it *belongs* to the New Creature. It is the *servant* of the New Creature. The New Creature is the only one that God recognizes at all; for He knows us not after the flesh. And we should live in the Spirit, and view ourselves and all of our affairs from this standpoint. We should "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:4.) Our viewpoint should be this: As New Creatures, we merely *inhabit* these bodies for awhile.

These bodies are our slaves and we are to use them as our slaves. The environment is unfavorable for the New Creature at the present time. But it is the New Creature that God is looking at. "If any man be in Christ, he is a New Creation; the old things have passed away; behold, they have *become new*." If he now fails to make good his consecration, fails to be an overcomer, he will have no resurrection; for all his *earthly* rights have been abrogated.

"Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit." We do, as New Creatures, have the fleshly bodies. But the flesh is not *we*; that is, not our kind, not our nature. It is only as the New Creature that we can inherit the Promise. Jesus was put to death in the flesh; that is to say, He sacrificed the flesh—He gave up His claim on the flesh at His consecration. And it was on the basis of His giving up His rights that the Father begat Him to the new nature. Therefore He said, My will is to do My Father's will. The Cup that My Father hath poured for Me, I will drink!—John 18:11.

Jesus would not stand for His earthly rights. His dying was not merely at Calvary. It was begun at Jordan three and a half years before. In the type, the high priest slew the bullock, which represented the Man Jesus. Our Lord gave up His life completely—His human life. The High Priest was another person. He went inside and ministered in the Holy while His human nature was sacrificed upon the altar, and His body burned outside the camp, but in sight of the camp.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOUL AND NEW CREATURE

Every New Creature is a soul. The word *soul* is used in the Scriptures, in a very broad manner indeed, as signifying *any* sentient being, any being that has sensibility, intelligence. A fish has intelligence; therefore the Bible describes a fish as *being* a soul (See Genesis 1:20, margin). A dog, a cow, a horse, is each a soul. An angel is a soul, or being. God is a soul, or being—the Bible says so. The Scriptures say that "If any man

draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Hebrews 10:38)—this means *God's* soul.

This broad use of the word, therefore, in connection with any kind of sentient being, assures us that as New Creatures all of us are souls—intelligent beings. We might be understood to be double souls in the sense that we were human souls to begin with, but that God has through Christ made a special arrangement for us whereby we are begotten again to be New Creatures. This begetting is of the mind; and only in this way are we New Creatures now.

This New Creature is not yet perfected. This new soul has not yet reached that condition which God intends that it shall have. The Apostle tells us that we have this treasure of the new mind in the old body—the earthen vessel. The new mind must do the Father's will, irrespective of the will of the body, or of the friends of the body, and what they might desire it to do. The new mind is to do God's will under all circumstances.

A spirit-begotten child of God may speak of himself as already possessing eternal life, which he does possess by faith. But the New Creature, the new soul, is not yet completed. God's promise is that when this new soul shall have been completed, we shall have a body like Christ. We shall be like Him. We shall see Him as He is and share His glory. We shall be souls on the Divine plane, whereas formerly we were souls on the human plane; now we are reckoned as in the transitional state.

DUAL SOULS—NOT DUAL MINDS

When we speak of being dual *souls*, we do not mean that we are dual-*minded*; for that would be a reprehensible condition. We are *single*-minded. Our duality consists in the fact that we have the mind of one nature and the body of another. A perfect soul results from the union of life-principle with an organism. It is thus with a fish, a dog, a horse. There is an organism, and there is vitality, a spark of life, before there can be a soul. The Lord's people were human souls, or had the powers common to all mankind, to begin with. Then they were begotten again. And the new will, the new mind, has at present an organism not adapted to its needs.

In the resurrection the New Creature will have an organism fully adapted to its requirements. But now it is a soul that is neither perfect in the flesh nor perfect on the spirit plane. And since the nature goes properly with the mind, the will, therefore the flesh is counted as being that of the New Creature, and the New Creature is held responsible for this flesh.

The Apostle suggests to us that not only our old minds, or wills, are dead, and that we reckon also our bodies dead, but that we go further, and reckon our bodies quickened, or made alive, from their dead and sin-disposed condition, that they may be fully our servants as New Creatures, that they may serve our purposes—"quickened by the Spirit of God that dwelleth in you." That is to say, so long as the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit is ruling in our hearts and minds, it controls and energizes the physical body.

THE SECRET OF SELF-CONTROL

God deals with us as New Creatures from the time we are begotten of the Holy Spirit. He has no dealings with the flesh. The flesh is under condemnation. God dealt with the flesh of Father Adam, condemning it to destruction. Then He provided a way in Christ by which the race may be rescued from destruction. The Church's relationship to God is purely as New Creatures. From the time, then, that we become New Creatures, accepted of God, He takes these mortal bodies of ours, which are consecrated to His service, as a part of the New Creature. So if we suffer, it is the New Creature that suffers. And in this sense God takes cognizance of our flesh from the time of our consecration. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

Because our human bodies are vehicles for His service, God takes note of them. In proportion as we become strong in the Spirit of the Lord, we have the power to make the mortal body do what the new mind wills. But we are weak in ourselves. We cannot properly control our mortal bodies. God, therefore, gives us of His Truth. And the more we receive of the Truth, of the Spirit, the more fully sanctified we should be, the more fully in harmony with the Father's will, and the greater control we should have of our mortal bodies.

SEPTEMBER 8

Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God—Jas. 4:4.

God has purposely placed the matter in such a position that His people must take their choice, and lose either the Divine friendship and fellowship, or the worldly friendship and fellowship; because those things which the Lord loves are distasteful to the worldly, and those things which the worldly love, evil deeds and evil thoughts, evil-speaking, are an abomination in the sight of the Lord, and those who love and practice such things lose His fellowship—they are not of His Spirit. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his"—Z '99, 70 (R 2442).

The friendship of this world implies the good will, approval and confidence that those who are in harmony with the present order of affairs give others; and because the present order is out of harmony with the principles of the Divine character and government, the world withholds friendship from the Lord's people and bestows it upon those who love the present order. The worldly are at heart at enmity with God. Since there is no friendship between them, to obtain the friendship of the world of necessity implies that we become at enmity with God. This is too costly a price to pay for the world's friendship—P '32, 136.

Parallel passages: 1 Sam. 8:19, 20; Psa. 49:16-18; 73:2-22; Eccles. 2:1-12; 11:9, 10; Matt. 16:26; Luke 8:14; John 15:19; Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; 2 Tim. 3:2-8; 1 John 2:15-17.

Hymns: 312, 48, 97, 109, 115, 162, 192.

Poems of Dawn, 48: *A Solitary Way*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 56 (R 4765).

Questions: Was I this week worldly or spiritual? Why was I so? How did I become so? What was the result?

A SOLITARY WAY

PSA. 107:1-9; PROV. 14:10; 1 COR. 2:11.

THERE is a mystery in human hearts,
And though we be encircled by a host
Of those who love us well, and are beloved,
To every one of us, from time to time,
There comes a sense of utter loneliness.
Our dearest friend is "stranger" to our joy,
And cannot realize our bitterness.
"There is not one who really understands,
Not one to enter into *all* I feel;"
Such is the cry of each of us in turn.

We wander in a "solitary way,"
No matter what or where our lot may be,
Each heart, mysterious even to itself,
Must live its inner life of solitude.

JOB 7:17; MATT. 10:37.

And would you know the reason why this is?
It is because the Lord desires our love.
In every heart He wishes to be *first*.
He therefore keeps the secret-key Himself,
To open *all* its chambers, and to bless
With *perfect* sympathy and holy peace
Each solitary soul which comes to *Him*.
So when we feel this loneliness, it is
The voice of Jesus saying, "Come to Me;"
And every time we are "not understood,"
It is a call to us to come *again*;
For Christ alone can *satisfy* the soul,
And those who walk with Him from day to day
Can never have "a solitary way."

ISA. 48:16; PSA. 34:22.

And when beneath some heavy cross you faint,
And say, "I cannot bear this load alone,"
You say the truth. Christ made it purposely
So heavy that you must return to Him
The bitter grief, which "no one understands,"
Conveys a secret message from the King,
Entreating you to come to Him *again*.
The Man of Sorrows understands it well.
In *all* points tempted, He can feel with you.
You cannot come too often, or too near.
The Son of God is infinite in grace;
His presence *satisfies* the longing soul;
And those who walk with Him from day to day
Can never have "a solitary way."

R4765: "LOVE NOT THE WORLD"

"Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."—James 4:4.

THIS text brings to mind another one somewhat similar—"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in

him." (I John 2:5.) From these Scriptures we should not get the thought that we are to have no worldly people as our friends, nor to have them consider us as their friends; otherwise it would imply that we were their enemies and they our enemies. But we are to be the enemies of none, and are, therefore, to be the friends of all.

One can, however, scarcely read the above advice from two of the Lord's Apostles without having another Scripture suggested to his mind—and this, too, from the lips of our dear Lord himself—which at first sight may seem contradictory, viz., "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.) The two, however, are not antagonistic, but are in full harmony when rightly understood.

How, then, shall we understand that we are not to have friendship with the world, and yet are to love the world? The key is found in the word "world." As, for instance, if one should go into politics, he would find that politics is so interlaced with evil things that it would be practically impossible for him to engage in it without compromising his relationship with God. In former times no one could associate very much with any one in the world unless he were, more or less, in politics. Therefore, it would mean being in accord with sinful practices—not, perhaps, directly, but indirectly.

Very few people know how political affairs are carried on. A man in politics forgets his conscience; he is almost compelled to "give and take" with others. Otherwise, the district or ward or state that he represents would proportionately lack representation, because he would be ignored; and anything that he would be inclined to say, would result in driving him out of politics, which would cause his ward or district or state to suffer injury. So, then, the broad thought connected with this text would be that God's people will recognize the things of the world in general, as being in opposition to the service of God, and that they are not in sympathy with the chicanery and methods of the Prince of this world.

There is a worldly side to every question, every business; and for us to conform ourselves to these arrangements and to co-operate with them, would be sin on our part. Nevertheless, as the Apostle says, we cannot go out of the world, and must, more or less, have contact with worldly people. The proper course is, therefore, as indicated in the Scriptures, that the Lord's people walk circumspectly, seeking to keep themselves loyal to God and to all of his principles; seeking to separate themselves from the world and to be burning and shining lights that the world may see their good works and glorify their Father in heaven.

WE ARE TO DO GOOD TO ALL MEN AS WE HAVE OPPORTUNITY

If God so loved the world, even while they were yet sinners (Rom. 5:8), as to sacrifice the dearest treasure of his heart in order to redeem and save them, then such love and such benevolence toward the world on our part cannot be out of harmony with his will. Indeed, such is the direct teaching of the Word—"As you have therefore opportunity, do

good to all men; love your enemies, do good to them that hate you; pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—Gal. 6:10; Matt. 5:44-48.

To love the world as God loves it, is not the sentiment against which the Apostles warn the Church. That is a grand and ennobling love which, without having the least fellowship with the impure, pities the fallen and longs for the time when they may be rescued from their degradation. The love which is worthy of our emulation is that which benevolently ignores personal antagonisms and animosities, and overleaping all selfish considerations and vengeful feelings, considers only the possibilities and the ways and means for peace and reformation and salvation.

But the love of the world, the friendship of the world to which the Apostle refers, is the love of fellowship, which implies the partaking of its spirit—its aims, ambitions and hopes, and its methods of pursuing them. If any man love the world in this sense, surely the love of the Father is not in him.

As children of God we have been called to a position of great favor and advantage. Our Heavenly Father has revealed to us his plans and purposes and has condescended to take us into his fellowship and active co-operation; and so grand and glorious and extensive is the outlook of the future that we are able to view the things of the present life in a vastly different light from that in which the world views them.

So we are not to love the present order or arrangement, nor the things that are part and parcel of it, identified with it; but rather we are to love the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth." We are to love the world only in the sense of having sympathy with it, as our Heavenly Father has, while we are unsympathetic with its arrangements.

According to God's arrangement, we must take our choice between the Divine friendship and fellowship, and worldly friendship and fellowship. The things which the Lord loves are distasteful to the world; and the things which the worldly love—evil deeds and evil thoughts—are an abomination to the Lord, and those who love and practice such things must lose the fellowship of the Lord and his spirit, must go into the outer darkness of the world.

SEPTEMBER 9

That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life—Phil. 2:15, 16.

It is the duty of every child of God to be very active in the dissemination of the Truth—in letting his light shine, and in keeping it trimmed and burning. "Trimmed and burning!" What does it mean? It means that we must give very close attention to the words of life that we may come to an exact knowledge of the Truth, and that we must carefully and faithfully trim away every vestige of error as fast as it becomes apparent to us—whether it be an error in doctrine or in our daily walk and conversation—so that the pure light of Divine truth may shine out with as little obstruction as possible through the medium of a clear and transparent character—Z '03, 358 (R 3243).

As far as lieth in us let us prevent our conduct from becoming blameworthy or harmful. So like our Lord are we to be that we become constantly engaged in well-doing. Then if fault be found with us, it will be due, not to wrongdoing on our part, but to the wrong condition in the hearts or minds of the fault-finders. Like our Lord, even among the evil, are we to shine as lights in the world, seeking to bless and not to injure; and if for our light we receive hatred from the children of darkness, it will be well for us to remember our Lord's similar experiences, that like Him, when rejected by some, we may still seek others whom it may be our privilege to bless with our earthly or heavenly good—P '26, 125.

Parallel passages: Eph. 5:1, 2; Matt. 5:45-48; Luke 6:27-36; 1 Pet. 2:12; Deut. 32:5; Matt. 5:14, 16; Eph. 5:8; Psa. 27:1; 36:9; John 1:9; 8:12; 12:46; 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Thes. 5:5; 1 John 2:10.

Hymns: 275, 315, 29, 32, 72, 155, 230.
Poems of Dawn, 165: *A Little Light*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 28 (R 5390).

Questions: What were this week's experiences along the line of this text? What were their results and lessons?

A LITTLE LIGHT

'T WAS but a little light she bore,
While standing at the open door;
A little light, a feeble spark,
And yet it shone out through the dark
With cheerful ray, and gleamed afar
As brightly as the polar star.

A little light, a gentle hint,
That falls upon the page of print,
May clear the vision, and reveal
The precious treasures doubts conceal,
And guide men to an open door,
Where they new regions may explore.

A little light dispels the gloom
That gathers in the shadowed room,
Where want and sickness find their prey,
And night seems longer than the day,
And hearts with many troubles cope
And feebler glows the spark of hope.

Oh, sore the need that some must know
While journeying through this vale of woe!
Dismayed, disheartened, gone astray,
Caught in the thickets by the way,
For lack of just a little light
To guide their wandering steps aright.

It may be little we can do
To help another, it is true;
But better is a little spark
Of kindness, when the way is dark,
Than one should walk in paths forbidden
For lack of light we might have given.

R5390: GOOD CONFESSION VERSUS BAD CONFESSION

—Luke 12:1-12.—

"Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God."—V.8.

A LARGE crowd surrounded the Savior, anxious to hear Him who "spake as never man spake." Ignoring the multitude, Jesus addressed His disciples, saying: "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Here, as elsewhere in His teachings, Jesus uses leaven as a symbol, or figure, of an evil influence. We know not of one instance in which leaven is used to represent anything good or pure. During the Passover season Jews were prohibited from using it, thus symbolizing the putting away of sin.

Jesus declared that the hypocrisies practised by the Pharisees—the learned people of that time—were leaven, impurity, sin, contaminating in their influence. His disciples should be honest, sincere, pure, free from cant and deception. Their words and works

should be such as would not need to be covered. Jesus declared that ultimately all hypocrisies and sins will be uncovered, revealed. Undoubtedly He meant that during His Kingdom, when the power of the resurrection will be exercised, all the hidden things of darkness will be abolished, the secrets of mankind will be exposed. No doubt this will constitute the basis of the shame and contempt which will be the punishment of many, as foretold.

Thus we read that in the resurrection some will come forth to shine as the stars of heaven, and others to shame and everlasting contempt. (Daniel 12:2.) However, it is comforting to know that the Hebrew text signifies lasting and not *everlasting*. The shame and contempt will last as long as the shameful and contemptible conditions last—until the reformation of the individual or, that failing, until his destruction in the Second Death.

FEAR NOT PERSECUTIONS

Jesus intimated that honesty of life would bring His followers persecution from the hypocrites; but that they should not fear, even though the persecution resulted in their death. The present life is but ephemeral, at best. The life that is worth considering is the everlasting one which God has provided for all the willing and obedient, and which may eventually be attained through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice. Those who thus believe should have no fear of what man can do to them, but rather should be fearful of anything that would separate them from God and His gracious provisions of a future life.

"Fear Him who after He hath killed hath power to cast into Hell." The word Hell here is Gehenna in the Greek. Primarily, this is the name of the valley outside of Jerusalem, into which the offal of the city was cast for utter destruction, and into which the vilest criminals were cast after execution—not to torment them, but to imply symbolically that there was no future for the wicked. Jesus used Gehenna as a type of the Second Death, which will be the portion of all who wilfully, intelligently, deliberately, sin against light and knowledge.

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and a reverential fear is always proper. But as God's people become intimately acquainted with Him, learning of His Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, and realize that He is the Friend of all who love righteousness, they come to love God; and, as the Apostle declares, "Perfect love casteth out fear [dread to offend]," which signifies rest. The Lord's disciples were to realize their Heavenly Father's care for them and His Wisdom—that as He forgets not the sparrows, so He will not forget them; and that not even a hair of their heads could be injured without his knowledge and permission; that everything that He permits to come to His people, to His children, He assures them, will work out for them some blessing.

CONFESS ME BEFORE MEN

Whoever would be in accord with God must confess Him and must confess Jesus, His Representative, whom He sent into the world. Whoever confesses Jesus, confesses the Father who sent Him. And all such will be in the Lord's favor, and ultimately be

acknowledged in the resurrection by the Father and the holy angels, as members of the Bride of Christ. But those who, after becoming disciples of Christ, deny Him, He will not acknowledge as disciples in glory.

Jesus' words were addressed to the disciples, not to the masses. Whoever would confess Christ would become His disciple. None could deny Him who had never acknowledged Him. He is to be confessed, not merely by baptism, nor by any outward form. He is to be confessed in the life, in the conduct, in the words, of His followers. They are to have His Spirit and to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light." Whoever makes a profession of being a disciple, and then ignores the Master's teachings, misrepresents Him, slanders Him, denies Him, and will not share in the glorious presentation of the Bride, in the end of this Age.

The masses, of course, were in doubt, and did not become disciples at all. Some even derided Jesus, saying that He had a devil and was mad. The Master declared that such misunderstanding of Him and such slanders were quite forgivable, if done ignorantly. But when some went beyond this, and declared that His good works of the Holy Spirit were accomplished through the power of Satan, Beelzebub, they were committing inexcusable sins which would not be passed over.

Such sin must be wilful; for their accusations had no basis whatever. The Master's teachings were purity itself. His conduct, His sayings and His miracles were all good works. Only a wilful perversity could attribute these to Satan. The fact that they would never be forgiven does not signify, however, that the vilifiers were hopelessly lost. They would suffer punishment proportionate to the degree of their wilfulness. If the punishment would bring reformation, well and good; but if not, it would eventuate in utter destruction—the Second Death.

Few subjects are less understood than this one—the sin against the Holy Spirit. The word spirit in such a case as this stands for power, or influence. For instance, the spirit of Satan would be the power, or influence, adverse to God and to righteousness. The spirit of error would be the power, or influence, of falsehood. Contrariwise, the spirit of Truth, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, represents Divine influence and power, wherever recognized. The responsibility of each individual is proportionate to his enlightenment. The mentally and morally blind have comparatively little responsibility, because they do not appreciate clearly the distinction between the spirit of Truth and the spirit of error, the Spirit of God and the spirit of Satan.

Man was not created in this condition of inability to discern right and wrong, good and evil. He was created perfect, in the image and likeness of God. Sin has wrought death, not merely to man's body, but also to his mind, his conscience. The ability to discern between right and wrong varies, therefore. Additionally, some have opportunities for instruction more than others, and thus their responsibility is increased. The world in general knows not God, and hence could not sin against the Holy Spirit in that full sense or degree which

would be punished with the Second Death. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."—2 Corinthians 4:4.

Some knowledge is necessary to bring us to an appreciation of Christ as the Sent of God. Then if we accept Him and become His consecrated disciples, or followers, we receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit. This brings us to a vantage point where our eyes of understanding open more and more widely, in proportion as we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Our responsibility increases with our joy in the Lord and our preparation for the Heavenly glories to which we have been called. It is these advanced disciples of Jesus that are in danger of grieving the Holy Spirit whereby they were sealed—of quenching the Spirit of holiness in their hearts. (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19.) While the quenching and the grieving are not instantaneous works, they are the paths which lead to the Second Death. Every Christian, therefore, should press on toward perfection of holiness—the filling with the Spirit.

The Apostle presents this thought in Hebrews 6:4-6, declaring that those who have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the Age to come, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, cannot be renewed unto repentance, if they with full wilfulness and deliberation reject Christ and righteousness, and turn to sin. Again, later on, he says (Hebrews 10:26, 27), "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received a knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for our sins, but a certain fearful looking for a decision and a fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries"—of God. The Apostle mentions especially the rejection of the atoning work of Christ, saying that such count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified a common thing, and do despite to the Spirit of favor which has brought them thus far.

Those who quench the Spirit of holiness, or "grieve the Spirit," are described by St. James (5:14) as spiritually sick. Cut off from fellowship with God, they have one last resort; viz., to request the assistance of sanctified elders of the Church to pray for them and to anoint them with oil, symbolic of the Holy Spirit. The prayer of faith shall save these spiritually sick; and the Lord will raise them up; and though they have committed sins, these shall be forgiven them.

"THE HOLY SPIRIT SHALL TEACH"

The Lord's faithful followers were to expect that amongst their tribulations would be false accusations which would bring them before magistrates. For the most part the disciples were unlearned, and would feel great trepidation in the presence of educated officials. They were to know, however, that the Lord's blessing would be upon them; and that they would have wisdom superior to that which was naturally theirs. They need not anxiously premeditate what their answers would be, but commit all to the Lord, expecting Divine assistance.

Nothing in this implies that the ministers of Christ either in the pulpit or in the class meeting should attempt to represent the Lord without studying their subject. On the

contrary, each should accept to himself St. Paul's words to Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." (2 Timothy 2:15.) There is a difference between standing before a congregation of God's people as a mouthpiece of His Word and being called before magistrates.

SEPTEMBER 10

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers—Eph. 4:29.

The depraved taste hedges itself behind conscience, and declares that it is always right to speak the truth, and hence God cannot have meant that speaking the truth would be slander; but that in condemning evil-speaking and slander, as works of the flesh and the devil, He must have meant the speaking of that which is false, untrue. This is a great mistake; a slander is equally a slander, whether it be true or whether it be false, and is so regarded, not only in the law of God but also in the laws of civilized men. A slander is anything which is uttered with the intention of injury to another, whether true or false, and the laws of men agree with the law of God, that such injury to another is wrong—Z '99, 70 (R 2442).

Corrupt communications consist of all language which tends to deprave others physically, mentally, morally or religiously. So much of such language is spoken that by contrast we should be on the alert to counteract its influence. As the salt of the earth, we should express only such thoughts as have a seasoning, nourishing and preserving effect on people's bodies, minds and hearts. Words are the most potent things in the world; and the most potent words are those that express God's thoughts. So far as possible let us use our language to express God's thoughts only, and thereby we will prove a blessing to all rightly disposed hearts—P '36, 110.

Parallel passages: Psa. 5:9; 52:2; 73:7-9; 1 Cor. 15:33; Eph. 5:3, 4; Col. 3:8; 4:6; 1 Thes. 5:11; Col. 3:16; Deut. 6:6, 7; Mal. 3:16, 17; Prov. 15:7; Matt. 12:36, 37; Titus 3:2; Jas. 3:2-8; 4:11; 1 Pet. 2:1.

Hymns: 116, 154, 275, 122, 49, 44, 296.

Poems of Dawn, 106: *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 62 (R 4770).

Questions: What was the character of this week's speech? Why was it so? What were its effects?

WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS

"WHAT a friend we have in Jesus,"
Sang a little child one day;
And a weary woman listened
To the darling's happy lay.

All her life seemed dark and gloomy,
All her heart was sad with care;
Sweetly rang out baby's treble,—
"All our sins and griefs to bear."

She was pointing out the Savior
Who could carry every woe;
And the one who sadly listened
Needed that dear Helper so!

Sin and grief were heavy burdens
For a fainting soul to bear;
But the baby singer bade her
"Take it to the Lord in prayer."

With a simple, trusting spirit,
Weak and worn, she turned to God,
Asking Christ to take her burden,
Owning Him as her dear Lord.

Jesus was her only refuge,
He could take her sin and care,
And He blessed the weary woman
When she came to Him in prayer.

And the happy child, still singing,
Little knew she had a part
In God's wondrous work of bringing
Peace unto a troubled heart.

R4770: WHAT "CORRUPT COMMUNICATION" SIGNIFIES

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth; but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."—Eph. 4:29.

CORRUPT communication is the spreading of evil report or message instead of good. Our text might be understood to mean a corrupting communication according to the course of ordinary conversation. Our minds might get us into all kinds of difficulty with ourselves and with others, if we did not keep a rein upon them and hold them within certain bounds; but our tongues might do even more injury than our minds. What we may think injures only ourselves; but if our tongues come into the matter, not only are our own minds defiled, but there is contagion, there is rancor; for the tongue spreads the matter all around. And whether the matter be true or false, the influence is corrupting, degrading, tending, perhaps, at times even toward immorality.

It would appear that not only amongst the worldly, but amongst the Lord's people there is a tendency to relate little incidents or make little remarks which, while not necessarily sinful, tend to cause sprouts of evil to develop. It is along this line that the Apostle says we should let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth. If, by

any mischance, any corrupting information has come to our attention, we should see to it that it goes no further. We have sometimes wondered whether it is the quality of the natural mind to use the tongue to the disadvantage of others, or whether evil spirits have something to do with it.

Let us, as the Apostle enjoins, drop evil communications; shun them, and hold fast only to that which is edifying—the word "edifying" having in it the thought of an edifice, a building, the up-building of each other.

BROAD SCOPE FOR CONVERSATION ON RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE

But some, even of those who profess to love the Lord and to be trying to walk in his footsteps, will say, "I never speak anything but the truth; and I mean no harm to anybody; but I must have something to talk about when my neighbors come in, and many of them would think me tiresome if I should try to interest them in religious matters." But it is evil speaking, slander all the same, and the scandal-monger, however refined his methods or words, well knows that so far from the scandal ministering grace to the hearer, it ministers evil; that the hearer, impelled by the forces of his fallen human nature, goes out to tell the scandal to others. The fallen nature feasts and revels in just such things, deluding many that they are thus moralizing, preaching against sin, and that in thus discussing and impliedly denouncing the transgressions of another, they are mentioning matters abhorrent to themselves. Alas! their reasoning is seriously defective when the Lord's counsels in righteousness are ignored.

There is surely broad scope for conversation among Christian people on the subject of the riches of God's grace in Christ Jesus our Lord, expressed in the exceeding great and precious promises of the Divine Word. In these things we have indeed that which not only ministers grace to the hearer, but that which adds also to the grace of the speaker. It showers blessing on every hand so far as the New Creature is concerned, and assists in deadening the old nature with its evil desires, tastes and appetites.

This, evidently, is what the Apostle had in mind when he said that the Lord's people should "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness, into his marvelous light." And a heart filled with the spirit of love, the spirit of God, the spirit of the Truth, and overflowing with the same will be sure to bestow it upon others; for, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh"; "Blessed are the pure in heart."—I Peter 2:9; Matt. 12:34; 5:8.

SEPTEMBER 11

Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple—
Luke 14:27.

The Lord's cross-bearing consisted in *the doing of the Father's will under unfavorable conditions*. This course brought upon Him the envy, hatred, malice, strife, persecution, *etc.*, of those who thought themselves to be God's people, but whom our Lord, who read their hearts, declared to be of their father, the devil. Since we are walking in the same way that our Master walked, we may reasonably expect that our crosses will be of a similar kind to His—oppositions to our doing the will of our Father in Heaven—oppositions to our serving His cause and letting the light shine out as our Master and Leader directed—Z '03, 345 (R 3235).

The cross means the untoward experiences that we must undergo, while seeking to subject our conduct to the principles of God's Word. Such conduct and no other is implied in the words "come after me." The vast majority will not even manifest such conduct in ordinary circumstances. A small minority will do it in such circumstances; but few indeed of Jesus' followers will do this in every condition. And at times this taxes their strength almost to the snapping point. Yes, if it were not for the Lord's special help, they would be unable to bear their cross. His help, freely and gladly vouchsafed, keeping them from falling, maintains them in discipleship—P '30, 151.

Parallel passages: Matt. 7:13, 14; 8:19, 20; 10:37-39; 13:45-47; 16:24; Luke 14:26, 28; 18:28-33; Acts 20:22-24; Rom. 14:1—15:3; 1 Cor. 9:25-27; Gal. 5:16, 17, 24; 1 Pet. 2:11-16.

Hymns: 8, 114, 134, 279, 160, 14, 67.
Poems of Dawn, 170: *The Changed Cross*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 90 (R 5425).

Questions: What and how have I done with my cross this week? What was the effect?

THE CHANGED CROSS

IT was a time of sadness, and my heart,
Although it knew and loved the better part,
Felt wearied with the conflict and the strife,
And all the needful discipline of life.

And while I thought of these as given to me—
My trial tests of faith and love to be—
It seemed as if I never could be sure
That faithful to the end I should endure.

And thus no longer trusting to His might,

Who saith we "walk by faith and not by sight,"
Doubting, and almost yielding to despair,
The thought arose—My cross I cannot bear.

Far heavier its weight must surely be
Than those of others which I daily see;
Oh! if I might another burden choose,
Methinks I should not fear my crown to lose.

A solemn silence reigned on all around—
E'en Nature's voices uttered not a sound;
The evening shadows seemed of peace to tell,
And sleep upon my weary spirit fell.

A moment's pause, and then a heavenly light
Beamed full upon my wondering, raptured sight;
Angels on silvery wings seemed everywhere,
And angels' music thrilled the balmy air.

Then One, more fair than all the rest to see—
One to whom all others bowed the knee—
Came gently to me as I trembling lay,
And, "Follow Me," He said, "I am the Way."

Then speaking, thus, He led me far above;
And there beneath a canopy of love,
Crosses of divers shape and size were seen,
Larger and smaller than mine own had been.

And one there was most beautiful to behold—
A little one, with jewels set in gold;
Ah! this, methought, I can with comfort wear,
For it will be an easy one to bear.

And so the little cross I quickly took,
But all at once my frame beneath it shook;
The sparkling jewels, fair were they to *see*,
But far too heavy was their *weight* for me.

This may not be, I cried, and looked again,
To see if any here could ease my pain;
But one by one I passed them slowly by,
Till on a lovely one I cast mine eye;

Fair flowers around its sculptured form entwined,
And grace and beauty seemed in it combined;

Wondering, I gazed, and still I wondered more
To think so many should have passed it o'er.

But, oh! that form so beautiful to see
Soon made its hidden sorrows known to me;
Thorns lay beneath those flowers and colors fair:
Sorrowing, I said, "This cross I may not bear."

And so it was with each and all around—
Not one to suit my *need* could there be found;
Weeping, I laid each heavy burden down,
As my Guide gently said, "No cross, no crown!"

At length to Him I raised my saddened heart;
He knew its sorrow, bid its doubts depart.
"Be not afraid," He said, "but trust in Me—
My perfect love shall now be shown to thee."

And then, with lightened eyes and willing feet,
Again I turned, mine earthly cross to meet,
With forward footsteps, turning not aside,
For fear some hidden evil might betide.

And there, in the prepared, appointed way—
Listening to hear and ready to obey—
A cross I quickly found of plainest form,
With only words of love inscribed thereon.

With thankfulness I raised it from the rest,
And joyfully acknowledged it the best—
The only one of all the many there
That I could feel was good for me to bear.

And while I thus my chosen one confessed,
I saw a heavenly brightness on it rest;
And as I bent, my burden to sustain,
I recognized mine own old cross again!

But, oh! how different did it seem to be,
Now I had learned its preciousness to see!
No longer could I unbelieving say,
Perhaps another is a better way.

Ah, no! henceforth mine own desire shall be
That He who knows me best should choose for me;
And so whate'er His love sees good to send,

I'll trust it's best, because He knows the end.

R5425: THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

—Luke 14:25-35.—

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it."—Matthew 16:25.

IT WAS at the close of the Great Teacher's ministry. Vast multitudes were following Him, all, according to the requirements of the Law, going up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of the Passover, at which Jesus foreknew, that He would die as the antitypical Passover Lamb. Occasionally in the journey He would turn and address some of the multitude. Today's lesson gives us some of His teachings. It was the custom of teachers in those days to accept disciples, or pupils—those who considered them great teachers and desired to learn of them and profit by their instruction. To this day Christians claim to be the disciples, or followers, of Jesus, claim to be giving heed to His word and seeking the blessing which He promised to His faithful followers.

The terms of discipleship which Jesus set forth, it will be noted, are very different from those proclaimed by some who profess to be His mouthpieces, His ministers. They sometimes proclaim that it is a sufficient sign of discipleship for persons to arise in a congregation and declare that they desire the prayers of God's people. Such are counted converts. To get them to take even this step requires the holding out of inducements. Sometimes the inducements are of a commercial kind—greater business prosperity to the merchant, greater favor with the employer for the clerk, an entrance into society or a better prospect of political preferment.

If we contrast these methods with the words of Jesus in this lesson, we shall perceive that the vast number of nominal Christians have been, so to speak, inveigled into professing something that they never intended to profess. Many are entrapped into professing Christianity who never became Christians, according to the Master's conditions of discipleship, and who hearken not to His Word.

"If any man come unto Me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." Surely there is no excuse for us to misunderstand such plain terms and conditions. The Master did not say that only His disciples could *ever* gain everlasting life. His general teaching was that the whole world is lost, estranged from God and without the right to everlasting life. But He came to die, "the Just for the unjust," that all of the unjust might have the opportunity of returning to Divine favor. He did not say that none but His followers would have such an opportunity of future life. Those who so declare are adding to the Word and helping thus, eventually, to confound themselves.

What Jesus *did* teach was that He would in due time be "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The world had already existed for 4,000 years before Jesus came, and no one will dispute that those who died previous to His coming had no opportunity of knowing Him and being His disciples. Yet He died to bless them, as well as to bless all who have been born into the world since. This blessing of the world, He declared, is to be accomplished by His Kingdom; and He told them plainly that His Kingdom was not of this world, age, or epoch, but of a future period. For the time being He was merely inviting disciples, and not attempting to reach the world.

The disciples were invited to become joint-heirs with Jesus in His Kingdom, that they might sit with Him in His Throne and participate with Him in His great work of human uplift—Restitution of all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary. He told them plainly that only through much tribulation would they be able to enter the Kingdom class; that the tribulations would prove their love of righteousness, their loyalty to God; and that God had purposely made the way so narrow that only the few, the very choicest of humanity in God's sight, could find it—a very few walking in that way to its further end of glory, honor and immortality.

With this view clearly before our mind's eye, there is a reasonableness in the hard terms of discipleship. Only those willing to comply with such terms, and thus to demonstrate their love and loyalty to God, could properly be entrusted with the great power, glory and honor which will be granted to the Kingdom class, in association with the Redeemer, as soon as it shall have been completed. Let us examine these words carefully, meanwhile measuring ourselves—not our flesh, but our spirit, our intentions, our desires.

Well did Henry Ward Beecher say respecting this statement made by the Master: "Never was there before, and never has there been since, I apprehend, such a speech made to those that professed to be willing and desirous to follow another." And probably a parallel statement is found in Matthew's Gospel (10:37): "He that loveth father or mother *more than Me* is not worthy of Me." The word hate is apparently used in contrast with love. To be a disciple of Christ, then, means that we must love supremely the Lord and the principles for which He stands, so that love for others would comparatively be hatred.

This proposition in its very start signifies a cutting-off—so far as the man is concerned, the will, the purpose—of every other love that would conflict with our love for the Lord and with our obedience to His will. Our earthly loves are to be counted as nothing in comparison. We are to be ready to sacrifice at the Lord's command every earthly hope, aim, object, and to lay down our lives willingly, gladly. Such as manifest a devotion of this kind can be trusted with anything. Of these the Lord speaks, saying prophetically, "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that Day when I (come to) make up My Jewels."—Malachi 3:17.

The fact that Jesus was of this character Himself, and placed the Father's will above all other considerations, is an assurance that all amongst His joint-heirs in the Kingdom will

have the same mind, the same spirit. He assures us that the Kingdom will not be a selfish one, but the very reverse. The kings and princes and judges of that Kingdom will be not only irresistible in power, but incorruptible, unbearably. With them the Divine standard will be first, in the absolute sense.

Such devotion to the Lord as is here described will necessarily at some time or other mean the severing of many earthly ties. It means that the followers of Jesus will be thought a peculiar people; and that many will think their course strange, unnatural, insane. Hence, as St. Paul said, we are counted fools all the day long for Christ's sake—because we preach the Wisdom of God and the Love of God in preference to the wisdom of humanity and the love of humanity. Of such St. John writes, saying, "As He was, so are we in this world"—ostracized, misunderstood; reproved, slandered. Only those who can stand such an experience can be winners of the crown to which Jesus referred, saying, To him that overcometh I will give a crown of life, and permit him to sit with Me in My Throne.

Who is sufficient for these things? asks the Apostle. And he furnishes the answer: "Our sufficiency is of God"; and in the promises—"My grace is sufficient for thee; My strength is made perfect in weakness"; and again, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

DEFINITION OF CROSS-BEARING

Adding to the severity of the terms, Jesus declared, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." It is not enough that we should start out with a courageous intention, a bold acknowledgment of Jesus, and a bold profession of discipleship. After we have been faithful in taking our stand on the Lord's side, we must be proven. Not merely those who have a little enthusiasm at the beginning, but those who shall demonstrate their worthiness by their faithfulness will be accounted worthy, and will be finally accepted by the Lord. Cross-bearing must be a daily matter. Our crosses are those oppositions of the world, the flesh and the Devil which conflict with the Divine will as laid down for us in the Lord's Word. The only proper sentiment is that which the Master expresses, saying, "Not My will, but Thine."

As an admonition to all not to undertake discipleship without mature deliberation, our Lord gave a parable of a man who began to build a tower, laying the foundation, but who was not able to complete it, and thus wasted his effort and made himself ridiculous, foolish. Another illustration was that of going to war without adequate preparation—an undertaking which would result disastrously. All the followers of Christ set out to build characters and to "fight a good fight." Whoever enlists under the banner of Jesus takes his stand against Satan and sin, and must expect to have a hard battle, and not to receive the victor's crown, nor to hear the words, "Well done," except by faithful perseverance in well doing.

What a blessing it would be if all who espouse the cause of Christ would do so with a full, clear understanding of what they are doing and with the fixed determination to go

onward in the good way, not even to look back! The cause of Christ would be much further advanced amongst men; and while their number would be much smaller, their influence and power in the world would undoubtedly be much greater.

"SALT IS GOOD, BUT—"

Salt has preservative qualities in connection with whatever it touches. It also serves to bring out the flavor of our food. In olden times it was used as a symbol of faithfulness, loyalty; and it is said that even yet some of the Arabs would be faithful to death to any person in whose home they had eaten salt. To them it seems to mean a pledge of loyalty.

Jesus used salt as a symbol, representing His own loyalty to God and the loyalty which all of His followers must have, and not only so, but which they must maintain. If salt lose its value for seasoning purposes, it is useless for anything else. It will not serve as a fertilizer, for it has an opposite effect. It is absolutely useless except for its intended purpose. So the Christian has a special purpose in the world—to be a preservative power, to have, as it were, antiseptic qualities, and to draw out all the good qualities of those with whom he is connected. This is the mission of the Christian in respect to the world. If he fail in this, he has failed in the purpose for which he was called, and is of no particular value in the Lord's service.

"He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear," said Jesus, in conclusion. All of His followers are to take heed to these words. Whoever neglects them despises the One who gave them, and will surely fail of a blessing that might otherwise have been secured. But as for the world, "ears they have, but they hear not; eyes have they, but they see not." We are not to measure the world by the same standards that we measure ourselves and all who profess to be the followers of Jesus. The world's highest standard is the Golden Rule. The Christian's highest standard is self-sacrifice, doing God's will at any cost.

SEPTEMBER 12

In your patience possess ye your souls—Luke 21:19

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," the Apostle explains. Very evidently patience, therefore, includes other graces of character—implies their possession to a certain extent. Among the Lord's people patience surely must be preceded by faith, and the degree of patience very generally measures the amount of faith. The Christian who finds himself impatient and restless evidently is lacking in faith toward the Lord; for otherwise he would be able to rest in the Lord's gracious promises and wait for their fulfillment. After using reasonable diligence and energy, he should be content to leave the results and times and seasons with the Lord—Z '03, 361 (R 3245).

The text should read: "By your patience preserve ye your souls." The word here translated *patience* is not from the Greek word meaning *longsuffering*, but from the one meaning *steadfastness*. It is the strength of character whereby, through perseverance in well-doing amid difficulties which are cheerfully endured we press on in well-doing by reinforcing self-control therein. This definition makes the text transparent. Jesus' exhortation encourages us to press on, cheerfully enduring obstacles in the way of well-doing; for by such a course alone will we be able to gain the preservation of our spiritual lives—P '35, 117.

Parallel passages: Psa. 37:7-9; Eccles. 7:8; Lam. 3:26, 27; Luke 8:15; Rom. 2:7; 5:3, 4; 12:12; 15:4, 5; Gal. 6:9; Col. 1:10, 11; 1 Thes. 1:3; Heb. 6:12, 15; 10:36; 12:1; Jas. 1:3, 4; 5:7, 8.

Hymns: 267, 25, 57, 134, 307, 179, 200.

Poems of Dawn, 134: *Be Strong*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 312 (R 5332).

Questions: Was I patient this week? How? Why? Under what circumstances? With what results?

BE STRONG

BE strong to bear, O heart of mine,
Faint not when sorrows come.
The sum of all these ills of earth
Prepares thee for thy home.
So many burdened ones there are
Close toiling by thy side,
Assist, encourage, comfort them,
Thine own deep anguish hide.
What though thy trials may seem great?
Thy strength is known to God,

And pathways steep and rugged lead
To pastures green and broad.

Be strong to love, O heart of mine,
Live not for self alone;
But find, in blessing other lives,
Completeness for thine own.
Seek every hungry heart to feed,
Each saddened heart to cheer;
And when stern justice stands aloof,
In mercy draw thou near.
True, loving words and helping hands
Have won more souls for Heaven
Than all the mixed and various creeds
By priests and sages given.

For every grief a joy will come,
For every toil a rest;
So hope, so love, so patient bear—
God doeth all things best.
Be strong to hope, O heart of mine,
Look not on life's dark side;
For just beyond these gloomy hours
Rich, radiant days abide.
Let hope, like summer's rainbow bright,
Scatter thy falling tears,
And let God's precious promises
Dispel thine anxious fears.

R5332: PATIENCE A CARDINAL GRACE OF CHARACTER

"Ye have need of patience [cheerful endurance], that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the [fulfilment of] the promise.—Heb. 10:36.

THE Apostle is addressing the Christian Church—You who have left the world, who have accepted Christ as your Standard-bearer, as well as your Redeemer, and who are seeking to walk in His steps, and have made consecration of your life to the Lord—"Ye have need of patience." To a certain extent you did the will of God when you made your consecration to be dead with Christ. But that will of God was more deeply impressed upon you when you began to realize more than at first what this *sacrifice* would *mean*, and that only those who *suffer* with Christ shall *reign* with Him.

"After you were illuminated" you saw the matter clearly, and "endured a great fight of afflictions." This was well. But St. Paul goes on to show in the context that some, after having demonstrated their zeal for a certain time, become cold. They become weary in

well doing. And he tells us that these thus cut themselves off from the favors, privileges and blessings belonging to the Church of Christ. His exhortation is that those who are still loyal to God at heart continue so and exercise *patience*, remembering that this is one of the cardinal graces of Christian character. Many have naturally a little love, a little gentleness, a little patience, a little meekness, etc. But after we begin to grow in the graces of the Holy Spirit, we need *patience* to control the flesh, the spirit of the world, the spirit of selfishness.

The will of God is in one sense of the word the standard of God—full perfection—that we should be like our Father which is in Heaven. But God remembers that we are fallen creatures, and that we cannot do perfectly. Our text does not mean that we must do the will of God in the perfect and complete sense; but rather, as the Apostle elsewhere says, ours is a *reasonable service*. When we present our bodies living sacrifices to God, it is our reasonable service. God does not expect us to do that which is impossible.

THE PURPOSE OF OUR TESTING

What is this will of God? Stated in concrete form, "This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification." (I Thess. 4:3.) As the Apostle teaches, consecration is a full and complete setting apart. If we do such a setting of *ourselves* apart at the beginning, then the *Father* sanctifies us—begets us as New Creatures, and sets us apart. So we have, first of all, our setting of ourselves apart; and then God's acceptance by our begetting of the Holy Spirit as New Creatures, and His continued work in us.

We are doing the will of God when we fully consecrate ourselves to Him, and attain a place in the New Creation. But He wills to put us to the test. How much do we love God? How sincere are we? A soldier in an army might be loyal in time of quiet, but how would he be in time of stress? Would he desert the flag then, or would he prove himself a good soldier? He would need a great deal of patience. If he says he loves his country, his endurance and faithfulness will be tested in her time of need. He must go on picket duty; he must sometimes do menial work. He must endure wearisome marches, and many privations. All these things are required of a faithful soldier. If he is faithful, he is likely to be promoted, honored, for his faithful service.

So we are tested as to our *loyalty*. What are we willing to *endure* for Christ's sake? How *fully* are we submitted? How *deep* does our submission go? Are we wholly in harmony with the will of the Lord? Is our interest merely superficial, or does it enter fully into our hearts? The question is not merely, Shall we make the consecration?—but after the Christian has taken all of these preliminary steps, to what extent will he manifest patient endurance and obedience and loyalty?

God puts us to these tests because He has great honors to bestow on those who will be overcomers. They are to be a select company, and these will receive the Promise. As the Apostle says, it is after we have *proved* our loyalty to the very last, that we shall receive the Promise; i.e., its fulfilment.

THE ESSENCE OF THE PROMISE

When, where, what is the Promise? Undoubtedly the promise will be received in the resurrection. The promise includes all that God has in reservation for them that love Him—that love Him more than they love houses and lands, or children, or parents, or friends, or husbands or wives, or self, or any other thing.

The particular promise that the Apostle refers to here is *The Promise*. All our hopes and blessings are centered in the original Promise made to Abraham, when God brought him out of the land of Chaldea into the land of Canaan. God promised Abraham that in His Seed should all the families of the earth be blessed. That has been the great Promise for encouragement to the Seed, to give them patience and fortitude. This is the essence of the Promise—that those who receive the Promise shall be the Seed of Abraham to bless the world. The faithful in Christ will be associated with Him in His Kingdom—will have the honor of blessing all the families of the earth under this Kingdom. Every creature of God shall then be brought to a knowledge of His Truth, and shall have the opportunity of being restored, if he will, to perfection, to all that was redeemed on Calvary.

Now the opportunity is *different*. *Now* the selection is being made of those who will inherit the Promise as the Seed of Abraham. "If ye be *Christ's*, then are ye *Abraham's Seed*, and heirs according to the Promise." The Apostle is in our text urging that we continue to be Christ's and to abide in Him. All those who thus remain in Him to the end will be glorified with Him. In order to remain faithful, we must have His spirit of devotion.

NOTABLE EXAMPLES OF PATIENT ENDURANCE

St. James exhorts the Church saying, "Take, my brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." Those whom the Apostle addressed already knew of the sufferings of Jesus. They already knew of the faithfulness of the Apostles. And now he was calling the attention of their minds to something *additional*. He is urging, Look back into the past, and see that patient endurance has been characteristic of all who have lived holy lives. These examples should be lessons of encouragement to us, in addition to those we have in the living brethren around us!

Then there is always something to be gained in casting the mind backward. The things close at hand are too near to be seen in their proper light. It was fitting that the Apostle should call attention to those faithful ones of the past, so that we might be encouraged to note what God desires. In those who are His, He desires a willingness to endure patiently and loyally, thus manifesting true character, that which greatly pleases Him.

As we look back over the Old Testament record of the Prophets, we notice that many of them displayed this very quality referred to by the Apostle as loyalty to the Lord, a willingness to suffer afflictions for *His sake*, and not as experiences brought through chance upon them by the people. We see Moses—how willing he was to suffer affliction

because of his faith in the Promise made to Abraham and his conviction that the Promise would come true. He preferred to suffer with the people of God rather than to live at ease in the royal family of Pharaoh, into which he had been adopted.

We see in Job another example of patient endurance of tribulation and of strong opposition for a considerable time. We see the same in Jeremiah—how much his faithfulness cost him of hardship, and how patient he was. We see the same in Daniel the Prophet—his faithfulness to the Lord, his patient endurance of whatever God permitted to come against him. And so with others of the Prophets. And we read that their experiences were written for *our* admonition, *our* instruction. Although they belong to one Dispensation and we to another, yet their experiences furnish us good lessons.—I Cor. 10:6, 11.

PERSONAL APPLICATION OF THESE LESSONS

Applying these lessons to ourselves, we may say that to whatever extent we may be privileged to speak the Word of God and to suffer persecution therefore, if we take it with patience, it will bring us a corresponding blessing and commendation from the Lord. But we cannot think it would be pleasing to Him if, when we suffer, we think, Oh, how terrible, terrible, terrible! Such an attitude would not be taking His Word for it, that "*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,*" and that all things shall work out for our good.—2 Tim. 3:12; Rom. 8:28.

When Job was rich, prosperous, God tested him by taking from him all his family, all his wealth, his health, and even allowing his wife to turn against him. Yet in all this Job did not turn against God. He did indeed express wonder, but he looked to the Lord in faith and said, "Though worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." I shall yet receive the manifestation of His favor, and learn what He means by these experiences, these afflictions, coming upon me. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."—Job 13:15.

After his testings had been accomplished, God gave him back children, houses, lands, friends. And these coming in abundance shadowed forth the blessings of Restitution—how the tribulations of mankind will eventually work out for good to those who will love God. If those who are now suffering affliction because of their loyalty to the Lord, because of their trust in His arrangements, will take afflictions and trials joyfully, these will surely work out good to them—"a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

SEPTEMBER 13

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!—
Psa. 133:1.

Like our Lord, let us seek to be peacemakers, and to dwell together with all the brethren in the unity of the Spirit, in the bonds of peace. Let our activities, our combativeness, *etc.*, be engaged against the great enemy and all the works of sin, including those in our members, our own fallen flesh. We, and all the brethren, will thus find sufficient engagement for every combative element of our nature, in ways well-pleasing to the Lord, and employment for every lovable and helpful quality we possess, in building one another up, and doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith—Z '03, 363 (R 3245).

The brethren here are not the natural but the spiritual brethren, as the next verse proves by showing them to be the antitype of Aaron. The unity here mentioned is the same as that for which our Lord prayed, that they all may be one, as the Father and the Son are one. This unity, of course, is not a personal or essential oneness; but a oneness of faith, hope, love and purpose, for the one Father, under the one Lord and in the one baptism. Good and pleasant is this unity. No earthly relation is comparable to it. May it be ours now in development and to all eternity in blessed realization—P '34, 128.

Parallel passages: Psa. 55:14; 119:63; Amos 3:3; Mal. 3:16; Matt. 18:20; 20:25-28; 23:8; Luke 22:32; 24:13-15; John 13:34; 17:11, 21-23; Acts 1:14; 2:1, 42, 44-47; Rom. 15:1-7; 1 Cor. 1:10; 10:16, 17; 12:12, 13; Gal. 2:9; 6:2, 10; Eph. 2:14-22; 5:2, 19, 30; Phil. 1:3, 5, 27; 2:1, 2; Col. 2:2; 1 Thes. 4:18; Heb. 10:24, 25; 13:1; Jas. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:17; 3:8, 9; 1 John 3:14; 4:7, 11-13.

Hymns: 23, 6, 94, 326, 95, 322, 170.

Poems of Dawn, 97: *In My Name*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 133 (R 5229).

Questions: Have I experienced the truth of this text this week? How? Why? With what results?

IN MY NAME

THERE were only two or three of us
Who came to the place of prayer—
Came in the teeth of the driving storm;
But for that we did not care,
Since after our hymns of praise had risen,
And our earnest prayers were said,
The Master Himself was present there,
And He gave us the living bread.

We noted the look in each other's face,
So loving, and glad, and free;
We felt His touch when our heads were bowed,
We heard His "Come to Me!"
Nobody saw Him lift the latch,
And none unbarred the door;
But "Peace" was His token in every heart,
And how could we ask for more?

Each of us felt the relief from sin,
Christ's purchase for one and all;
Each of us dropped his load of care,
And heard the Heavenly call;
And over our spirits a blessed calm
Swept in from the Jasper Sea,
And strength was ours for the toil of life
In the days that were yet to be.

It was only a handful gathered in
To the little place of prayer,
Outside were struggle and strife and sin,
But the Lord Himself was there.
He came to redeem the pledge He gave—
Wherever his loved ones be,
To give His comfort and joy to them,
Though they count but two or three.

R5229: DWELLING TOGETHER IN UNITY

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psalm 133:1.

IN SOME earthly families there is a considerable degree of unity. Of such we sometimes say, "This family all seem to pull together." In other families there seems to be a pulling apart. When we see husband and wife, brothers and sisters, seeking to help one another, we say, "There is a great deal of love in that family." By this we mean an earthly love—a certain amount of animal love. This disposition is a right one. The Bible seems to imply that there is an obligation, a special duty, to those who are near to us. The Scriptures say that a man should not neglect his own household. He that careth not for his own is worse than an unbeliever.—I Timothy 5:8.

Man was originally created in the image of God, and had love Divine as the inspiring influence in his life. This love has been largely effaced by selfishness, which is the representative of sin. In proportion as people are fallen, to that extent they are selfish. Some are kind and generous to the members of their own family, and seek to co-operate

in helping one another. We cannot say that this is not a right principle, if, in seeking to do for its own, it does not injure others. Brothers and sisters should sympathize with one another, and have a spirit of helpfulness one toward another. Wherever we see this spirit in a family we say, "That is a delightful family."

There are other families where there seems to be a personal selfishness, and no brotherly sympathy at all. In such families there is a desire to do more for an outsider than for one of their own. The members see more blemishes in their own than in others. In such cases, justice is lacking. Whenever the principle of justice is overridden, a spirit of antagonism is engendered instead of love, and under such conditions there is no unity possible.

FRICION THE RESULT OF SELFISHNESS

Let us apply this rule to the Lord's family—the Church. God has organized a new family in the world—not according to any earthly ties, but according to the Spirit of God. This family consists of those who have been begotten of the one Spirit of the Father. What a beautiful family it is! We see a type of this family in the days of Gideon. All the sons of Joash, Gideon's father, were different from the others of Israel in their general appearance. It is written that they resembled the children of kings. (Judges 8:18.) So should it be with us. As we have the Spirit of the Lord, we should shine out in our words and deeds, and in every way should "show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light."—I Peter 2:9.

Evidently the principle of selfishness is the root from which all disagreements emanate. Surely there is nothing of selfishness in the Lord's Spirit. Whence then is this spirit of strife and discord which sometimes manifests itself among the Lord's people? One sets himself up and seeks to take away the rights and liberties of others. Others, having a similar spirit, may desire to be clannish. One says, "I am of Paul"; another, "I am of Apollos," a third, "I am of Christ." This spirit is wrong. St. Paul points out that there is none other than Christ to whom we should be united.

The most favorable condition for unity is that all seek to have the Lord's will done in their mortal bodies. The only difficulty that could then arise would result from ignorance or from weakness of the flesh that had not been overcome or that could not be overcome. The other members of the congregation, having the Spirit of the Master, would assume that the erring brother was merely ignorant, and not wilfully in opposition. Therefore in all kindness and gentleness they would seek to point out the will of the Father as expressed in Christ. The younger brother would be glad to have this done, because he would have the Spirit of Christ.

If the difficulty were one of the flesh, the brethren should recognize that it was merely a weakness of the flesh, and sympathetically they should point out to the brother wherein he had come short. In turn, he should make apology for his mistake. Then he should be freely forgiven. So he would learn and would come into proper unity with the other

brethren. Thus we are all, at the present time, to have the Spirit of the Master, and so far as possible to live together in unity.

"NO SCHISM IN THE BODY"

It is, however, not possible always to "dwell together in unity" with everybody. It would be impossible for God and Satan thus to dwell. There are some people who have the spirit of Satan. We could have no unity with such a one. There would be polishing from coming in contact with such, but there could be no unity; for what fellowship could light have with darkness? On one occasion St. Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church, "I hear that there are divisions among you." Then he proceeded to say that it must be so, in order that whatever was wrong might come to the surface, that the inharmony of the situation might be realized, and that the one in the wrong might be led to go out, because he was an intruder. (I Corinthians 11:18, 19.) Recognizing his position, such a one would go out, saying by his action, "I am not a member of the Body of Christ; these are the Lord's people." Or, failing to go out, he should be advised to do so.

Those who are not brethren, who are not children of light, but children of darkness, associating with the brethren, must be dealt with along the lines of the Divine direction laid down in Matthew 18:15-17. We may not take any measures not Scriptural. This is the only method.

We have seen great machines running with great precision and very little commotion. The parts are dwelling together in unity; all are working in perfect order, because they are well put together. They could not fall together, or there would be merely a rattling. The family of God are like a great machine. The setting of the members in the Body is under the supervision of the great Engineer, who brings them into the spirit of harmony, through the impartation of His own Spirit.

The working of a new engine or other machine is very slow at first, because there is a certain amount of friction engendered when the parts begin to move. So when the engineer finds that there is friction in any of the parts, he puts on a little lubricating oil, and thus prevents injury. When the parts are worn smooth, there is little danger of friction. So with the members of the Body of Christ. When they are new in the Body we must expect some friction, and then we should exercise more of the Spirit of the Lord. And we should be very sure of our own spirit, of our own intention.

Even if the one causing friction should not be of the Body, even if he were a stranger—no part of the machine to which he is attaching himself—there would be all the more need of oil. We should, therefore, remember that no matter how well developed each member may be, he will need the Holy Spirit. If we find any member unendurable, we should go to the Lord in prayer and ask for more of His Spirit, that we may exercise more patience and more brotherly-kindness in dealing with that one. So shall we be pleasing to the Lord, and helpful in building one another up and in doing good unto all men, especially to the Household of Faith.

SEPTEMBER 14

Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully—1 Pet. 2:12, 19.

We may be evil reported of and slandered, but all who know us, who have dealings with us, should find from experience our loyalty to principle, our endeavor that the words of our mouths as well as the meditations of our hearts and the conduct of life should be pleasing to the Lord and an honor to His name and cause, that God may be glorified through Christ, to whom belongs the glory and the Kingdom forever—Z '03, 365 (R 3246).

The Lord's people are often undeservedly slandered. It should be their constant care so to live as not to deserve reproach. However, if it comes, let them not weary in well-doing; let them continue the course of honest conduct, certain that even if they now fail to bless others with their good works, the latter, in the Day of Christ, when visited with an opportunity of salvation, will receive such a blessing from the remembrance of these good works as will inure to God's glory. The seed, though long delayed in sprouting, will then yield an abundant crop. Therefore we may thank God for the privilege of suffering evil for our well-doing—P '33, 147.

Parallel passages: 2 Cor. 8:21; Rom. 12:17; Phil. 4:8; Neh. 5:9; 1 Pet. 2:15; 3:13-18; Matt. 5:16; John 13:34, 35; 1 Pet. 2:20-24; Rom. 8:17-19; 2 Tim. 2:10-12; Heb. 13:10-14.

Hymns: 299, 134, 208, 224, 302, 315, 325.

Poems of Dawn, 287: *The Rainy Day*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 323 (R 5116).

Questions: Have I been mistreated this week? How did I endure it? What were the effects?

THE RAINY DAY

THE day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the moldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
My thoughts still cling to the moldering past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

R5116: PERSECUTION AND FIERY TRIALS THE CHRISTIAN'S EXPERIENCE

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

GODLINESS IMPLIES a character which is actuated by principles of righteousness. In all our dealings we are either just or unjust, kind or unkind, not according to what some people may think of us, but according to the standard of righteousness found in the Scriptures. Therefore, in order to develop that character which is pleasing to God, we should in every detail of life consider carefully what is right and what is wrong, according to that standard. This course is Scripturally termed meditating in God's Law. When we reach that development of character in which thought, word and deed are measured by the principles of righteousness, we shall have attained godlikeness.—Psa. 119:97.

What the Lord desires to see in His people is not merely an outward manifestation of devotion to Him and to His brethren, but a development of love in our hearts and our dispositions. If we profess to love one another and yet pursue a course of self-seeking, wherein do we manifest love? So St. John admonishes to love not in word only, but in deed and in truth.—I John 3:18.

Primarily, the godly are those who are in Christ Jesus, members of His Mystical Body, having presented their human bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through the merit of the great Advocate. Secondly, the term godly includes those who live righteously, in sympathy with Christ Jesus, even though they may not live up to the full standard which the Lord has set, because they shrink from the suffering that results from godly living. Thirdly, the term godly includes some in the remote past, who, believing in the promise of the Lord that the "Seed" should some day come, separated themselves from the rest of the world and, having obtained new aims, new ideas, were out of touch with the remainder of the race because of having a different standard.—Heb. 11:13-16.

The Ancient Worthies composed this third class, who had a share in the suffering of the godly and a participation also in the blessing. Moses, for example, preferred to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to participate in the honors of the Egyptian Government. Although adopted into the family of Pharaoh, he had respect to the promise that the Messiah would come. Hence he suffered on account of his faith in the promise. So all the patriarchs desired to be in harmony with God, in accordance with His promise

made to Abraham, and because of belief in that promise they suffered more or less persecution.—Heb. 11:24-26;36-38.

Some one may ask, "Why should the godly suffer?" The Bible answers that sin has brought the world into opposition to God. Whoever, then, would have all men speak in commendation of him would not be in harmony with the Divine arrangement, for the masses of the world are pursuing a course that the Lord does not approve. We are not saying that everything which the world does is sinful, but that the standards of God are so high that because of their fallen condition the masses of the world are not subject to the Law of God, neither, indeed, can they be, for they are carnal, sold under sin. (Rom. 8:7; 7:14, 15.) Those who wish to have influence with the world must cater to popular prejudices. On the contrary, those who would be God's people must be loyal to the principles of righteousness and consequently must go in the opposite direction to that of the world. Hence they are opposed by the world.

From the standpoint of God the course of the world is sinful. There is a tendency in our flesh to go with the world, who are laboring under false views of various kinds, because that course is in sympathy with the desires of our own fallen flesh. Hence to live godly is to live in opposition to the course of the world and of our own flesh. This would include not only living uprightly and avoiding sin, etc., but also the making of sacrifices as well, where principles are not involved. We are to beware, however, lest we be deceived along this line. Not only are we contending with the world, but we are wrestling with wicked spirits in high positions.—Eph. 6:12.

ILLUSTRATION OF SATAN'S DEVICES

Sometimes Satan's arts seem to be employed to get those who are trying to live godly into contention with each other. One of his devices is to make unimportant things seem important, and in this way to make people think that they are contending for righteousness' sake, and that the sufferings that they bring on themselves in this manner are for righteousness' sake. Another device is to deceive people into "busy-bodding in other men's matters." (I Peter 4:15.) It behooves us, therefore, as the Lord's people, not to try to straighten out all the affairs of the Church or of the world, and not to get into conflict with the brethren. They, like ourselves, are laboring to counteract the influences of the world, the flesh and the Devil.

Our influence upon each other should be uplifting; we should not cause others to grieve, except where suffering is absolutely necessary. Hence the Lord's people should cultivate the fruits of the Spirit increasingly—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. The cultivation of these fruits of the Spirit is a law in respect to the Lord's people. All who would live godly in Christ Jesus are to see to it that they are not the *cause of suffering* to others—especially to those of the household of faith.

SUFFERING AS A CHRISTIAN

While it is true that all who will live godly in this world will suffer to the extent to which they are out of harmony with the present evil conditions, yet the promised blessings of the Scriptures are to those who live godly *in Christ Jesus*, those who are *Christians*. Of these St. Peter says, "If any man suffer *as a Christian*, let him not be ashamed."—I Peter 4:16.

A Christian is a follower of Christ, one who has cast in his lot to suffer with Christ, that He may be also glorified with the Lord. (2 Tim. 2:12.) From the Apostle's standpoint, therefore, no one could *suffer* as a Christian unless he had become a Christian.

Every painful experience which our Lord had was suffering for righteousness' sake—not only the great sufferings, not only the great fight against sin, but also all the little, unpleasant experiences common to the world. Being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26), there was no reason why He should suffer. We do not understand that the Heavenly Father has provided sufferings, trials and difficulties for the angels who are in harmony with Him. Nor do we think that Jesus, being a Son in full accord with the Father, would have suffered were it not for His Covenant of self-sacrifice. All of His sufferings were because He had come into the world to be man's Redeemer. They were all parts of His necessary experience.

The sufferings which our Lord endured were the result of His activity in the service of the Father. These were His weariness, His weakness after giving out His vitality to heal others, His bloody sweat, His ignominious buffetings, and all the reproaches, the sneers and the bitter words incurred on account of His faithfulness, to all of which He meekly and quietly submitted until His sufferings on Calvary terminated His human existence.

SUFFERINGS RESULTING FROM HEREDITY, NOT SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

There is no question that suffering in general is not suffering with Christ, but with Adam. Our physical infirmities which are of heredity, are not sufferings of Christ. Rather we should speak of the sufferings of Christ as being *voluntary* and not involuntary. When the Apostle says that if we suffer with the Lord we shall also reign with Him (2 Tim. 2:12), he means the suffering which we bring on ourselves through faithfulness to our Covenant. St. Paul speaks of filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for His Body's sake, which is the Church. (Col. 1:24.) These experiences are not for Adam's sake.

In St. Paul's own case he had, we believe, weak eyes as a result of his wrong course in persecuting the Church; and that wrong course was, no doubt, largely the result of heredity. When the Apostle speaks of the sufferings he endured on account of his eyes, he does not speak of them as the sufferings of Christ, but says that his affliction was a messenger of *Satan* to buffet him. (2 Cor. 12:7.) We might then say that all physical sufferings resulting from heredity are ministers of Satan opposing us, causing us much difficulty. However, we believe that the Lord is pleased with us if we resist these ministers of Satan.

If we should think of all our physical pains and aches as sufferings for Christ, then we should be obliged to think of our mental defects also as sufferings for Christ. For instance, a man who had a disabled hand might have a comparatively even temper; another might have a perverse temper, leading him into trouble, leading him to busybody in other men's matters, etc. Thus his disposition causes him to suffer as a *busybody* and not for Christ. St. Paul tells us that our defects in character are works of the fallen flesh. (Gal. 5:19-21.) If the sufferings that come to us because of imperfect mental conditions are sufferings of heredity, the physical sufferings which result from imperfect physical conditions, cannot be counted as sufferings for Christ.

In the case of a Christian, inherited weaknesses and those brought upon himself by the violation of the laws of God previous to his entrance into the family of God as a son, while not sufferings with Christ, will be made advantageous to him. These weaknesses our Father sees fit to leave with us, but assures us that His grace will be sufficient for us. (2 Cor. 12:9.) While the realization of such care for our interests is humiliating in that it forces conviction of our weakness, yet it is refreshing and inspiring in that it proves our Father's love for us. "The Father Himself loveth you."—John 16:27.

SUFFERING TURNED TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW CREATURE

But when one has undertaken to follow in the footsteps of Christ and has been begotten as a New Creature, whatever affliction that *New Creature* undergoes because of following the Lord, is suffering as a Christian; and whatever our experiences in suffering may be, these are not necessarily the portion of the sons of God, for the angels do not suffer; but He permits the Church to have them in order to develop and crystallize character. If we rejoice that we are found worthy to share in the sufferings of the present time, every trial will be turned to advantage as a part of our Christian experience. "They are not of the world." (John 17:16.) Therefore all of our experiences must be regarded as Christian, for correction in righteousness and for educational purposes.

But this is taking a broader, deeper view than ordinary. Certainly a Christian is not to be ashamed of what he may suffer because of his loyalty to the Lord, to the Truth and to the brethren. In these sufferings he is to glorify God and to be thankful for them. He is to be glad for the opportunity of enduring something, to show not only the Lord, but himself also that he has endured something for Christ's sake. Every sacrifice that we make is for the purpose of suffering as a Christian, and we are not to be ashamed so to suffer.—I Peter 4:16.

SUFFERING FOR CONSCIENCE NOT ALWAYS SUFFERING FOR CHRIST

There are others who suffer more or less as Christians suffer, but they are suffering from a worldly standpoint. People sometimes say, "This worldly man has his trials and sufferings, and shows such patience, such resignation, that surely he is suffering as a

Christian." But we do not understand that anyone can suffer as a Christian unless he takes the steps necessary to make him a Christian. We are to view matters from God's standpoint. Doubtless many have suffered as Christians from a human viewpoint who were not Christians. In the Dark Ages many were put to death for the sake of principle. In our own day there are people who give no evidence of being Christians, but who would rather die than have the Bible taken out of the public schools. Although they do not understand the Bible, yet if these were times of persecution, many would die at the stake in order to keep the Bible in the public schools.

We cannot always tell whether suffering is for Christ's sake. But where people have suffered for conscience' sake, they have thus cultivated character, and will get a blessing in the next Age for that suffering. At present there is only the one door into membership in the Body of Christ—obedience even unto death. Suffering with Christ, as we have seen, is not the ordinary suffering common to all in the fallen state, but only such experiences as are the result, more directly, of following Christ's example in advocating unpopular truths and in exposing popular errors. Such were the causes of the sufferings of Christ; and such will be the causes of suffering, persecution and loss to all who follow in His footsteps. Such will have fellowship in His sufferings now, and in the end will be counted worthy to share in the reward given for faithfulness to principle.

Throughout the Gospel Age this course has meant self-sacrificing labor and endurance of reproach in the sowing and watering of Christ's doctrines. Now, in the end of the Age, it means a similar fidelity and endurance in the Harvest work now in progress—faithfulness even to the laying down of life itself, whether it be required by the gradual process of working it out in the Master's service, a dying daily, or by being brought more abruptly to a martyr's death.

SHRINKING BACK FROM SUFFERING

Our Lord forewarns us that in the end of the Gospel Age, many who have a love for Christ will allow their love to grow cold because of the iniquity and sin in the world. (Matt. 24:12.) It will be a test for such to decide whether they will follow the Lord in self-sacrifice as His disciples or whether they will partake of the worldly spirit. We see this test in operation now. A great many people who name the name of Christ, who really love the Lord, who appreciate much of His character, who would like to see the right prosper, nevertheless have no thought of making a spectacle of themselves before men. They would like to do right, to walk honorably, and to have the favor of men as good citizens. But as to being warm and faithful followers of the Lord—through "evil report and good report" (2 Cor. 6:8)—their faith and zeal are not sufficient to endure the test.

The Lord Jesus gives us the invitation to become joint-heirs with Him. He has very clearly informed us that to follow in His steps will mean trials and difficulties in the flesh. He says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (John 16:33.) St. Paul repeats the sentiment, saying, "We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God"; and again in our text he emphasizes the thought, saying, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution.*" (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12.) There is no other way

to enter the Kingdom than by self-sacrifice, deadening of the flesh, mortifying it. In proportion as the New Creature grows, the old creature perishes, until the sacrifice shall have been completed in death.

The Lord's people should thoroughly understand the terms and conditions upon which they have been called. They should therefore not think it strange when trials come upon them, no matter how fiery, no matter how severe. The Apostle Peter lovingly counsels the Church: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some *strange* thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on *their* part He is evil spoken of, but on *your* part He is *glorified*." (I Peter 4:12-14.) The Lord is to be not only the Instructor, but also the Refiner to purge out the dross, that we may be made ready to share with Christ in the Kingdom of "glory, honor and immortality."—Rom. 2:7.

TRIALS FROM FALSE BRETHREN

The Scriptures plainly teach that special trials may be expected in the Church, amongst the brethren. And we find it to be true that our severest trials come not from without, but, as the Apostle in substance says, "From among yourselves shall arise false brethren," to injure the flock in general through personal ambition. (Acts 20:30.) This becomes a test not only to the Church, but to all those who are in contact with us, for if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.—I Cor. 12:26.

We are not, therefore, to think it strange if there are trials and difficulties, and if more or less dispute arise in the Church. We are to cultivate gentleness, meekness, patience, loving-kindness toward all. Nevertheless, if a dispute arise amongst the Lord's people, we are to recognize that such things are unavoidable amongst those who have the Truth. Our heads are imperfect, and consequently it requires some time to come into line with the teachings of the Lord's Word. Even disputation makes life an activity, and is better than a dead condition—not to care what is spoken or not spoken. Nevertheless, those who have zeal should be careful that they manifest the Spirit of the Lord, as above indicated—gentleness, patience, meekness, brotherly kindness, love, humility.

Think it not strange that there are fiery trials *amongst yourselves*, arising from one cause or another, that will make it particularly severe for you. Those among whom you are thrown in contact will cause you suffering, because of your zeal and their misunderstanding, their imperfection, etc. Similarly, you may be a cause of trial to others. All of these fiery trials will work out good for you. It is far better to be amongst those who are fervent in spirit than to take a place amongst those who are lukewarm and thus lose the privilege of being one of those who are footstep followers of Christ. Perhaps those who are lukewarm will, in the Time of Trouble, learn a lesson. But the Little Flock are to learn their lesson in the present time—allowing the experiences of life to work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. 4:17.

Our knowledge of God is limited; yet it is only what we should expect of the Heavenly Father, that any whom He accepts as His children will have Divine love and care in the supervision of their affairs, which will make all things work for good to them. Since the Lord is our Shepherd, no one is able to pluck us out of His hands. (John 10:28, 29.) We are as dear to Him as the apple of His eye. He that began a good work in us is able to complete it in the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6.) So the more faith we have the more we appreciate the text, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) This includes even the things that seem to be very contrary, very evil, very disadvantageous.

Our Lord said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." (John 17:3.) To know the Father means to be in fellowship with Him, to have an intimate acquaintance with Him. Experience corroborates this fact. The more obedient we are as children the more intimate is our acquaintance with Him. And if we are unfaithful, even for a little space, we shall fail to make development along spiritual lines. But in proportion as we are seeking to walk in His ways, we become intimate with Him in the particular sense in which a child knows his father. This knowledge gives us the trust that He cares for us as His children, and makes all things work together for good to us.—Rom. 8:28; I John 1:6, 7.

CO-OPERATION WITH GOD TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY

We note, however, that St. Paul says that all things work together for *good*, not for *best*. God has something to do in the way of His choice of His reward and of our possibilities. The angels of God, however obedient to Him, could not become archangels nor cherubim. Their obedience brings their highest welfare on their own plane. So with us. We cannot get the best for the reason that He has already given it to Jesus Christ, whom He has set next to Himself at His right hand in power and glory and honor.—I Peter 3:22.

Again, this promise is not a guarantee that all things in life will work together for the very best to us as though we had neither will nor choice in the matter. We should not say, "I positively resign myself; the Lord has said that all things will work together for the best, and if I miss opportunities in the service I shall say, 'Oh, well, it is all for the best.'" Thus to think would be a mistake, for it is evidently not at all the thought.

After we have become New Creatures in Christ and children of God, He leaves us with a certain amount of choice. It is very largely in our own control what we shall do, whether we shall make progress or stand still or go backward. We cannot say that if one had lost the High Calling his experiences would be the very best possible; and that if he went into the Second Death, his fate was the best. But we can say that this Scripture means that God stands ready to give us the best that He may have under the terms and conditions of the Covenant which He has made with us.

Ours is a Covenant of sacrifice. There are certain laws and principles which are not to be broken. Along these lines the Lord Jesus tells us that the Father will appoint those next

to the Lord who have demonstrated most of the Spirit of the Redeemer. He will not put anyone in such a position or into the Kingdom arbitrarily. His Character, His Words, stand pledged that He will make the best of us that He is able to do, while at the same time recognizing our wills as paramount.

Jehovah does not seek those as His children who need to be forced. Our Lord said that the Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:23.) We are to work to the best of our ability. But with all of our stumbling the Lord stands pledged that He will not leave us if we are faithful, and that He will make even our stumbling work out for good to us. Those who lose the crown may come up through great tribulation with the Great Company class. This is the best thing possible for them under the Divine arrangement. For those who go into the Second Death, their fate will not be the best for *them*; but it will be best for the entire universe that those should be blotted out of existence who are out of harmony with righteousness.

SEPTEMBER 15

Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you—2 Cor. 6:17.

Those who conscientiously live separate from the world in spiritual matters, and recognize as brethren only those who confess to circumcision of the heart and adoption into God's family, will find themselves opposed by moralists, liberalists and higher critics, as well as by the masses, who hate the light, because it condemns their darkness—doctrinal and otherwise. Nevertheless, this is the only good and safe course to pursue. Better far is it that only true Israelites should be recognized as brethren, and thus the true wheat be separated from the tares—Z '99, 203 (R 2510).

It is God's will that His people be separate from all obligations to, and co-operation and sympathy with, institutions and practices that are of Satan's control and spirit. This would imply separation from the communion and spirit of all people who are servants of Satan, whether knowingly or unknowingly so; and as far as possible separation from association with them. Thus we largely avoid the contamination of any unclean thing. What if it does make us at times walk alone? We may at least comfort ourselves with the reflection that the Lord had the same experience before us, and that God receives and companions us. Such acceptance and companionship compensates all losses—P '32, 136.

Parallel passages: Num. 16:21, 26; Ezra 10:11; Psa. 50:5; Prov. 9:6; Isa. 8:11; 52:11; Jer. 51:6, 9; Acts 2:40; 2 Cor. 6:14-16; Eph. 5:11; Rev. 18:4.

Hymns: 196, 213, 226, 299, 303, 305, 145.

Poems of Dawn, 200: *Sweet Day of Rest*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 230 (R 5737).

Questions: Did the cleansing work proceed in me this week? How? With what results?

SWEET DAY OF REST

I KNOW some day my Lord will come,
And stand within my humble home,—
His glorious presence in the room
Will make it like a rose in bloom.

His voice, like music on mine ear,
Will banish every thought of fear,
He'll fold me closely to His breast
And there in peace I'll sweetly rest.

And, oh, my Lord, on that sweet day
I know the words that Thou wilt say,
"It is enough, my child, come home,

thy work is done, beloved, come."

Then I'll arise and go with Thee
Across the shining, crystal sea,
Until we reach that blissful shore
Where we shall dwell for evermore.

R5737: OUR CLEANSING—INWARD AND OUTWARD

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

—2 Corinthians 7:1.

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

But some may, perhaps, be inclined to say that the words of our text are applicable to sinners as well as saints—sinners especially—even though the Epistle itself is addressed "unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints, who are in the whole of Achaia." We answer, No! our text cannot appropriately be applied to sinners in general, who have not yet come to God, who have not yet repented of their sins and been forgiven. God makes no appeals to such; He merely denounces them as sinners and refuses them all recognition, all fellowship, and tells them that there is no other name given under Heaven amongst men whereby they can be saved from their sins than that of Jesus—through faith in His blood. In other words, God refuses to have any dealings whatsoever with those who cannot or will not accept of the great Sin-Offering which He has provided. As Jesus expressed the matter, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me."—John 14:6.

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

But now, in the present Age, there is a test of faith for this special Little Flock whom the Lord is selecting and whom He designates as His Church. Any who cannot exercise the faith cannot be of this elect Church, but must wait for their blessing at the hands of

the Church during the reign of Christ, for which we still pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven."

SAINTS NOT NATURALLY ALL NOBLE

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

This class, not in harmony with the sin of the world nor with their own weaknesses, is referred to by our Lord in His message, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden [under the yoke of sin and appreciating its penalty, death], and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me." These learners—disciples, pupils in the School of Christ—are the class to whom the words of our text are addressed. It would be useless to exhort the world in general to cleanse themselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. The world is in sympathy with this very filthiness and has no desire to cleanse itself, has no just appreciation of how filthy it is in the sight of God and those who have His Spirit of Holiness. The Lord describes the condition of the world as one in which anger, malice, envy and various lusts [desires] are the usual and normal conditions by turns. Lust, selfishness—which often amounts to brutality in its seeking of wealth, or pleasure or power—seeks to fill the natural mind, so that if it were taken away, with nothing substituted, life would lose all of its charms. Where would be the propriety in exhorting such to put away filthiness of the flesh and spirit when they have nothing as a substitute?

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

We answer that the rule or standard of Divine acceptance is faith and obedience of heart. Those who with their hearts, their minds, their wills, turn away from sin and by faith accept the Divine arrangement, the Lord is pleased to accept according to their wills,

their intentions, and not according to their flesh and its blemishes. Their unwilling defects according to the flesh are veiled from His sight by the Robe of Christ's righteousness covering them, to the extent of the inability of their new minds, which despise sin and seek to war a good warfare against it in their flesh and everywhere. Such is the class addressed by the Apostle in our text, saying, "Dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit."

GOD'S BELOVED DISESTEEMED

As the mouthpiece of the Lord the Apostle addresses all believers who have fled away from sin and who are striving to be pleasing and acceptable to God, as "dearly beloved." The Apostle, a noble-minded man himself, appreciated the fact that many of these dearly beloved brethren had weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh. He did not love them *on account of* these blemishes, but *in spite of* them—because at heart they were loyal to the principles of righteousness and striving to overcome sin and its inclinations in their own mortal flesh, and—so far as their influence would go—in the world. But the world does not love these whom the Father loves, whom Jesus loves, whom the Apostle loves. Our Master's words are, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and have ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, that your fruit should be permanent."—John 15:16, 18, 19.

The world does not like these chosen ones because, confessing their own weaknesses and striving against them, they call them by their proper names—sins, meannesses, filthinesses of the flesh and spirit. Every effort made by these to cleanse themselves is a reproof to others who are not striving to cleanse themselves, and who hate to be reminded that the things in which they take their greatest pleasure are greed, selfishness, inordinate affections, strifes, pride, vainglory. Whoever is fully satisfactory to the world may be sure that he is not satisfactory to the Lord. Whoever is satisfactory to the Lord need not expect to be satisfactory to the world; for the fellowship of this world is enmity to God, and, therefore, the world is not subject to the Divine standard, neither indeed can be, as the Apostle explains. (James 4:4; Romans 8:7.) Its heart is in the other direction.

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

THE NECESSITY FOR CLEANSING

But why should the Apostle suggest that the Church should do a cleansing work in their hearts and in their flesh when we find that God has wholly covered these blemishes from His sight? If the blemishes are covered, why trouble about them further? Ah, there are the best of reasons! Those who at heart are loyal to the Lord and His righteousness are distressed by their blemishes, their sins, the weaknesses of their flesh, even though they are aware that the Lord has graciously covered all these, and is not imputing their guilt because at heart they are opposed to them. The desire of this class is to build, to establish, character by faithfulness to principles of righteousness. They wish that their minds may become more and more established in faithfulness to the Lord and His Golden Rule of love; and that, so far as possible, the new mind shall control the fallen, imperfect flesh and bring it into subjection, into accord, with the Divine Law of Love.

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

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

"LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES"

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

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

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

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

Others are witnesses to some extent of our trials and triumphs of an outward kind. But the most important battles of the New Creation are those which are known only to ourselves and to our Captain—the battle of the new *mind* or *will* against the influences of the old, natural disposition. The true soldier of the cross will find this battle-ground quite sufficient to engage all of his combativeness and destructiveness and to keep him fully occupied. Such as are on the alert to develop the new character have much less time than others to criticize their neighbors, friends and brethren. They find enough in themselves requiring vigilance and restraint. And as they progress in this direction, they become

more sympathetic toward others who have the same or other weaknesses and inclinations contrary to the Divine standards. They sympathize especially with the brethren of the New Creation, who similarly have given their all to the Lord and are battling against the world, the flesh and the Adversary, in their bodies and in their spirits.

OUR GRADUAL TRANSFORMATION

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

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

But the Lord's children have this new will, this new treasure, in an earthen vessel. We have a natural disposition toward sin. Additionally, we have minds that, even though they are *putting away* the things of sin, have more or less *recollection* of the things of sin, the impurities of sin. So while we draw ourselves away from that which is sinful, we are to strive also to have our minds pure. We are to cast out everything in us that is sympathetic with sin. We are not to think of those things, we are not to permit ourselves to ruminate on what is sinful. We are to set our affection on things above.—Colossians 3:2.

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

OUR CLEANSING AND THE LORD'S CLEANSING

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

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

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

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

"THE PERFECTING OF HOLINESS"

Our text declares that such a purification of flesh and spirit, body and mind, constitutes a perfecting of holiness. The thought here is that holiness cannot be attained in a moment, but that it must be gradually effected, perfected. A right view of this matter will hinder us from falling into certain dangerous errors. Holiness is not a charm which we may put in our pockets; it is not a garment which may be worn occasionally. Holiness resembles more the tempering of a piece of metal; it enters into the entire fiber, changing its general characteristics; it is transforming in its influence. True, there is a holiness *reckoned* to the Lord's people in the Robe of Christ's righteousness, which is granted to

us when first we turn from sin, accept the Redeemer, and consecrate ourselves to God. But this is not sufficient. We must work into our characters that which we have willed—or, as the Apostle expresses it, we must allow the Lord to work in us the holy will, and the holy conduct which must necessarily accompany the holy will, as opportunity and conditions will permit.

But how is this holiness perfected in us? How does God work in us to will and then to do His good pleasure? Our text answers this portion of the question, too, assuring us that it is God's part to give us the promises; and that these promises constitute the incentives to those who are in the right attitude of mind. Without these Divine promises of the present and the future blessings, who would battle against his own weaknesses? Who would strenuously resist the attacks of the world and of the Adversary? Moreover, who would willingly sacrifice his life and all his natural rights to serve the Lord and His cause, if there were no exceeding great and precious promises to quicken and energize him to the service of the King, in battling against sin, in assisting all who are on the side of righteousness? Surely there would be few, if any at all. And so our text intimates, saying, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves," etc. The promises are indeed the power of God unto our cleansing—our salvation—as pointed out by St. Paul.—Romans 1:16.

"GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES"

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

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

oneness of spirit with the Father and the Redeemer ere they can be counted in as His Bride in the full, absolute and complete sense, and be granted a share in His glories.

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

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

THE PILGRIM'S WANTS

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

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

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

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

"I want Thine own hand to unbind
Each tie to terrestrial things,
Too tenderly cherished, too closely entwined,

Where my heart too tenaciously clings.

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

SEPTEMBER 16

The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace—Psa. 29:11.

If you have trials and temptations which you are able to overcome, and which are working out in your character patience, experience, brotherly kindness, sympathy and love, rejoice and offer the prayer of thanksgiving and acknowledgment of Divine mercy and help. If your trials seem heavier than you can bear, and likely to crush you, take the matter to the great Burden-bearer, and ask His help in bearing whatever would do you good, and release from all that would do you no good, but which would injure you—Z '96, 163 (R 2004).

The strength that the Lord gives His people is spiritual, the power of character whereby they are able in every circumstance to do His will. Glorious indeed is this strength! The Word of God, appropriate to our providential surroundings, is the means of its bestowal. The stronger God's people become the more are they blessed with the assurance that gives and increases peace. Like a river which ever increases in depth and breadth as it is joined by other streams, their peace becomes deeper, wider and fuller by God's increasing gifts. Blessed the people that have Jehovah as their God!—P '26, 125.

Parallel passages: Job 34:9; Psa. 18:2, 35; Isa. 26:3, 12; 27:5; 23:12; Eph. 1:19; 3:7, 16; Col. 1:29; 2:12; Phil. 4:7, 9; Matt. 11:28-30; John 14:1, 27; Rom. 5:1; Col. 3:15.

Hymns: 1, 249, 244, 266, 252, 93, 164.

Poems of Dawn, 197: *Peace, Perfect Peace.*

Tower Reading: Z '11, 150 (R 4817).

Questions: Did God bless me this week with strength and peace? How? Whereby? With what results?

PEACE, PERFECT PEACE

PEACE, perfect peace! in this dark world of sin?
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

Peace, perfect peace! by thronging duties pressed?
To do the will of Jesus, this is rest.

Peace, perfect peace! with sorrows surging 'round?
On Jesus' bosom nought but calm is found.

Peace, perfect peace! 'mid suffering's keenest throes?
The sympathy of Jesus brings repose.

Peace, perfect peace! with loved ones far away?

In Jesus' keeping we are safe, and they.

Peace, perfect peace! our future all unknown?
Jesus we know, and He is on the throne.

Peace, perfect peace! death shadowing us and ours?
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.

It is enough: earth's struggles soon shall cease,
And Jesus call us to Heaven's perfect peace.

R4817: STRENGTH AND PEACE

"The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace."—Psa. 29:11

AS WE look back over the years that have passed since first we learned to "know the joyful sound" of the true Gospel and consecrated ourselves fully to the Lord, we view with sorrow the imperfections of even our best efforts; and as looking forward we see the difficulties that seem to obstruct our onward course, we shall greatly need to reinforce our waning courage with the special promises of Divine grace to help in every time of need. Among others, we have the blessed assurance that "The Lord will give strength unto his people"; "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."—Psa. 50:15.

As soldiers under our great Captain, we have enlisted in no uncertain struggle, unless our own faint-heartedness or unfaithfulness should make it so. We are fully supplied with the whole armor of God, which will amply protect us against the fiery darts of the Adversary, if only we accept it and carefully buckle it on. We have with us the constant presence of our Captain, so long as we are closely following his leading. Above the din of battle his inspiring voice may be heard saying, "Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom"; "Be of good cheer; I have overcome!" (Luke 12:32; John 16:33.) If we are weak and incline to faint-heartedness, we have only to remember the blessed promise, "The Lord will give strength unto his people"; and by our faithfulness we shall glorify God, who will deliver us from all our foes, both seen and unseen.

Like all others, the Lord's people need fortitude and patience, else they might soon become discouraged in the conflict with the world, the flesh, and the Adversary. They need strength; they need encouragement. In the text under consideration, the word *strength* means, in large measure, *courage*. The Lord will give *courage* to his people. He encourages us in a variety of ways; he encourages us through each other, as we build one another up in the most holy faith.

MILK FOR BABES—STRONG MEAT FOR THOSE MORE

DEVELOPED

We, nevertheless, look to the individual, innate strength and to its importance. "Be of good courage, and he will strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." (Psa. 31:24.) We are assured that we shall be strengthened in the "*inner man*" through the Spirit of the Lord. None have this particular kind of strength, that of the "inner man," except those who have become New Creatures in Christ, to whom "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." (2 Cor. 5:17.) With this particular Spirit-begotten class all of the Lord's dealings are intended to develop character.

"Desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby," and become strong. (I Pet. 2:2.) This milk of the Word the Lord gives at first to his children, that the new nature may grow thereby and become able to digest stronger food and thus develop in character-likeness to our Lord. To all his own he has provided nourishment—*milk* for babes, *strong meat* for those more developed. (Heb. 5:12-14.) And any who would be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might (courageous) will avail himself of the Divine provision.

Our *faith*, however, is the basis of both our *strength* and our *peace*. No matter how fiercely the storms of life may assail us, we must never let go of our *anchor* and allow ourselves to drift; but always remember that "The foundation of God standeth sure"; that "His truth is our shield and buckler"; that "What he has promised he is able also to perform," notwithstanding our human imperfections and frailties; that, covering these, we have the imputed righteousness of Christ, our Surety and Advocate; that "The Father himself loveth us," and that "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust," and so has compassion for the sons of his love and is very pitiful and of tender mercy. (2 Tim. 2:19; Psa. 91:4; Rom. 4:21; John 16:27; Psa. 103:14.) Indeed, "What more *could* he say than to us he hath said" to assure our faith and to steady and strengthen our hearts to patient endurance in the midst of the trials and conflicts in the narrow way of sacrifice?

With abounding compassion and tenderness our Lord, on the last night of his earthly life, bestowed upon his beloved disciples his parting blessing, his legacy of *peace*. It was the richest legacy he had to bequeath, and was of priceless value. It was the promise of that tranquility of soul, that rest and ease of mind which he himself possessed—the *peace of God*. It was the same peace which the Father has always enjoyed, even in the midst of all the commotion which the permission of evil has brought about; but it was not derived from the same source. In Jehovah, this peace is self-centered, because he realizes *in himself* omnipotence and Infinite wisdom; while the peace of Christ was centered, not in *himself*, but in *God*, through faith in *his* wisdom, power and grace. So also, if we would have the *peace of God*, the peace of Christ ("my peace"), it must, like his, be centered in God, by faith.

The peace promised is not the short-lived peace of the world, which is sometimes enjoyed for a little season; but "my peace," the peace of God which Christ himself by faith enjoyed, who, "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor" (2 Cor. 8:9); who lost friend after friend, and in his last hour was forsaken by all of the few that

remained—the peace that endured through loss, persecution, scorn and contempt, and even amidst the agonies of the cross. This peace is something which none of the vicissitudes of this life can destroy and which no enemy can wrest from us.

"MARVEL NOT IF THE WORLD HATE YOU"

"There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." (Isa. 48:22.) "The wicked are like the troubled sea, continually casting up mire and dirt." Their hearts are not in accord with peace and righteousness, but are filled with selfishness. The wicked are self-seeking and grasping; filled with anger if they cannot always get what they want; with malice if they see some one enjoying what they cannot have. All of these things indicate a lack of peace.

To the extent that any of the Lord's people have any of these evil propensities they cannot have the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding"—which passeth all description. It is a rest of heart by faith. In this peace lies a satisfaction for all the various qualities of the mind; in proportion as the mind develops the ambition of pleasing the Lord, of communicating to others the knowledge of the Truth and the blessed opportunity of salvation, it becomes our ambition to do good, instead of evil. So ambition, being turned into a right line, the peace of God, which none can comprehend save those who possess it, comes to the mind and heart.

It is not an outward peace, however, for the Lord's people, individually and collectively, have most distressing experiences. The Church has always been persecuted, as Jesus forewarned us: "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you"; "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—I John 3:13; John 15:19.

"IN THE WORLD YE SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION"

The peace promised is not such as the world can always recognize and appreciate, for the possessor of it, like the Lord and the Apostles and Prophets, may have a stormy pathway. *They* did not have peace *outwardly*. They were beset, harassed on every hand; they were persecuted and obliged to flee from place to place; some of the saints of old were stoned to death; some were sawn asunder. Yet the peace of God, abounding in their hearts, enabled them to endure all these trials joyfully. Indeed, that it must be so with all the faithful until all the purposes of God in the permission of evil are accomplished, we are distinctly forewarned, but with the assurance that through all the storms of life this peace shall abide—"In the world ye shall have *tribulation*," but "in me ye shall have *peace*."—John 16:33.

This promise, that God will give peace to his people, seems to apply only to a peace of heart. Our Lord and the Apostles possessed it to such an extent that they enjoyed themselves much more than did their enemies. While Paul and Silas were in prison they sang praises to God, instead of berating the governments and threatening what would be done to them; instead of butting their heads against the bars and saying, "God does not

care for us; we will go about our own business, hereafter." So with us. In proportion as we see matters from the Divine viewpoint and appreciate the precious promises and let them inspire our hearts, we shall rejoice in those promises, and our hearts will be blessed. Even if we have trials and difficulties that we are not able to surmount, if these are working out for us the fruits and graces of the Spirit, we may rejoice and give thanks for these evidences of God's love.

"MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU"

We see that the peace of God is compatible with great commotion and with sorrow and pain of various kinds; for it is not dependent upon outward circumstances, but upon a proper balancing of the mind and the condition of a perfect heart. Such peace—the peace of God—was enjoyed by our Lord Jesus in the midst of all the turmoil and confusion of his eventful earthly life. And this brings us to the consideration of our Lord's last legacy to his disciples, when he was about to leave the world, as expressed in his own words: "*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth [in stinted measure or in perishable quality], give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*"—John 14:27.

The promise in our text—"The Lord will bless his people with peace"—evidently belongs to this Age, when all creation groans and travails in pain. (Rom. 8:22.) When the Millennial Age shall have been ushered in, there will be prevailing conditions of peace and thus he will give peace to all people.

Let us, then, have for our watchword, "LOYALTY" to God and to the principles of righteousness; and let each of us write upon his heart the gracious promise—"The Lord will give *strength* unto his people." Let us be faithfully "his people," and let us earnestly desire and faithfully use the *strength* promised. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it"; "He is faithful that promised."—I Thess. 5:24; Heb. 10:23.

So then, if you lack the strength or the peace promised, the fault is *yours*, not *God's*. Either you have not the interests of his service closely enough at heart, or else you do not make use of the strength he provides. "The Lord will give *strength unto his people* (his trusting, faithful servants, those who are using to his praise the talents consecrated to their Master, however many or few those talents may be); the Lord will bless his people with peace."

SEPTEMBER 17

Christ in you, the hope of glory—Col. 1:27.

Every true child of God must have a definite individual Christian character which is not dependent for its existence upon the spiritual life of any other Christian. He must from the Word of Truth, proclaimed and exemplified by other Christians, draw those principles of life, *etc.*, which give him an established character, a spiritual individuality of his own. So positive and definite should be the spiritual individuality of everyone, that, should even the beloved brother or sister whose spiritual life first nourished ours and brought us forward to completeness of character fall away (which the Apostle shows is not impossible, Heb. 6:4-6; Gal. 1:8), we would still live, being able to appropriate for ourselves the Spirit of Truth—Z '03, 375 (R 3250).

The "Christ in you," the new creature, was promised to be in the hearts and minds of God's Gospel-Age Spirit-begotten people, giving both hearts and minds new capacities, spiritual in their scope. It was to be the holy anointing, fitting them for their earthly and heavenly offices. This is the mystery of God, the mystery of all mysteries, that Christ was to consist of many members Jesus the Head member and the Church the Body members. High, holy and heavenly was to be this glorious "Christ in you." Its possession was to be the basis for the hope of glory, the hand payment of the inheritance—the Divine heart and mind, a part of the inheritance promised to the saints—P '36, 110.

Parallel passages: Matt. 3:16; Acts 10:38; 2:1-4; 10:45-47; 2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:20, 27; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13; 15:23; Gal. 3:16, 29; Eph. 4:13, 23, 24; Col. 1:23; 1 Pet. 4:13; Heb. 3:14; Rom. 8:10; John 14:19; 17:23, 24; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21; 2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16; John 15:2-7; Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 6:3; 13:14; Gal. 3:26, 27; 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 3:10; Rom. 8:4, 5.

Hymns: 58, 21, 23, 27, 170, 72, 310.

Poems of Dawn, 43: *The Transformation*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 131 (R 5227).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? In what circumstances? With what effects?

THE TRANSFORMATION

TO the Potter's house I went down one day,
And watched him while moulding the vessels of clay,
And many a wonderful lesson I drew,
As I noted the process the clay went through.

Trampled and broken, down-trodden and rolled,
To render more plastic and fit for the mould

How like the clay that is human, I thought,
When in Heavenly hands to perfection brought!

For *Self* must be cast as the dust at His feet,
Before it is ready, for service made meet.
And Pride must be broken, and self-will lost—
All laid on the altar, whatever the cost.

But lo! by and by, a delicate vase
Of wonderful beauty and exquisite grace.
Was it once the vile clay? Ah! yes; yet how strange,
The Potter hath wrought such a marvelous change!

Not a trace of the earth, nor mark of the clay—
The fires of the furnace have burned them away.
Wondrous skill of the Potter!—the praise is his due,
In whose hands to perfection and beauty it grew.

Thus with souls lying still, content in God's hand,
That do not His power of working withstand—
They are moulded and fitted, a treasure to hold,
Vile clay now transformed into purest of gold.

R5227: EVIDENCES OF THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

"Christ in you, the hope of glory."—Colossians 1:27.

THE SCRIPTURES frequently speak of the Church as being "in Christ," giving the thought of membership in His Body. (Romans 12:4, 5; I Corinthians 12:12-27; 2 Corinthians 5:17.) Our Lord Himself used the figure of a vine and its branches to convey the same thought. He spoke of Himself as the Vine, and of the Church as the branches in the Vine, partaking of nourishment therefrom. (John 15:1, 2.) It is not this thought, however, that is expressed by the Apostle's words, "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

The word *Christ* signifies *anointed*. All who will be members of the Royal Priesthood will be anointed—not separately, but collectively. This was pictured during the Jewish Age by the installation into office of both the kings and the high priests of Israel. According to the Law, every king and every high priest must be anointed, else he could not serve. The oil which was used in this ceremony was of a peculiar kind, which might not be used for any other purpose.—Exodus 30:22, 23.

The anointing which our Lord and the members of His mystical Body have received is different from anything else in the whole world. It is the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which is variously spoken of as the spirit of holiness, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of the Truth, and the Spirit of God. It is not the Truth, but the *spirit* of the Truth, it is not

the Word of God, although it is in harmony with the Word; it is not holiness, yet it is in full accord with holiness. It is the spirit, the disposition, which is associated with a sound mind, with holiness, with Truth and with the Word of God.

As the anointing of kings and priests in Israel was the Divine evidence that they were accepted to office, so was it with our Lord Jesus. St. Peter tells us that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power." (Acts 10:38.) Our Lord was set apart for a very high office. In harmony with the Divine arrangement, He is to be the great antitypical King and Priest—"after the order of Melchizedek."

During the Gospel Age, God has been setting apart those who are to be members of the Body of Christ. These are invited to be kings and priests unto our God—a Royal Priesthood. Consequently, when one is received into this Body, under the Headship of Christ, he comes under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. This unction is from the Father in that He alone can give the recognition. It is from the Son in that we can come to the Father only through Him.

This is well illustrated by the consecration of the Jewish high priest. The holy oil was poured upon Aaron's head, typifying the anointing of our Lord at the time of His consecration. The oil then ran down to the very skirts of Aaron's garments, thus typifying the anointing of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. This descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Church was manifested at Pentecost.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN ANOINTING AND BEGETTING

The anointing of the Holy Spirit is slightly different from the begetting of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit which came upon Jesus at Jordan was both the begetting and the anointing power of God. Our Lord was The Anointed from the moment at which He was begotten.

So with the Church at Pentecost. They were waiting for acceptance of God. Our Lord had appeared in the presence of God as their Advocate, in order that their sacrifices might be acceptable. When the Father recognized their acceptance by shedding forth the Holy Spirit—when there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and "sat upon each one of them" (Acts 2:3, R.V.)—that recognition was both their begetting and their anointing. The former—the begetting—represents the matter from the individual standpoint, and the latter—the anointing—from the collective. We are begotten individually, but we were anointed collectively.

If we should consider the anointing and the begetting as two different steps of progress, we should be obliged to say that the begetting takes place first, and that the begotten one is anointed, or recognized as an heir of God. But this giving the one a priority over the other is not necessary to the thought. These seem to be two pictures, which represent the matter from two different standpoints. We are not individually anointed, nor are we collectively begotten.

This Spirit which we receive from God abides in us. Whoever loses the Spirit loses the light, and passes into the death condition. So the Apostle urges, "Grieve not the Spirit." If we cease to be in the Body of Christ, we cease to be anointed. If we lose the spirit of our begetting, we shall die. The begetting represents the beginning of our experience, and the resurrection the completion. Each is individually begotten and born of the Spirit.

In the picture of anointing the whole Body is anointed. There will be no need for a repetition of the ceremony. At the beginning of the Gospel Age, the one Body was anointed, and all who will be members of that Body come under that one anointing, and all these will share in His resurrection—the First Resurrection—the Chief Resurrection.

THE ANOINTING NOT THE MIND OF CHRIST

Not only was our Lord begotten to the new nature, anointed of the Holy Spirit, but each member of the Body must be similarly begotten, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." If we have received this anointing, we are eligible to all that God has promised to The Christ—primarily to the Head, and also to the members of His Body. As God foreknew the great Shepherd of the sheep, the Redeemer, He also foreknew this class.

Long before our Lord came into the world, the Father had planned that there should be an Anointed Company, the Head of which should be our Lord, and the Body of which should be the Church. (Ephesians 1:3, 4, 22, 23.) Jesus was to have the first place in the Christ Company, and associated with Him would be those who would have His Spirit, His will, who had made a full consecration of their lives to do God's will faithfully, even unto death.

For those who have this spirit of consecration, and have presented themselves in sacrifice, our Lord stands as the Advocate before the Father, to make good for them, to cover their blemishes and imperfections. Our Lord's work is not that of anointing, but of making it possible for us to be received by the Father. The anointing is *of* the Father, but *by* the Son. St. Peter says that Jesus, having received the Spirit of the Father, shed it forth.—Acts 2:33.

As long as we have this Spirit of God, it is an evidence to us that we are children of God. So long as we possess it, we maintain this relationship of sons. (Romans 8:9, 14.) Then the consequent thought is that if we are children of God we are "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ," "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—Romans 8:17; I Peter 1:5.

The words of our text suggest the thought that whoever has the Spirit of God has the evidence that he is an heir of glory and will receive the reward, if found faithful. On one occasion the Apostle John said, "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you." (I John 2:27.) Those who have this anointing have no need that any one teach them that fact, for they have the evidence

of it, the proof of it in their own hearts and experiences. These evidences are more apparent to themselves than to any one else.

The evidences that one has been anointed may not be understood except as we have the instructions of the Word of God. The Scriptures give us an outline of the witness to the possession of the Holy Spirit, so as to leave no room for doubt. They tell us that the Holy Spirit, the begetting power in us, leads us more and more to have the mind of Christ. We were not anointed with the *mind of Christ*, but with the *Holy Spirit*, and whoever has the Holy Spirit will find that he will *develop* the mind of Christ.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MIND OF CHRIST

The mind of Christ is the will to do the Father's will. Our Lord, when a child, said on one occasion to His mother, "How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49.) We recognize that we have a Heavenly Father, whose service is the highest possible service. Those who are His must have this spirit. The work of the New Creature must be the Heavenly work, otherwise he will have no proof that he has passed from the condemnation upon the human race and become a New Creature.

If we have the spirit of loyalty to God, to the Truth and to the brethren, we have the mind, the disposition of Christ. We also have indeed the weaknesses of the flesh, but it is our privilege to fight against these and to become more and more transformed in the spirit of our minds, to have our minds more centered in the Truth and in the service of the brethren.

If there is a decrease of zeal in this direction, then we may know that there is danger of going backward instead of forward. We hear of instances where the Lord's people have lost their first love and have become more or less cold. From our standpoint we may know when any have lost their first love. It is when they have allowed their minds to be led away to earthly things—love of family, of home, of worldly possessions, etc., all of which war against the Heavenly things. We should seek our pleasures, not from earthly sources, but from the Heavenly source. Very frequently we find Christians who tell us that they had a blessed experience when first they knew the Lord, but that they do not now feel as near to Him as formerly. If we probe the matter, we nearly always find that they went into business, or married, or did something which has warred against the Holy Spirit. We are not speaking against those things, but "If ye know *these things*, happy are ye if ye do them"—the things that make for our peace.

OTHER EVIDENCES OF THE ANOINTING

In addition to having the mind of Christ, we have other evidences that we have been anointed. We find ourselves needing the spiritual food, and to satisfy our hunger, our Heavenly Father has provided us the knowledge of the Divine Plan, the knowledge of our Lord. Each new view gives us fresh inspiration. Then if we find some of the brethren spiritually hungry, how can we withhold from giving them the spiritual refreshment

which we have? If one has earthly mercies and dispenses them, God may give him the privilege of opening blind eyes. If it is a blessing to open physically blinded eyes, how much greater a blessing is it to open the spiritually blinded eyes! We have the blessed privilege of helping some to get their eyes open to see spiritual things, and also of helping others who already see to understand more clearly.

If we love the Truth, we will serve the Truth. This service is sure to bring upon us the disapproval of the world, it will not bring us an earthly passport. The world will say that we are doing it for money or some selfish object, for they are sure to err, sure to fail to see the real purpose of the truly consecrated people of God. If we endure these things, we thereby prove ourselves to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

If devotion to the will of the Father brought upon our Lord shame, ignominy, we must not wonder that we are treated likewise. If the world called the Master of the House of Sons Beelzebub, they will assuredly call His followers some evil name. The willingness to receive all this as a part of our reasonable service is a further evidence that we have been anointed.

Probably the Lord's people find that they can very easily love some of the brethren, but that there are some others whom it is not so easy to love, for they do not seem to be lovable. However, we should reflect that if the Lord can receive and love these brethren, we should do the same, and that our love should help them out of their naturally mean traits of disposition. Thus we shall develop love for all of the brethren—the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated—and desire to render them assistance as opportunity may offer.

The evidences that one has been anointed with the Holy Spirit are, increasing desire for spiritual things, desire to assist others to see and to grow in knowledge and Heavenly grace, persecution from the worldly-minded, and the development of the mind of Christ—the disposition which is loving, generous, forgiving toward others and which is reverential toward God and obedient to His will. Whoever finds, on self-examination, that he has these evidences in his own heart has the witness of the Spirit that he is a child of God.

THE HOPE OF GLORY

The word "glory" carries with it the thought of honor and dignity—sometimes also that of brightness, shining. The Scriptures speak of the Heavenly Father as having the excellent glory, that glory unto which none others can approach. Our Lord Jesus is said to have been received up into glory—honor and distinction. Of Adam it is said that he was "crowned with glory and honor," was put over the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea. (Psalm 8:5-8; Genesis 1:28.) In this connection the word "glory" seems to indicate that Adam was made in the image of his Creator.

Applying these same thoughts to ourselves, we find that as yet we have no glory. What blessing we have received is the possession of the Holy Spirit, the evidence of our

adoption into the family of God. This, however, is merely the beginning of the glory which God has promised to those who are faithful—merely the earnest. To have the Holy Spirit in us is to have the anointing in us. If we allow the Holy Spirit to operate in us, and ourselves faithfully co-operate therewith, the end will be glorious.

Thus the anointing which we have received—the Spirit of Christ in us—is the hope or basis of the glory which we are expecting—a glory which is to be like that of our Redeemer—a glory which is above that of angels, principalities and powers—a glory which is next to that of the Lord. This anointing, this Spirit of Christ within us, is the earnest, or hope, or basis, of all that is coming. Hence we should heed the admonition of the Apostle that we quench not the anointing, this Holy Spirit of Christ. On the contrary, we are to cultivate it, develop it, give attention to it. If we should allow it to die, because of neglect of the help which God has supplied, if we should quench it by indulgence in sin, we should thereby demonstrate that we are unworthy of the blessing and fit only for the Second Death.

SEPTEMBER 18

My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest—Exodus 33:14.

The Lord is ever present with his people. He is always thinking of us, looking out for our interests, guarding us in danger, providing for us in temporal and spiritual things, reading our hearts, marking every impulse of loving devotion to Him, shaping the influences around us for our discipline and refining, and hearkening to our faintest call for aid or sympathy or fellowship with Him. He is never for a moment off guard, whether we call Him in the busy noon hours or in the silent watches of the night. How blessed the realization of such abiding faithfulness! And no real child of God is devoid of this evidence of his adoption—Z '03, 376 (R 3250).

The word here translated *presence* means *face*. The Lord's face represents His favor. His disfavor to the race has been manifested by His turning His back to them; as when His favor shall return, His face will beam with kindness, healing and benediction upon them. Now the Lord gives His people His favor as their special portion. Whatever else we lack its possession makes us supremely rich. His favor guarantees that we will overcome our spiritual enemies; and after our victory we will be blessed with a Canaan rest of eternal peace from sin, error, selfishness and worldliness in wisdom, justice, love, power and Kingdom-mindedness—God's ideal of real rest—P '30, 151, 152.

Parallel passages: Psa. 5:12; 11:7; 41:11, 12; 102:13; Prov. 16:7; Ezek. 39:29; Luke 2:52; John 14:16-23; Acts 10:35; Eph. 1:6; Heb. 4:14-16; 1 Pet. 2:9.

Hymns: 46, 283, 235, 68, 244, 94, 179.

Poems of Dawn, 66: *A Perfect Trust*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 25 (R 5387).

Questions: What experience of God's favor and of rest in Him did I have this week? What did I have to do to obtain them? How did I use them?

A PERFECT TRUST

O BLESSED peace of a perfect trust,
My loving God, in Thee;
Unwavering faith, that never doubts
Thou choosest best for me.

Best, though my plans be all upset;
Best, though the way be rough;
Best, though mine earthly store be scant;
In Thee I have enough.

Best, though my health and strength be gone,
Though weary days be mine,

Shut out from much that others have;
Not my will, Lord, but Thine!

And e'en though disappointments come,
They, too, are best for me,
To wean me from a clam'ring world,
And lead me nearer Thee.

O blessed peace of a perfect trust
That looks away from all;
That sees Thy hand in everything,
In great events or small;

That hears Thy voice—a Father's voice—
Directing for the best:—
O blessed peace of a perfect trust,
A heart with Thee at rest!

R5387: REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

"My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exod. 33:14.

WE ARE NOT to think of our Heavenly Father as literally walking through the wilderness with the children of Israel, as leaving the affairs of the Universe and going with them in their journey. Nor are we to get the thought that God is everywhere at the same time. This unscriptural thought has been the foundation for much error. Christian Scientists say that God is everywhere—in every piece of wood, of china—in *everything*. When we ask what they mean, they say that since the word *God* simply stands for good, and since there is good in everything, therefore God must be in everything; for God means good and must be everywhere, even in every atom of matter. So on this erroneous doctrine of God's omnipresence they build their theory. But theirs is not the Scriptural thought.

The Scriptural thought is that God specially manifests His Power and Love to His people. God is in Heaven; the earth is His footstool. But by His various powers and agents, and by His intelligence and knowledge, He can be as if present everywhere—through His angels, His messengers. Just as we by the telegraph and the telephone can have communication with the uttermost parts of the earth, so God can exercise His Power in every part of the Universe.

The words of our text, we remember, were the Lord's answer to Moses when that great statesman was in perplexity. He had been commanded to go forward as the leader of Israel, and through Divine favor to bring them into the land of Canaan, there to give them rest.

From the beginning of the wilderness journey, there was more or less of disinclination or fear on the part of the people. They realized that they were breaking up their homes and going forth into a strange land. Even though they had been oppressed by the Egyptians, they reasoned that if they went out into the wilderness with no Egyptian taskmasters, this would mean that they would have no food. Thus they were stiff-necked—like an ox—difficult to turn about.

The Lord's promise to Moses was, "My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." And He promised to be with the Israelites. He gave them assurance that they might recognize His power in their midst; for God's energy in all the affairs of earth, as of the Universe, is not merely a power to know the things that are happening, but to control all events that they may outwork His designs. He guides and assists the efforts of His people. Additionally, the angels of the Lord quite probably were employed in this special work of superintending the affairs of the Israelites.

This thought is in harmony with the Scripture which intimates that there is a guardian angel for each one of the Lord's saints, who has supervision over him. We read, "In Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven." (Matt. 18:10.) They have immediate communication with the Father; and thus He has direct oversight of all who belong to Him.

The Divine Power was manifested directly with the Israelites in the Shekinah glory over the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy, which indicated the Lord's presence with them. And when they were to journey onward, the pillar of cloud went before them by day, and the pillar of fire by night. When they were to stop, this cloud would stand still. While they were encamped, the cloud would rest over the Tabernacle, and the Shekinah glory rested between the cherubim on the Mercy-Seat in the Tabernacle. Thus the presence of God went with them to the Land of Canaan, and gave them all things which He had promised—Joshua 23:14.

MOSES' NEED OF ENCOURAGEMENT

From our context we perceive that Moses' meekness was again manifesting itself. He had previously asked for some one to be mouthpiece for him, and the Lord had said that Aaron might be his mouthpiece. Rash people often get into trouble, because there is a lack of meekness, modesty. But it was not so with Moses—"the meekest man in all the earth." Humility is a most important element of character. The meek man will find it easier to be gentle and patient than will the man who lacks meekness. And so in enumerating the fruits of the Holy Spirit St. Paul mentions meekness.—Gal. 5:23.

When the Lord promised that His presence should go with Moses, He was speaking to him as the *Mediator*. Therefore He said, "My Presence shall go with *thee*." As soon as Moses had inaugurated the Law Covenant at Sinai, Israel was in covenant relationship with God, and the Lord with Israel.

ISRAEL'S FAILURE TO ENTER REST

One might get the thought that God's promise to give rest would signify that Moses should have a rest of mind, and that all who would come into line with Moses and with God's promises would also have a rest of mind. But this mental rest is not what is here meant. The Israelites were going from the land of Egypt into the Land of Promise, which was to be an everlasting inheritance to them, if they would keep their Covenant. But of all the adults who came out of Egypt, only Caleb and Joshua entered into Canaan. (Num. 32:11, 12.) The majority failed to enter in because of their lack of faith. The forty years' wandering in the desert was because of their fearfulness and consequent rebellion.

When on the wilderness journey Israel came finally to the place where they could see the land of Canaan, spies were sent to make investigation and to report as to which would be the best way to enter the promised land. All of the spies save Caleb and Joshua, gave an unfavorable report. Then through timidity the people said, "We cannot go up and take that land. Those people are giants, and we look like *grasshoppers* beside them." So in their lack of faith they murmured against going up. Therefore God swore in His wrath, "This people shall not enter into My rest."—Hebrews 3:11.

TYPICAL AND ANTITYPICAL REST

The Apostle Paul shows that the rest in Canaan was a type of the rest of the people of God, in this Gospel Age. (Heb. 4:3, 9.) By *faith* we rest in God—we rest in His promises. We are not moved away by any of the adverse conditions of the present time. Our rest is the *reality*; the rest of Israel was the *type*.

The antitypical rest, into which the Lord's people enter, has two phases. We who believe enter into rest *now*. We have the peace of God ruling in our hearts and guiding our lives. We have the peace of faith, the rest of faith, the confidence that God will direct our course. Therefore we are *contented*, even though not yet *satisfied*. We shall not be *satisfied* until we enter into our *complete rest*. Our true rest will be that glorious, perfect condition beyond the veil, which we shall attain through the First Resurrection.

St. Paul, in discussing this question in the 3d and 4th chapters of Hebrews, declares that the people of Israel failed to enter into rest, not because God did not perform His part, but because they failed to exercise the proper faith in the Lord; they had "an evil heart of unbelief." And he proceeds to say, "Let *us* therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1.) There are requirements; there are conditions. The Apostle means that whoever would be of this *overcoming* class must take heed, or he will fail to enter into the eternal rest of God. There *will be* such a class of overcomers; and God has predestined and foreordained that they shall enter into this glorious and perfect rest. If we are faithful unto death, we shall attain this glorious rest by the resurrection "*change*."

JOSHUA A TYPE OF CHRIST

The world is not now able to enter into rest. They are like the raging sea. They have not come into relationship with God. As the Scriptures tell us, mankind is a poor, groaning creation, travailing together in pain. They do not see the rest which God has provided. We see, however, that when the antitypical Moses, the great Mediator, shall have been completed, He will lead the people into rest.—Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22.

Moses did not lead the people into the Land of Promise; it was Joshua—their new leader—who led them over Jordan. Thus the type shows that mankind will enter into the promised land, not by the Law, but by a Savior. The name Joshua means savior—Greek *Jesous*. (Heb. 4:8, margin.) So Jesus will lead all of mankind who will, into the true Land of Promise—into love and loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness. It will take the entire thousand years of the Messianic Kingdom to bring the world into condition for all the blessings which God has in store for them.

Our Lord Jesus entered into rest by trusting the Heavenly Father to fulfil all His gracious promises. Jesus, the Head of the antitypical Moses, thus enjoyed perfect rest of heart, and realized the Heavenly Father's continual presence with Him. This continued for three and a half years; and then He entered into the rest complete, by the First Resurrection.

The same is true of all the members of the Body of the antitypical Moses—The Christ. God's presence goes with them. The world at present is not in a condition to enter into the Father's rest. Only the members of the Body of Christ have entered into this rest of faith, trusting in the Lord. And none except those who continue faithful will be recognized as members of the great antitypical Mediator. All who lack faith lack proof that they are in the Body of Christ. If, then, our hearts are disturbed and we cannot enter into this rest of faith, the proper course is to seek the Throne of Grace, that we may overcome the difficulty.

THE REST PROVIDED FOR MANKIND

As for those Israelites who the Lord said should not enter into His rest, we understand Him to mean, not that *no* Jew will enter into the true rest of God, but rather, that this was a prophecy of the end of the Jewish Age—that they as a nation would not be ready to enter into this rest of faith which was then offered them—that *as a nation* they would fail. They did fail; for "they knew not the day of their visitation."

As soon as the great Messiah shall establish the New Covenant, both Jews and Gentiles will enter into peace and prosperity, as rapidly as they enter into that New Covenant. But the disobedient, after a full, fair trial, will go into the Second Death. Throughout the Millennial Age mankind will be entering into the actual rest, which will mean deliverance from the bondage of Sin and Death. Before Messiah's Reign shall have ended, they will have fully entered into that rest and into perfection of life, and will be counted in as a part of the seed of Abraham, according to the promise, "I have constituted thee a father of many nations." (Gen. 17:5; Rom. 4:17.) The blessing of the Lord will be

upon them all. Any *refusing* to enter into the rest of God will be cut off—the wilful sinner shall die at one hundred years of age.—Isa. 65:20.

SEPTEMBER 19

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth—John 17:17.

Our Lord always links the progress and development of our spiritual life with our receiving and obeying the Truth, and every child of God should beware of that teaching which claims to be in advance of the Word, and that Christ or the holy Spirit speaks to such advanced Christians independently of the Word. It cultivates spiritual pride and boastfulness, and renders powerless the warnings and expostulations of the sacred Scriptures because the deluded ones think they have a higher teacher dwelling in them. And Satan, taking advantage of the delusion, leads them captive at his will—Z '03, 377 (R 3250).

Sanctification sets one apart from sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, and dedicates one to the Lord's service. As it continues its work, it keeps our wills dead, sacrifices our bodies for the Lord and makes our characters like His. The Word sanctifies us, first by working in our hearts a consecrating faith and love, whereby it enables us to present ourselves to the Lord as sacrifices. It continues the work by beginning in us the new heart, mind and will, and by enabling us to sacrifice unto death, while keeping our human will dead and God's will alive in us. It proceeds with the work by energizing us to grow, cleansing, strengthening and balancing us. It completes the work by perfecting us—and all this by Jesus' ministry—P '35, 117, 118.

Parallel passages: Jer. 1:5; Acts 26:17, 18; Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11; Gal. 2:20; 6:14; Eph. 1:3, 4; 3:19; 4:7, 12-16; 5:25-27; Col. 2:11; 1 Thes. 4:3, 4; 5:23; 2 Thes. 2:13, 14; 2 Tim. 2:21; Heb. 2:11.

Hymns: 49, 4, 47, 78, 196, 198, 267.
Poems of Dawn, 120: *Master, Say On*.
Tower Reading: Z '13, 292 (R 5319).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? How? Under what circumstances? With what effects?

MASTER, SAY ON!

MASTER, speak! Thy servant heareth,
Longing for Thy gracious word,
Longing for Thy voice that cheereth;
Master, let it now be heard.
I am listening, Lord, for Thee;
What hast Thou to say to me?

Often through my heart is pealing
Many another voice than Thine,
Many an unwilling echo stealing

From the walls of this Thy shrine.
Let Thy longed-for accents fall;
Master, speak! and silence all.

Master, speak! I cannot doubt Thee;
Thou wilt through life's pathway lead;
Savior, Shepherd, oh! without Thee
Life would be a blank indeed.
Yet I seek still fuller light,
Deeper love, and clearer sight.

Resting on the "faithful saying,"
Trusting what Thy gospel saith,
On Thy written promise staying
All my hope in life and death;—
Yet I ask for more and more
From Thy love's exhaustless store.

Master, speak! And make me ready,
As Thy voice is daily heard,
With obedience glad and steady
Still to follow every word.
I am listening, Lord, for Thee:
Master, speak, speak on, to me!

R5319: THE TWO PARTS TO SANCTIFICATION

"Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth."—John 17:17.

THE prayer recorded in the 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel was offered while our Lord was on the way from the Memorial Supper to the Garden of Gethsemane. From the prayer we learn that it was offered for the Apostles and all those who through the Word of the Lord should become His disciples, or followers.

The word *sanctify* has the significance of *set apart, made holy*. There are two parts to this work of sanctification. The first is that which *we* do, in the very beginning, when we *set ourselves* apart, with the desire to know and to do the will of God. The second is that part which comes gradually—the teachings and instructions which set before us things that we did not perceive before—certain principles of righteousness which we did not previously recognize. This is a *deeper* setting apart, and is done by *God*, inasmuch as it is done by the Father's arrangement.

This deeper meaning of sanctification is the one signified in the text. Hence, our Lord prays the Father to do this work. The disciples had left all to follow Jesus, and were set apart in the sense that they desired to know and to do the will of the Father. Our Lord

prayed that the work of Divine instruction might go on in them, as it is written: "They shall all be taught of God." The Master desired that the disciples should come under Divine, providential instruction, which He indicated would come through the Word of God.

At that time the *Word* was not the Bible as we have it now, for the New Testament had not then been written. The Truth presented in the New Testament, however, is not God's Word in full, nor all of the Truth, but merely a portion of it. Our Lord did not pray that truth in general along different lines should be the portion of His followers, but rather that they should have knowledge of the Divine Plan and purposes.

There may be more or less truth coming into a man's life, which will awaken his mind. It may be the truth concerning chemistry, or it may be other scientific knowledge. There is truth respecting geology, truth respecting the sun, etc. These may influence the mind and lift a man somewhat from his fallen condition. But these are not *the Truth*, to which our Lord refers, and which is far more necessary than is the knowledge of the weight of the earth or the distance of the stars.

All the various truths which come to the world in general, which lead them to think, and which finally point some to their need of the Redeemer, are preparatory. But not only do these latter have such a drawing of God, but they must also set themselves apart. And these general truths, which are more or less clear, may bring the individual to the real school. These we may term a preparatory course. There must be such a preparation before the real course of the School of Christ is reached.

THE FIRST PART OF SANCTIFICATION

There is a sanctifying that takes place before the *real* sanctifying begins. The Lord said to the people of Israel, "Sanctify yourselves and I will sanctify you." This would be their setting of themselves apart by a certain hope. But the setting of *one's self* apart is one thing, and *God's* sanctifying him is another. Concerning the call of this Age, no man cometh unto the Father but by the Son, and no man cometh unto the Son except the Father shall previously have drawn him.

First comes the drawing of the Father through the natural mind. Man's brain is so constituted that there is a natural drawing—a desire to know the Creator. This we see manifested in the heathen, who have never known God and have never had the Bible. These people have a natural inclination or desire to worship God. Those who have this natural inclination of the brain not too much perverted by the fall, are in our Lord's providence guided to the Truth, the Light, without which no man can come to Him. Perhaps they find Jesus through a hymn or a tract or a book.

Willingness to receive God is merely the first step, as it were, in response to this natural drawing. As they come to enter the way, they learn that it is narrow, difficult, and that the "gate" is low. Of course, many are turned away. God is not seeking all. He is seeking a very special class; and therefore He is not seeking those who would be

discouraged at the narrowness of the way and the lowness of the gate. These conditions are made so for the very purpose of turning such away.

Formerly, we thought that those who turned away because of the narrowness of the way and the lowness of the gate would go to eternal torment. Now we see that God is seeking a special class to do a good work—those who are seeking to do His will. Whoever does not manifest the proper degree of zeal would probably be injured if he endeavored to go on. Therefore, the Lord says, Consider the terms, count the cost, weigh the matter, before you decide to be My disciple. Then, if you decide to be My disciple, come and follow Me.

After one has become a disciple of the Lord, he comes into the condition of the class represented in our text by the word *them*. In this class were the twelve Apostles, the five hundred other brethren whom St. Paul mentions, and all who throughout the Gospel Age have accepted our Lord in sincerity and faithfulness of heart. To all such the prayer applies—"Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth"!

Strange to say, this which we thought to be the *end* of the way is but the *beginning* of it. Formerly we thought that to accept Jesus was all that there was to do. Our friends said, You have heard of Jesus; you have accepted Him. That is all there is of it. Now tell some others about Jesus.

But after we come to know of the Truth, we need to know more. If each of us were to cast his mind back and try to recall how much he understood at first, he would realize that he knew that he was a sinner and that if he came to Jesus the Father would set him apart. This is what St. Paul refers to when he says, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." (Ephesians 2:10.) This setting apart the Father does through His Truth, as before pointed out.

TRUTH THAT SANCTIFIES

This sanctifying Truth is not to be viewed from the standpoint of general knowledge, for this Truth is not for the world—is not *intended* for them. It is for the consecrated—for those who have become God's children. It is the kind of truth that God gives His family. The Apostle Paul says that God has called us according to His purpose, that in the end He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:7.) God has a purpose, which will be fully exhibited in future Ages in the further development of His great Plan.

God had a special purpose when He called and set apart a special class. The special Truth which does that sanctifying work is the Truth of His great Plan of the Ages. He does not make all this known at once. The revelation of His Plan has been going on for centuries. Some of these revelations have come to us through the Prophets, some through Jesus and some through the Apostles. These revelations constitute the Heavenly provision for sanctification.

It is necessary, however, that we have the Plan, and something more than the Plan also. Various other things are to be considered, although this Truth is the channel of sanctification: "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." If one were caring for a babe, for instance, she would think about its food, fresh air, exercise, etc. So it is with God's people. Truths are gradually opened up to their observation. Our Father leads us out into various experiences in order to have our senses exercised. Our experiences and providences cause us to think, to appreciate, to study, to inquire; and as we do so, we develop by means of these experiences and providences. We are led to consider, What does *this* experience mean, and what does *that* one teach?

While God's Word is the basis for all our instruction, yet it is not our only source of knowledge. There are various lessons to be learned through the varied experiences of life. The child that would merely receive food and then lie still—merely eating and sleeping, never having a chance to toddle around—would not know how to walk. So it is with God's child.

THE SECOND PART OF SANCTIFICATION

We see that God called us with a new call. We are to have a new nature. Ours is not to be an earthly nature. The real object and purpose of our call is to fit and prepare us to be His New Creation, superior to men and to angels. We are to be Divine channels of blessing to all creatures—angels and men—for the development of all God's Universe, including other worlds, as they come to have inhabitants. As we come to see the scope of God's Plan, we see a reason why God is giving us trials, experiences. Our Lord Jesus was to be a merciful High Priest; hence His experiences, His sufferings. And if it was necessary that our Lord Jesus, the Shepherd of the Flock, should suffer, how much more is it necessary to our perfecting that we should suffer!

We should have a great deal of trial, suffering, temptation, and, being succored in these, we should know how to succor others. Those who are faithful amongst the Lord's people now, become especially developed in character-likeness to the Master. They are privileged to become *elders*, that they may feed the *young*, that they may instruct the Flock, that these may grow in the fruits and graces of the Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness—love. Therefore, the chief qualification of those who would stand as monitors amongst the Lord's people is that they be faithful, loyal, and manifest, not a lordly spirit, but a humble spirit, a spirit of service.

Sanctification is a gradual work, lasting throughout the Christian's life. It is not a point which he reaches only at *death*, but which he should attain soon after consecration. Consecration opens the door and gives him the standing, gives him the relationship, gives him the backing and encouragement of the Divine promises, and puts him in the way, therefore, to cultivate the various fruits of the Spirit, and finally to attain joint-heirship with our Lord in the Heavenly glory. But to *maintain* this standing in the Body of Christ, requires that fruits shall be produced, evidences of love and devotion.

Testings will come thereafter as to the degree of faithfulness in service, and to see how much of besetments he would endure—how strong a wind of false doctrine he could stand, how much of the assaults of the flesh and of the Devil he could bear without being unsettled and driven away from the Truth.

The Scriptures tell us that the Lord knows our frame, that He will, with each temptation, provide a way of escape. We shall all be tried. If the fire becomes so hot that to go any further would destroy us, the Lord will prevent this. By and by we become stronger. Then He may give us even greater testings. So "the Lord your God doth prove you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."

TRIALS PROPORTIONATE TO STRENGTH

A metallurgist tries his metal—proves it. He tests it, to separate the dross from it. After he has separated some of the alloy, he puts in another flux, to remove other dross; and then another flux, etc. So the Lord is taking away our dross. He does not take away all of the dross of our flesh; for it is the New Creature that is being perfected. As the dross in our minds becomes apparent to us, we as New Creatures will more and more co-operate with God in its elimination.

So the Lord's people are to be more and more sanctified through the Truth. The word *sanctify*, then, conveys the thought of making saintly, holy. Every day of our lives should make us more sanctified—more fit for God's service in the future.

It is not necessarily true that the one having the most trying experiences would have the most dross. Our Lord Jesus had more trials than any of His followers, and He was perfect. As St. Paul intimates, these trials work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And the brightness of our *future* will depend upon the heart-development and character-development attained *now*. Our Lord Jesus will have the highest position because of greatest faithfulness under trials. Some of the Lord's brethren will have high positions because of having proved faithful under great trials. These trials are to fit us for a high position, both in the present life and in that which is to come.

"Yes, in God's furnace are His children tried;
Thrice happy they who to the end endure!
But who the fiery trial may abide?
Who from the crucible comes forth so pure
That He whose eyes of flame look through the whole,
May see His image perfect in the soul?

"Not with an evanescent glimpse alone,
As in that mirror, the Refiner's face;
But, stamped with Heaven's broad signet, there be shown
Immanuel's features, full of truth and grace;
And round that seal of love this motto be—

'Not for a moment, but eternity!'"

SEPTEMBER 20

Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place ... to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones—Isa. 57:15.

Let us ever keep in memory that a broken and contrite heart the Lord never despises, will never spurn. Therefore, into whatever difficulty any of the Lord's people may stumble, if they find themselves hungering for the Lord's fellowship and forgiveness, if they find their hearts contrite and broken, let them not despair, but remember that God has made a provision through the merit of Christ which enables Him to accept and justify freely from all sin all that come unto Him through Jesus—through faith in His blood. ... Those who have broken and contrite hearts on account of their sins may know that they have not committed "the sin unto death", for their condition of heart proves this, as the Apostle declares: "It is impossible to renew again unto *repentance*" any who have committed the sin unto death—Z '03, 383 (R 3253).

Jehovah is sublime in His person, character, Plan and works. Infinite is He in His exaltation. Though supreme above all other beings, He is quite unlike the great among men and fallen angels. Few of the former, and none of the latter, condescend to beings of low estate, especially to give them an uplift in heart and mind. Of necessity, all of Jehovah's dealings are with inferiors; nevertheless, He delights to use His position, Spirit, Plan, works and possessions for the lowly and contrite. He even gives up unto death His human sons for their blessing. Where can another be found so worthy? Worthy is He of faith, love, obedience, thanks, praise, service and faithfulness—P '34, 128.

Parallel passages: Deut. 10:17; Psa. 8:9; 57:5; 97:2, 6, 9; 145:5, 11, 12; Isa. 2:10; 6:1, 3; 35:2; Ezek. 1:26-28; Gen. 19:16; Ex. 15:13; 22:27; 34:6, 7; Num. 14:18-20; Judg. 2:18; 2 Sam. 12:13; Ezra 9:9, 13; Neh. 9:17, 27-31; Job 33:14-30; Psa. 30:5; 32:1, 2, 5; 85:10; 103:3, 8-14, 17; Matt. 18:11-14, 23-27; Luke 1:50, 77, 78; Eph. 2:4-7; Heb. 4:16; 1 Pet. 3:8, 15; 1 John 1:9.

Hymns: 176, 68, 67, 63, 121, 286, 293.

Poems of Dawn, 31: *A Present Help*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 115 (R 5217).

Questions: How did God this week show me His grace? How did I receive and use it? What were the results?

A PRESENT HELP

THERE is never a day so dreary,
But God can make it bright;
And unto the soul that trusts Him,
He giveth songs in the night.

There is never a path so hidden,
But God will show us the way,
If we seek for the Spirit's guidance,
And patiently wait and pray.

There is never a cross so heavy,
But the loving hands are there,
Outstretched in tender compassion,
The burden to help us bear.

There is never a heart that is broken,
But the loving Christ can heal;
For the heart that was pierced on Calvary,
Doth still for His people feel.

There is never a life so darkened,
So hopeless and so unblest,
But may be filled with the light of God,
And enter His promised rest.

There is never a sin nor a sorrow,
There is never a care nor a loss,
But that we may carry to Jesus,
And leave at the foot of the cross.

What more can we ask than He's promised?
(And we know that His Word cannot fail,)
Our refuge when storms are impending,
Our help when temptations assail.

Our Savior, our Friend and Redeemer,
Our portion on earth and in Heaven;
For He who withheld not His own Son,
Hath with Him all things freely given.

R5217: GOD'S SYMPATHY FOR HIS PEOPLE

"Thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."—Isaiah 57:15.

JEHOVAH is the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity. Before the mountains were brought forth, or the hills, before the First-born was created, He is God. To Moses at

the burning bush, He said, "I AM THAT I AM." (Exodus 3:14.) Our God is very great, very wise, very high. Nevertheless, the Scriptures show us that He is also very sympathetic. He is a God of Mercy and of Love.

The passage from which our text is taken informs us that if God were to contend with humanity, the end of the strife would be that mankind would be blotted out of existence. But He remembers that we are dust, and has compassion upon us. In this respect He is different from the gods of the heathen, who are domineering, apparently bent on wreaking vengeance upon those in their power.

Besides being very great and lofty, our God is particularly sympathetic towards those who are of a broken and contrite heart, whose spirit is humble, who realize that they are imperfect, who desire to be in accord with Him, and to dwell in holiness. To such He is ever near—to revive the spirit of the humble, to give them strength. He will not trample them into the dust, as many an *earthly* potentate has done to his subjects, but will assist them in the right way, and revive the heart of the contrite. These are to know that our God is a God of sympathy, compassion and love, who takes pleasure in reviving their hearts and in bringing them back into harmony with Him, if they are willing to be led.

DISCOURAGEMENT WITH SELF A FAVORABLE CONDITION

There is a difference between a broken and a contrite heart. A heart is broken when it is bowed down with grief and sorrow; a heart is contrite when it has a quiet, deep, continual sorrow for acts not in harmony with righteousness. A broken *will* is not necessarily the same; for there are those whose wills are broken, but who are not submissive to the Divine will.

To be repentant is to be thoroughly submissive to the Divine will, and implies a change of mental attitude toward sin. This humble, discouraged condition becomes a very favorable one if the person will seek Divine assistance, if he will become submissive to the Lord and ready to do the Divine will. Such will surely receive the blessing of God; for the Lord is very nigh to every one who is broken-hearted. The way to full consecration would be very short to him.

If such as be of contrite heart will be submissive to the Lord, He will save them from their difficulties and bring them into a large place, as the Prophet David states. (Psalm 18:19.) This does not necessarily mean that He will deliver them from financial troubles, but that He will give them peace and rest, which are better than money. If they have family troubles, they will find in Him a superior Friend, who is able and willing to administer superior consolation and refreshment.

Come, ye disconsolate! where'er ye languish,
Come to the mercy-seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts; here tell your anguish;
Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.

Joy of the desolate, light of the straying,
Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure!
Here speaks the Comforter, tenderly saying,
Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot cure.

THE LORD'S METHOD OF DELIVERANCE

The Scriptures assure us that, "There is none righteous, no, not one." There is *relative* righteousness, however, which God can approve. Those who are seeking to be in harmony with Him to the best of their ability, who are walking in the ways of righteousness, and at the same time are trusting in the precious blood of our Redeemer—such are spoken of as righteous. Of these it is said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matthew 5:6.

This class, however, shall have afflictions. The Scriptures tell us that all who will live godly lives shall suffer. (Acts 14:22; 2 Timothy 3:12; Romans 5:3-5.) The reason why this is true is that the world is traveling in the opposite direction to righteousness—in the way of selfishness and gratification of the flesh. We read, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15.) This is especially true of this Gospel Age, when some are following in the footsteps of the Master. It was also true of the Jewish Age, when some were seeking to walk in the way of righteousness. The Lord delivered them out of their afflictions, not in the sense of shielding them from trials, but in that of not permitting them to be overcome by their difficulties.

The Ancient Worthies fully appreciated the Divine favor exercised in their behalf, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, in order that they might have the continuance of that favor and larger blessings by and by. God delivered them out of their trials and difficulties by not permitting these to overcome them. This was also true of our Lord, and is true of the Church as well. The Lord delivers us out of our trials and difficulties, so that mentally we are not oppressed by them in the same way as are others. He will sustain and support us in our experiences and will eventually deliver us by giving us a share in the First Resurrection.

The sons of God by adoption are, during this Gospel Age, especially beset by trials and difficulties. If they should fall, however, the fact that they have stumbled will not make them feel like going back into sin, if their hearts are of the right stamp. On the contrary, they will feel like St. Peter, who, when others were stumbling, said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." (John 6:68.) The true people of God have no desire to go to any one but Him. If they stumble, they recover themselves, avail themselves of His arrangements for forgiveness and press on. By these stumblings they learn of their own weaknesses, and then fortify themselves so that they may be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.—Ephesians 6:10.

A just man will not fall into sin. The very most that could happen to him would be to stumble. There are various causes for stumbling. But if the heart is right, the man will rise again; for the Lord will show him that he has made a mistake and will point out the way

to him by which he may recover himself. If he is a lover of righteousness, he will desire to press on toward that which is right, just, approved of the Lord, even if he should stumble many times.—Psalm 37:23, 24; Prov. 24:16.

THE EVIDENCE OF FAVOR WITH GOD

So far as our humanity is concerned, we are undone by reason of the fall. It behooves us, then, to be very humble, to feel our own littleness, our own fallen condition. It becomes us to be very contrite, very much in opposition to sin, to feel that sin is the great blight upon the whole race, and that God will not be in harmony with anything except that which is righteous and holy.

All, therefore, who would be in harmony with God must be repentant in respect to their own shortcomings and must be appreciative of His lofty standards—His holy standards. He, in turn, informs these that they have His sympathy, and that they shall have His succor. He appreciates the attitude of mind in which they are; and therefore, as our text tells us, He is ready to revive the spirit of the humble and contrite ones. To such He will show His salvation; to others He will not.

Only the humble-minded can really appreciate their own condition. God not only will revive their spirit, but is willing to lift them up and to make them again sons of God, with all that this implies of blessing. He has this attitude toward the humble and contrite in the present time, and He has *always* had this spirit toward the humble and contrite ones. Throughout Christ's reign this humble class will have His favor and blessing. Only the humble and contrite ones have the opportunity of becoming joint-heirs with our Lord.

God resists the proud. To the humble He gives grace, and opens the eyes of their understanding. They become His children because they are in the attitude to receive His blessings and to be guided by His instruction. The text applies not only in the present time, but will have an application in the next Age. "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." (Isaiah 62:10.) These words are all intended to indicate the preparations for the incoming Age. There is no provision for the proud, none for the haughty, none for the self-conscious—but all for the humble-minded.

If God has these blessings in store for the humble only, and if the humble are few in number at the present time, what of the others of humanity? God is allowing now a humiliating influence to work with people, which should teach them humility and lead them to be contrite of heart. But much more will this be the case in the next Age. "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9.) All the blessings will be upon the contrite and humble. And this will be so markedly before the attention of the people that all will know a change has taken place.

Now the humble and contrite are trodden down in the street. Now the proud are happy. "Now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, even they that tempt God are delivered." (Malachi 3:15.) But in the new Kingdom every one that

exalteth himself shall be *abased*, and the *humble* shall be *exalted*. (Luke 14:11.) God has provided a thousand years for the education of all. A thousand years may seem a short period for this work when we know that for six thousand years things have been going wrong. But we must recollect that during the six thousand years, many of the people have lived but a short time—many dying in infancy.

In the new order of things this will be changed, and each will live longer. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." (Isaiah 65:20.) "Judgment [*justice*] also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place."—Isaiah 28:17.

And then it will not be necessary for one to say to another, "Know the Lord; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 31:34.) The high standard that God has for His people will be recognized. Then all who have humility and the right condition of heart will come into harmony with God. All who refuse to come into harmony with God will get the wages of sin—the Second Death.

THE TIME, MY SOUL, IS SHORT!

No time to linger by the way,
No time for ease, no time for play;
No time for earthly loves or joys,
No time for worldly cares or toys—
The time, my soul, is short!

No time to murmur or complain,
No time to heed the heart's dull pain;
No time for tears or mournful song,
No time to ask, How far? How long?—
The time, my soul, is short!

Ah, yes! 'tis short—yet time enough
To run thy course, so steep and rough;
Just time to reap "the fields," so white,
Before the coming of "the night"—
Just time, my soul, just time!

Just time to make thy heart more pure,
Just time to make thy "calling sure,"
Just time to enter through "the door,"
To reign with Christ for evermore—
Just time, my soul, just time!
GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

SEPTEMBER 21

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil—
Psa. 23:4.

The Sheep of the Lord's true flock fear no evil, because of the Lord's favor, because He is with them, on their side, and has shown His favor in the redemption price already imputed. He is with them, too, in His Word of promise—His assurance that death shall not mean extinction of life, but merely, until the resurrection, an undisturbed sleep in Jesus. What wonder that these can walk through the valley of the shadow of death singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord, calling upon their souls with all that is within them to praise and laud and magnify His great and holy name, who loved us and bought us with His precious blood, and has called us to the Kingdom inheritance with our dear Redeemer!—Z '03, 413 (R 3268).

The condition of the curse is the valley of the shadow of death. Death's shadow goes before it (death), in the sin, error, degradation, sorrow, trouble, pain, sickness, losses, disappointments and dying that darken this valley. From birth to death we pass through this dark vale. The vast majority pass through it in fear and reach its end in despair. God's children have blessings in this valley that enable them to bear its rigors bravely and calmly. Whatever of evil reaches them affects but their humanity; their new heart, mind and will is secure, because God, their Helper, is making all things work together for their good, and is giving them hope of eternal deliverance from all evil in the resurrection. Therefore, while in this valley they fear no evil—P '33, 147.

Parallel passages: Job 3:13; 14:2, 5, 7-12, 13, 14, 19-21; 17:13-16; 21:23-26, 32, 33; 38:17; Psa. 3:6; Rom. 5:12, 14, 17; Hos. 13:14; 1 Cor. 15:21-23, 26, 41-58; 1 Thes. 4:13-17; Rev. 1:18; Rom. 14:8; Phil. 1:21; Heb. 13:14; Psa. 27:1; 56:4, 11; 118:6; 44:19; Rom. 8:15.

Hymns: 284, 63, 87, 93, 137, 252, 330.
Poems of Dawn, 202: *Why Should I Fear?*
Tower Reading: Z '15, 90 (R 5653).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? With what results?

WHY SHOULD I FEAR?

WHENE'ER the storms come down on thee,
And days of peace all seem to flee,
This thought thy peace again shall bring,
Why should I fear?—the Lord is King.

E'en when the tempest rages high,

And darkest clouds are drawing nigh,
With hands of faith to this, oh, cling,—
Why should I fear?—the Lord is King.

Amid the stormy waves of life,
Above the tumult and the strife,
The chimes of hope still sweetly ring,—
Be not afraid,—the Lord is king.

Thy ship is toss'd by wind and wave,
But there is One whose power can save;
Across the sea He hastes to bring
Both rest and peace,—the Lord is King.

Yes, Jesus walks upon the sea,
And in the storm He comes to thee;
Then trust in Him, rejoice and sing;
He calms the waves,—the Lord is King.

He stretches out His hand to thee,
And from thy fears He sets thee free;
Beneath the shadow of His wing
He keeps thee safe,—the Lord is King.

R5653: "JEHOVAH IS MY SHEPHERD"

—Psalm 23.—

THE INFLUENCE OF THE PSALMS—THE MOST TOUCHING OF THEM ALL—
DAVID A SHEPHERD—HIS INTEREST IN HIS SHEEP—SUGGESTIVE OF THE
HEAVENLY SHEPHERD'S INTEREST IN HIS FLOCK—HIS SHEEP SHALL NOT
LACK—HE GIVES THEM REST—HE FEEDS THEM—HE REFRESHES THEM
WITH THE WATER OF LIFE—HE RESTORETH MY SOUL—HE LEADETH ME—
EVEN THROUGH THE DARK VALLEY I WILL FEAR NO EVIL—HIS ROD AND
HIS STAFF—HIS TABLE FOR HIS PEOPLE—THE ANOINTING HE GIVES—
GOODNESS AND MERCY EVER.

"Jehovah is my Shepherd."—Psalm 23:1.

IT IS safe to say that no other collection of poems has accomplished as much good as the Book of Psalms. Its sentiments seem to touch the soul at every turn—in joy, in sorrow. Referring to the Twenty-third Psalm, Beecher wrote, "It is the nightingale among the Psalms. It is small, of a homely feather, singing shyly out of obscurity; but it has filled the air of the whole world with melodious joy"; and Spurgeon said, "This is the Pearl of Psalms, whose soft and pure radiance delights every eye."

Only the people of God, in covenant relationship with Him, can properly appreciate this Psalm and apply its gracious sentiments to themselves. The Psalmist David could do this, because he belonged to the favored nation which God had taken into covenant relationship with Himself at Mount Sinai. The Israelites had covenanted to walk in the Lord's way and to obey His statutes; and God in turn had covenanted with them that He would, in proportion as they would do this, bestow His blessing upon their every interest. And perfect obedience to that Covenant and its Law would have been rewarded with everlasting life. We see, as the Apostle explains, that such a complete obedience was impossible. "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in Thy sight."

Comparatively few of the Jews even did their best to live up to the requirements of the Law; but the Prophet David evidently was one of these, however far short he came of perfection; for the Lord declared him "a man after His own heart." If he made failures, he confessed them, repented, received his punishment, and rejoiced in restoration to the Lord's favor, striving the more in the future to maintain his fellowship with God. It is interesting for us to note the kind of man with whom the Lord is well pleased—the kind of sheep in which the Great Shepherd is interested. And of this same class, of course, were others—the Prophets and lesser personages—all who endeavored to live godly.

THE GREAT SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK

In an important sense this Psalm is applicable to our Lord Jesus and His Church. All the features of the Psalm are applicable to our Redeemer Himself as well as to His followers, whom He styles the sheep of His flock. To His Church He is the Representative of the Father, so fully, so completely, that He could say truthfully, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." No human being could see the Heavenly Father and live, as the Scriptures declare; and those who saw and understood Jesus to be the Son of God, caught the best possible glimpse of the Heavenly Father. And so we all see Jesus as the Representative of the Father, the Son of the great King, the Son of the great Shepherd, Jehovah.

Jesus and His Church are more particularly the sheep of Jehovah's flock than were the Israelites of the Jewish Age; for the relationship of the Jews was through Moses, while the relationship of the Church is through Christ and the superior Covenant which centers in Him. It is well that we see this clearly; else how could we know whether or not we might apply the gracious sentiments of this Psalm to ourselves? It would not be right for a worldly person to apply this Psalm to himself. He would be deceiving himself; for he is not one of Jehovah's sheep. Nothing is more clear than this. Jesus declared that there is only one way of entering the sheepfold; namely, through the door. And He declared Himself to be the Door.

HOW TO BECOME A TRUE SHEEP

By nature we are sinners under Jehovah's sentence of death, and not His sheep. He has purposed a great Plan for the world in general, which will begin to operate as soon as

Messiah's Kingdom is established. However, in the interim He is receiving special sheep—during this Gospel Age; and Jesus tells how, saying, "If any man will come after Me [be My disciple, My follower, My sheep], let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." Self-denial is the first step—self-renunciation, giving up of the will to God. The Covenant reads, "Gather My saints together unto Me; those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." All who would be the Lord's sheep must make this Covenant of Sacrifice; it is the condition under which they may be accepted.

Moreover, as the Jews could come only through their appointed mediator, Moses, so we can come into this higher sheepfold only under the antitypical, greater Moses, Christ. There is none other name given. Once having taken this step, once having come into the sheepfold by the Door—in the approved manner—we have the Message of God, saying, "All things are yours; for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." What this means is described in this Psalm.—1 Corinthians 3:22, 23.

ALL WANTS ABUNDANTLY SUPPLIED

The Lord's sheep, abiding in perfection of relationship with Him, will lack nothing. Their every need will be supplied. This may not mean greater earthly wealth or name or fame or luxury. The Lord's sheep are New Creatures, spirit beings, who are temporarily dwelling in the flesh like other people, but who really are waiting for their change, to be completed by a share in the First Resurrection. The Lord's blessings to Natural Israel were earthly blessings, supplying their every earthly need; but His blessings to Spiritual Israel are spiritual favors. "No good thing will He withhold" from these—yea, even chastisements and sorrowful experiences that may be necessary for their spiritual development.

The Psalm assures us that, as the Lord's sheep, we shall be provided with green pastures and the cool, refreshing waters of Truth. Moreover, while thus being spiritually fed and refreshed, we shall have the peace of God, as is implied in the suggestion that the sheep will lie down in the green pastures. But alas! Not all of the sheep have full confidence in the Shepherd and are fully resigned to have no will but His. Some are continually getting into difficulty, because they neglect the green pastures and cool, refreshing waters of Truth found in the Word of God—because, goat-like, they sometimes wander off into the desert, straying far from the Shepherd and attempting to feed themselves on the indigestible things of the present life, on which no spiritual nature can thrive.

Yet even such straying sheep the Shepherd will not leave, if they have become truly His. He goes after them, as the Psalm represents. His rod and His staff are their comfort. With the rod he beats off their enemies, the wolves that would injure; and with the crook of His staff He wisely and carefully assists the entangled sheep out of its difficulties—out from amongst the cares of this life, the entanglements and deceitfulness of riches, and the besetments of sin and of Satan. Many of the sheep of the Lord's flock thus can sing, "He restoreth my soul"—He brings me back to Himself; He makes me again to know, to

appreciate, to enjoy His provision for me and to see how much better it is than anything I could have provided for myself.

A further experience is next brought to our view—the Shepherd's leading. "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." He causes me, even by my own stumblings and difficulties, to learn to appreciate the desirableness of His ways and the undesirableness of every other way. All His ways are perfect, are righteous. He leads us not contrary to our wills, but in harmony therewith, to prove what is the good, next the acceptable, and finally the perfect will of God.—Romans 12:2.

THE VALLEY OF DEATH'S SHADOW

All of our lives we have been in the shadow of this great Valley of Death. Only father Adam was ever on the mountain-tops of life. He lost his footing there, and descended gradually the slopes into this Valley of the Shadow of Death. We, his children, were all born here. We are dying daily; we are surrounded by dying conditions. We have merely the hope that the Lord will lead His sheep back to the heights of life. He is now leading His sheep of this Gospel Age—the Church, the Body of Christ. By and by He will lead the world, during His Millennial Kingdom; as He declared, "Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also must I bring, ... and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."—John 10:16.

"Oh, sometimes the shadows are deep,
And rough seems the path to the goal!"

The end of this Valley of Shadow is near, not merely in the sense that we shall soon reach the end of life's journey, but especially in the sense that the New Day is about to dawn, of which the Lord, our Shepherd, declared the result: "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams." (Malachi 4:2.) The final result will be that there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying; but the whole world will begin to emerge from the Valley of the Shadow of Death. For a thousand years they will be rising again to the glorious heights of human perfection from which Adam fell, and the right to return to which is secured for all by the death of Jesus, "the Just for the unjust."

THE CHURCH'S BETTER TABLE

But this precious Psalm seems especially to apply to the Church, as we have said. Thus we appropriately read that the Lord's people of the present time have an especially prepared table, where they may partake even in the presence of their enemies. That will not be true in the future; for no enemies nor anything to hurt or injure shall then be permitted. (Isaiah 11:9.) But how true it is that the Lord's consecrated people, even when misunderstood, misrepresented, defamed and opposed, are still privileged to feast at the Lord's Table! The table represents God's provision for their needs—the promises of God, the assurances of His favor, etc.

Another evidence that the Psalm belongs especially to the Church of this Age is the statement, "Thou anointest my Head with oil." Jesus, the Head of the Church, was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. That holy anointing oil used on the priests and kings of Israel typified the Holy Spirit, which came upon the Church representatively in Jesus. And this same anointing oil has come down over all the members of the Church, which is the Body of Christ, as we read in Psalm 133:2.

THE CUP BOTH SWEET AND BITTER

"My cup runneth over." The word cup is used in the Scriptures to represent a draft, sometimes sweet, sometimes bitter, sometimes both. The intimation is that the Lord's Cup signifies bitter experiences and trials in the present time; as Jesus said, "The Cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" And this was the Cup—His Cup—which He offered to His disciples and which we, in becoming His disciples, propose to share with Him, and which is symbolically represented in the Communion Cup.—1 Corinthians 10:15-17.

It is sweet and precious, in many senses of the word to be privileged to participate in the sufferings of Christ, in any sacrifices or services for the Lord and His Cause. The sweet mingles freely with the bitter. But the Lord promises that in the future the Cup of new wine in the Kingdom shall more than compensate for any bitterness of the present time. Our Cup is full, but we would not wish it one drop less.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." How precious the thought—God's goodness, God's mercy, with all those who are truly His in Christ—following us day by day, moment by moment, and according to the Scriptures making all things work together for our good! Then the grand finale is signified, "I shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever"—in the Heavenly House, of which the Redeemer said, "In My Father's House are many mansions; ... I go to prepare a place for you," and "I will come again and receive you unto Myself." Then, at His Second Coming, with our glorious change, we shall enter the Father's House in the fullest sense of the word, on the spirit plane, which flesh and blood does not inherit.

This shall be the everlasting portion of God's Elect—the Church. The great blessings subsequently to come to the world—earthly blessings—will in no sense interfere with, but enhance, the glory of the Church; for she will be engaged with her Lord in dispensing blessings to the earthly sheep.—Galatians 3:29.

SEPTEMBER 22

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever—Psa. 23:6.

The goodness and mercy which we anticipate ... in the Kingdom has its beginning here already and is thus to be appreciated. Whoever knows nothing of the joys of the Lord in the present time will evidently not be prepared for the joys of the Lord in the Kingdom, whatever blessings and joys he may attain to under the administration of the Kingdom during the Millennial Age. There is, then, joy and rejoicing, granted to the Lord's faithful ones, not a momentary matter connected with their first acceptance of the Lord and their consecration of themselves to Him. The goodness and mercy of the Lord is not to be looked back to as a thing of the remote past, but it is to be recognized and appreciated as a thing of the present. Day by day God's goodness and mercy follow us, refresh us, strengthen us, bless us—Z '03, 413 (R 3268).

God's goodness and mercy bless our new minds and humanity, though goodness here refers more especially, though not exclusively, to our spiritual privileges, while mercy here refers more especially, though not exclusively, to our human privileges. It is our glorious privilege to have these, not for a part only, but for the whole of our journey to the Kingdom. Let us not for a moment doubt the loyalty of the Lord to give us all the grace, mercy and Truth necessary for our entire journey. He will never fail, leave nor forsake us. And after we have proven faithful unto the end, our everlasting portion will be membership in God's family—P '32, 136.

Parallel passages: Ex. 15:13; 20:6; 33:19; 34:6; 2 Chron. 5:13; Neh. 9:17, 27-31; Psa. 23:1-5; 33:5; 73:1; 103:1-17; Jas. 1:17; John 14:2, 3; Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:5.

Hymns: 288, 11, 45, 46, 176, 92, 58.

Poems of Dawn, 239: *Courage! Morning Dawns.*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 109 (R 5437).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences along the line of this text? How were they met? What did they effect in me?

COURAGE! MORNING DAWNS

THOUGH the night be dark and dreary,
Though the way be long and weary,
Morn shall bring thee light and cheer;
Child, look up, the morn is near.

Though thine eyes be sad with weeping,
Through the night thy vigils keeping,
God shall wipe thy tears away,

Turn thy darkness into day.

Though thy spirit faint with fasting
Through the hours so slowly wasting,
Morn shall bring a glorious feast.
Thou shalt sit an honored guest.

R5437: "UNDER HIS WINGS"

"He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust."

—Psalm 91:4.

THE 91st Psalm very clearly applies to the Church, and would seem to be especially applicable to the Church in the end of this Age. But since it is addressed in a personal way, as though to one person, it may be The Christ as a whole that is referred to, from the Head to the last member of the Body. Our Lord Jesus had trials and difficulties, and needed protection and care. He went to the Heavenly Father and sought the necessary aid. And so with all the Lord's people continually.

But the Psalmist seems especially to refer to our day: "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee." Of course, there have been times in the past when thousands have fallen through persecution, etc., but the falling away mentioned here seems to be the falling away from God's people. Many will be turned aside, injured, wounded, if not killed, in the great battle pictured.

This battle, we understand, is at the conclusion of this Gospel Age. The powers of darkness are now specially arraying themselves against the consecrated people of God, and all associated with them. There never was a time when God's people, as a whole, had so large opportunities or so great success as Christendom has had in the past century. Under the attacks of Satan that have been in progress for the last fifty, sixty or seventy years, many have fallen into unbelief, Higher Criticism, infidelity, the various features of which are represented as a great pestilence. We see that there is a pestilential infidelity abroad in the land. Its votaries are misled by the Adversary—quite probably without any such intention on their part.

Very probably in the future, as they see the Truth, many of these will acknowledge their error; but for the time being there is a great drouth in Christendom. Church attendance is falling away. Many of the ministers are preaching what they themselves doubt. They have fallen from grace, fallen from Divine favor, fallen from an appreciation of the Word of God.

THE FEET OF THE CHRIST

This Scripture points out, too, the "feet" of this Christ class living in our day. "He shall give His angels charge over thee, lest thou dash thy *foot* against a stone." All the

members have a relationship to the Head and to one another. These "angels" we understand to represent Divine promises and helpful assistances of the saints. These "angels" are represented as bearing up the *feet*, that they may not stumble over the Stone of Stumbling at this time. (Isa. 8:14.) Instead of stumbling over this Stone, they will be lifted up by it to greater appreciation and higher conditions. The *feet* shall not be moved.

In the figure of our text, these who are to be covered represent all who are of this one class. As a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, so God will be as a mother-hen to His people, and will gladly gather them close to Himself and give them the necessary protection—under His wings. They may fully trust that all things shall work together for their good, because they are His, abiding "under the shadow of the Almighty."

The Almighty here represents Himself as a mother-bird. The patience of the mother-bird with her young is remarkable, and she would sacrifice her own life for her little nestlings. So the Lord represents that He is ready to do anything for the protection of His own, who are under His care. Jesus would have received the Jews thus under *His* protecting care; but the people as a nation did not appreciate their need, and hence were overthrown in a great time of trouble. Jesus said to them, with weeping, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and *ye would not!*"

OUR FATHER'S "WINGS" AND "FEATHERS"

We might exercise a particularity of inspection of our text, and say that the word *feathers* might carry a little further thought than the word *wings*. "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust." The soft, downy feathers under the mother-hen's wings serve to keep the little chicks warm and to shield and hide them from enemies that would attack them. Not only the strong sheltering wings, but also the feathers of the hen-mother's breast are used to protect her young. We have seen alarm on the part of a mother-hen at the approach of danger, and heard her cluck to her little ones. Then they would run to her, nestle under her wings, and seem perfectly satisfied and free from fear in their place of safety. Presently you would see the little heads or eyes peeping out; but the chicks felt perfectly secure.

And so with us. Our Heavenly Father's love and care and protection are His wings and His feathers, shielding us from all harm, keeping us warm and safe. He is able to make every experience in life work out for our good. We are, however, to remember that the promise that God will make all things work together for our good is a promise to the New Creature, not to the old creature. Oftentimes the interests of the New Creature and of the old creature are diverse. God has an interest in all that concerns us, but He overrules our temporal affairs for our best spiritual interests. If we were too prosperous, it might not be of advantage to us as New Creatures.

Our temporal affairs may be permitted to go awry. We are not wise enough to know what is for our own best interests as New Creatures, and what would help us the most in our fight against the world, the flesh and the Devil. We are, therefore, to flee to the Lord

and accept whatever experiences may come, as those which will be best for us; and we are to seek to get the designed lessons of faith and obedience from them.

SEPTEMBER 23

Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints—Jude 3.

Our good fight of faith consists in a considerable measure in our defense of the Word of God, which includes also our defense of the character of God. This will mean our willingness to stand for the Truth at any cost and against any number of assailants—against the creeds and theories of men, which would misrepresent the good tidings of great joy which the Lord and the Apostles have announced, and which shall, thank God, yet be unto all people. As the Apostle again says, "I am set for the defence of the Gospel." We can do no less than defend the Truth. The Truth is God's representative, Christ's representative, and hence our standard, and as true soldiers we must defend our standard, even unto death—Z '03, 423 (R 3272).

The faith once delivered to the saints consists of the doctrines, precepts, promises, exhortations, prophecies, histories and types of the Bible given by God to His true Gospel-Age people. These have been attacked with all the ability and malice that fallen angels and men could concentrate into the onslaught. As the custodians of the oracles of God, we would be untrue to our stewardship, if like craven cowards we inactively permitted the attack to go on. We should arm ourselves with the whole armor of God and repel the attacks of error against the Truth; and, assuming the aggressive, we should, with all our wisdom, power, justice and love, destroy the opposing errors, and deliver from their chains our captive brethren and friends—P '26, 125, 126.

Parallel passages: Acts 17:2; 18:4, 19; 20:27; 24:25; 1 Cor. 9:23-27; Gal. 2:2-5, 12-14; 5:7; 2 Pet. 2:1; Phil. 2:16; 2 Tim. 2:5; 4:7.

Hymns: 44, 78, 118, 183, 145, 272, 266.

Poems of Dawn, 152: *Heroism*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 215 (R 5056).

Questions: Did I this week defend the Truth? How? Why? With what results?

HEROISM

IT takes great strength to train
To modern service your ancestral brain;
To lift the weight of the unnumbered years
Of dead men's habits, methods and ideas;
To hold that back with one hand, and support
With the other the weak steps of new resolve!
It takes great strength to bring your life up square
With your accepted thought, and hold it there,
Resisting the inertia that drags back
From new attempts to the old habit's track.

It is so easy to drift back—to sink—
So hard to live abreast of what you think!

It takes great strength to live where you belong,
When other people think that you are wrong;
People you love, and who love you, and whose
Approval is a pleasure you would choose.
To bear this pressure, and succeed at length
In living your belief—well, it takes strength—
Courage, too. But what does courage mean
Save strength to help you face a pain foreseen;
Courage to undertake this life-long strain
Of setting yourself against your grandsire's brain:
Dangerous risk of walking alone and free,
Out of the easy paths that used to be;
And the fierce pain of hurting those we love,
When love meets truth, and truth must ride above!

But the best courage man has ever shown,
Is daring to cut loose, and think alone.
Dark are the unlit chambers of clear space,
Where light shines back from no reflecting face.
Our sun's wide glare, our heaven's shining blue,
We owe to fog and dust they fumble through;
And our rich wisdom that we treasure so,
Shines from a thousand things that we don't know.
But *to think new*—it takes a courage grim
As led Columbus over the world's rim.
To think—it costs some courage—and to go—
Try it—it taxes every power you know.

It takes great love to stir a human heart
To live beyond the others, and apart;
A love that is not shallow, is not small;
Is not for one or two, but for them all.
Love that can wound love for its higher need;
Love that can leave love, though the heart may bleed;
Love that can lose love, family and friend,
Yet live steadfastly, loving to the end.
A love that asks no answer, that can live,
Moved by one burning, deathless force—*to give!*
Love, strength and courage; courage, strength and love—
The heroes of all time are built thereof.

R5056: "CONTEND FOR THE FAITH"

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3.

THE CONTENTION which the Scriptures reprobate is that of *selfishness*—contending for place, for power, for *our* friends against *some one else's* friends, for our ideas against those of others. And the implication is given that those who are thus contentious will never enter into the Kingdom; for this contentious spirit indicates a wrong attitude or condition.

It is one thing, however, to be inveigled into something or to be overtaken in a fault, and quite another thing to *contend* along *selfish lines*. Amongst the Lord's people, even in the Apostles' day, there was a tendency at times to fight *each other* rather than to fight the Devil and the spirit of the world and the weaknesses within themselves. The organs of destructiveness and combativeness, which would serve a Christian soldier in good stead if directed against his own weaknesses and blemishes, are sadly out of place when, ignoring his own weaknesses, he merely becomes contentious with the brethren—often over nothing or over questions whose importance he exaggerates, because of his contentious spirit. Such should remember the Scriptural statement that "he that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city."—Prov. 16:32.

The Apostle Paul reprehends that misdirection of Christian energy which "bites and devours" one another and warns against it as tending to the *destruction* of *all that is spiritual* amongst the Lord's people. Not that the Apostle favored slackness as respects the important principles of Divine Revelation, for he showed always his determination to contend for righteousness; as one instance of this we recall his own words regarding his rebuke of one of the other Apostles, older in the Christian faith than himself—"I withstood him to the face, *because he was to be blamed.*"

COMMENDABLE CONTENTION

But while all of the Lord's people should be on guard against the spirit of contention, watching closely lest anything be done in a biting and devouring manner, instead of manifesting patience and long suffering, brotherly-kindness, love, yet they have enlisted as New Creatures, spirit-begotten, to walk after the Spirit, and they must continually recognize this fact and keep watch that they are always walking in line with the spirit of the Truth; and our text tells us of a contention which is not only proper, but necessary for all who are walking in this way. They are to "*earnestly* contend for the faith"—for the Word of God, for the promises which God has made, for the good things for which God has arranged.

The necessity for this course lies in the fact that this world is no friend to grace; no friend, therefore, to the people of God. Selfishness, which is the spirit of the world, lies on the side opposite to the Holy Spirit of love; and our own *selfish* interests are in line with the world in general. Consequently, no one *could* properly contend for the faith with

a *selfish motive*, for the "faith once delivered unto the saints" would forbid such a motive and condemn it at once. One reason, undoubtedly, why the Lord has permitted His cause to be in disesteem and subject to the attacks of the world, and particularly of evil spirits in the world, is that He desires to have for His people in this "little flock" a *tried* people, a people of *character*. Character implies such fixity of purpose and intention that the individual would fight a "good fight" against every influence tending to lead away from the Lord's Word and the Lord's brethren.

The world and its theories are in opposition to the saints; therefore, we must contend against the selfish human and devilish arrangements which prevail at the present time. It is possible for one to be contentious in religious matters, and to "*earnestly* contend," and yet such a course be not contending "for the faith once delivered to the saints." One might be contentious for some pet theory of his own rather than for those principles of righteousness which the Bible inculcates.

Sometimes it might *seem like* contention for the faith once delivered to the saints for one person to argue with another on Scriptural subjects, and yet his *real motive* in so doing might be *pride*. Pride is a part of selfishness; therefore in contending for his own ideas one might be cultivating pride. The contention which God would approve is that earnest desire to have whatever God's Word teaches. We must not contend with the tongue improperly, nor speak slanderously. In all of our contentions we should manifest the fruits of the Holy Spirit—gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love. Thus the proper contention would not partake of anger, hatred, malice or strife.

SEPTEMBER 24

I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection: lest ... I myself should be a castaway—1 Cor. 9:27.

There is a tendency for the body, the flesh, to arise from its condition of reckoned deadness; hence, the new nature needs to be continually on the alert to maintain its ascendancy, to fight the good fight of faith and to gain the prize as an overcomer. These battlings of the new mind against the flesh are a good fight in the sense that they are fightings against sins and weaknesses that belong to the fallen nature. They are a fight of faith in the sense that the entire course of the Christian is a course of faith, as the Apostle says, "We walk by faith and not by sight." ... It is a fight of faith in the sense that no one could keep up this battle against his own flesh and its propensities and desires, except as he can exercise faith in the promises and in the Lord as his Helper—Z '03, 425 (R 3272).

There is a distinction between keeping the body under and bringing it into subjection. We keep the body under when we suppress its efforts to control us, detach our earthly affections from its objects and prove impenetrable to its attacks. We bring it into subjection when the new heart, mind and will, laying hold of and enslaving it to God's will, makes it serve Truth, righteousness and holiness. Both of these things we must do to gain the prize of our calling. While other things must be done to gain eternal life, these are indispensable to overcoming. Whoever fails in this does not overcome. He will be a castaway as respects the prize—P '36, 110.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 9:25, 26; 2 Cor. 6:4, 5; Rom. 8:13; Acts 1:25; 2 Pet. 2:15; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:5; Jer. 6:30; Luke 9:25; 2 Cor. 13:5, 6.

Hymns: 78, 47, 4, 8, 114, 150, 196.
Poems of Dawn, 48: A Solitary Way.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 296 (R 5777).

Questions: How did my experiences this week accord with this text? What was helpful or hindersome therein? What were the effects?

A SOLITARY WAY

PSA. 107:1-9; PROV. 14:10; 1 COR. 2:11.

THERE is a mystery in human hearts,
And though we be encircled by a host
Of those who love us well, and are beloved,
To every one of us, from time to time,
There comes a sense of utter loneliness.
Our dearest friend is "stranger" to our joy,
And cannot realize our bitterness.
"There is not one who really understands,

Not one to enter into *all* I feel;"
Such is the cry of each of us in turn.
We wander in a "solitary way,"
No matter what or where our lot may be,
Each heart, mysterious even to itself,
Must live its inner life of solitude.

JOB 7:17; MATT. 10:37.

And would you know the reason why this is?
It is because the Lord desires our love.
In every heart He wishes to be *first*.
He therefore keeps the secret-key Himself,
To open *all* its chambers, and to bless
With *perfect* sympathy and holy peace
Each solitary soul which comes to *Him*.
So when we feel this loneliness, it is
The voice of Jesus saying, "Come to Me;"
And every time we are "not understood,"
It is a call to us to come *again*;
For Christ alone can *satisfy* the soul,
And those who walk with Him from day to day
Can never have "a solitary way."

ISA. 48:16; PSA. 34:22.

And when beneath some heavy cross you faint,
And say, "I cannot bear this load alone,"
You say the truth. Christ made it purposely
So heavy that you must return to Him
The bitter grief, which "no one understands,"
Conveys a secret message from the King,
Entreating you to come to Him *again*.
The Man of Sorrows understands it well.
In *all* points tempted, He can feel with you.
You cannot come too often, or too near.
The Son of God is infinite in grace;
His presence *satisfies* the longing soul;
And those who walk with Him from day to day
Can never have "a solitary way."

R5777: OVERCOMING DESIRES FOR EARTHLY THINGS

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—1 Cor. 9:27.

THE Apostle Paul is here using the illustration of a race-course. In certain races there are what are called *handicaps*; that is, one who is weaker is given a certain allowance of time in starting, and is granted a victory if he gets in on time. That would be an accommodation for only a *few*. It is called a *handicap* from the standpoint of the others. But in the Christian race there is accommodation granted to *all*; for there is none perfect—all come short of the glory of God, and we could never gain any reward that God has offered, had it not been for the satisfaction which the Redeemer has made.

Yet it is also true in this race that some have more allowance than others. Those who have many weaknesses have a corresponding allowance of grace made for them; and those who have fewer weaknesses have a less allowance. "I therefore so run, not as *uncertainly*," said St. Paul. He was *fully determined*. He had a *definite goal* in view, and meant to *win*. This is the only attitude, if we would gain the prize that God has offered us; and the whole matter is dependent upon our zeal, our faithfulness and our earnestness.

The Greek games had other exhibitions of strength and agility besides racing. There were contests with wild animals, in which a man would attempt to slay an animal. Then there were others between men, in which a man would attempt to deal his antagonist a vital blow, if possible, with his brass knuckles. In preparation for this contest, the contestants had a wind bag to practise on. But this was not the real battle, it was merely the preparation.

So the Apostle says that he was not using his strength merely in *practise*. He was trying to *do* something. He was fighting a real battle. What battle was it? The answer of the Bible is that a great battle began away back in the days when Satan became the Adversary of God. Our first parents came into slavery to Satan, and later some of the angels fell. Now many are fighting, and some are thoroughly ignorant of whose side they are fighting for. Those who are fighting for unrighteousness are on Satan's side. Whoever is fighting for moral reforms, etc., is on God's side, rather than the side of the Enemy of mankind.

The world are fighting more or less—some more intelligently, some less intelligently. There are in every army some who could not tell you what the fight is about. So now, many do not know that a battle is being waged between Righteousness and Sin. The millionaires have their own battles and contentions; and the little store-keepers have their battles, in competition with the larger merchants. The attorney has his battles. He may sometimes take a case that is on the side of justice, and defend it with zeal; and again he may take a case that is on the side of injustice, and prosecute it with equal zeal. But the world do not recognize the real battle. The same man may be on the right side one day, and on the wrong side the next day.

The Apostle had enlisted under the true banner. Christ lifted up a standard in opposition to Satan, and He will yet win a glorious victory on the very field where Sin has reigned for six thousand years. He had a personal conflict with the powers of darkness, in which He was Victor. And His victory was gained by His overcoming His own natural desires, and fully submitting Himself to the will of God. This was the only

condition on which He could be exalted from the earthly state, to the glories of the Divine nature. He has met the required condition, of dying the Just for the unjust, and has gotten the great victory over Satan.

The Heavenly Father, in harmony with His own arrangement, has empowered the Lord Jesus to take out from the world a company to lay down their lives with Himself, during a time when everything seems contrary, when evil seems to triumph more frequently than do righteousness and justice. These, walking by faith, and not by sight, are to lay down their lives for the sake of righteousness, to carry out the purposes of God.

OUR PRIMARY BATTLE IS WITH SELF

Do we ask, Whom, or what, shall we fight? The answer is that one would not enter the real conflict at all, if he should follow the impulses of his own mind. In such case he would not have any part in this fight. He might engage in the ordinary battling of the world—sometimes in the right, sometimes in the wrong. But if he would get into this company which is being guided by Jesus, he must come unto God by Him, and must sacrifice earthly hopes, aims and ambitions, and walk in Jesus' footsteps—steps of suffering unto death. "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. 2:10.) Thus the battle begins in our mind, our will. We submit our mind to the mind of Christ.

In the typical Day of Atonement sacrifices, the Body of Christ is represented by the Lord's goat. And as the high priest killed the goat in the type, so in the antitype the animal nature is to be killed, slaughtered, sacrificed. It is not to be yielded up to *sin*, but to be *overcome*. The New Creature is in mortal combat with entrenched sin, and the cravings of the human nature. He has made a consecration of himself to God. And as a result, the Advocate has placed His own merit upon the consecrated one. When this is done, the battle immediately begins, that the New Creature may keep down the old creature, the old will.—Galatians 5:17.

The Apostle says, "I keep my body under, ... lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway." It must be a *real* battle, a *real* conflict; for the victory is only to those who *overcome*. "To him that overcometh ... will I give power over the nations"; "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."—Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21.

VICTORY OR DEATH!

This battle, then, that begins at the time of our consecration, continues until the end—our death. It will be the death either of the New Creature or of the old creature. So far as our earthly interests are concerned, we sacrifice them fully—we exchange them for the opportunity of gaining glory, honor, immortality, joint-heirship with the Lord, participation in the Divine nature. So, as the Apostle suggests, we are not to be expending our strength merely on a bag of wind, but we are to fight to some purpose.

"For me to live is Christ," says the Apostle; and for me to *lose* in this battle is for me to perish as a New Creature, and this means that the Second Death would be mine. We should realize that in our position as Christians our eternal interests are at stake. We fear of losing the eternal life, which we shall surely lose if we fail to be overcomers.

The Apostle Peter writes, "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; ... that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless!" (2 Peter 3:11, 14.) With this anticipation, how serious life should be!

The Christian who knows about these things of the future, and who lives in anticipation of them, has a joy and a peace of which the world knows nothing. One week of such living is worth more than an entire lifetime with only such things as the world has to offer. And if now we enjoy living the new life, and entering by faith into the things that the Lord has in reservation for us, what will be the *realization!* If we would lose much in the present time by losing our hope and faith, what would it be to lose these things eternally!

As we realize this, we see that we cannot afford one moment of carelessness. The man engaged in combat with the animal knows that the bruised and wounded animal seeks to kill him. So the Apostle tells us, the *old nature* strives to kill the *New Nature*. Therefore the New Nature must see to it that it uses all its strength to gain the victory. The Lord has promised us grace sufficient for every time of need. If we are overcome by the old nature, it will not be because we have not strength sufficient for the victory; for if we call upon the Lord, He will sustain us. But the Lord will test our loyalty, our faith, our strength of character, our alertness of mind. And the victory is sure, so long as our trust is in Him!

SEPTEMBER 25

Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness [justification], and sanctification, and redemption [deliverance]—1 Cor. 1:30.

He who redeemed us, or bought us with the sacrifice of His own life, gives us, as our Prophet or Teacher, *wisdom* by His Gospel, to see our fallen state and Himself as our Helper; as our Priest, He first *justifies* us and then *sanctifies* or consecrates us ... and finally, as King, He will fully *deliver* the faithful from the domination of sin and death, to a glorious share in His Kingdom; for "God will raise up [from the dead] us also, *by Jesus.*"

"Hallelujah! What a Savior!"

Truly He is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him—Z '03, 440 (R 3279).

God appointed Jesus to supply our every need. He is our Wisdom in that He teaches us the whole counsel of God. He is our Righteousness in that He imputes His merit to us and enables us to practice justice. He is our Sanctification in that He enabled us to consecrate our humanity to death, and enables us to carry out our consecration fully ... enables us to grow in every good thought, quality, word and deed. He is our Deliverance in that He enables us to gain victory over all our spiritual enemies through helping us to exercise an overcoming faith, hope, love and obedience; and ultimately, if we are faithful, will give us victory over death and the grave by raising us from the dead. Hallelujah! What a Savior!—P '30, 152.

Parallel passages: Jer. 9:23, 24; Matt. 23:8, 10; 1 Cor. 1:18-29; Col. 3:2; Rom. 3:21-26; 4:20-25; 5:1; 10:3-14; John 17:17-19; Acts 26:17, 18; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 5:25-27; Heb. 2:11; Rom. 11:26; Luke 4:18; Matt. 6:13; Rom. 7:24, 25; 2 Tim. 4:18; Heb. 2:15.

Hymns: 96, 139, 167, 170, 240, 15, 178.

Poems of Dawn, 265: *Deliverance*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 227 (R 5506).

Questions: How have I this week appropriated Jesus as my Teacher, Justifier, Sanctifier and Deliverer? What helped or hindered therein? What resulted therefrom?

DELIVERANCE

STILL o'er Earth's sky the clouds of anger roll,
And God's revenge hangs heavy on her soul.
Yet shall she rise—though first by God chastised—
In glory and in beauty then baptized.

Yea, Earth, thou shalt arise; thy Father's aid
Shall heal the wound His chastening hand hath made;
Shall judge the proud oppressor's ruthless sway

And burst his bonds, and cast his cords away.

Then on thy soil shall deathless verdure spring;
Break forth, ye mountains, and ye valleys, sing!
No more your thirsty rocks shall frown forlorn,
The unbeliever's jest, the heathen's scorn;

The sultry sands shall tenfold harvests yield,
And a new Eden deck the thorny field.
E'en now we see, wide-waving o'er the land,
The mighty angel lifts his golden wand,

Courts the bright vision of descending power,
Tells every gate, and measures every tower;
And chides the tardy seals that yet detain
Thy Lion, Judah, from His destined reign!

R5506: THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

"If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free."—John 8:31, 32.

AT HIS FIRST Advent our Lord came to the Jewish nation, which was a House of Servants in covenant relationship with God. To these was to be granted the first privilege of becoming sons of God, and their blessing would be in proportion as they were faithful to the light that would come to them. Before they could become *sons* of God, however, it was necessary that Jesus should be their Redeemer, should make reconciliation for iniquity, and thus open up the way. This He had come to do, but He had not done it as yet. Whoever would come to understand the Divine purposes and arrangements, and act in harmony with them, should be made free, should be liberated from the condemnation resting upon them as Jews, from the results of the weaknesses of their flesh, and would be brought into full accord with God.

We can see that this great privilege also meant something more than all this. It meant something still higher—even joint-heirship with Messiah. But all these things were a hidden mystery as yet. They were known up to that time only by our Lord Himself; they were made clear to Him because He had been begotten of the Holy Spirit. There were many things hard to be understood. Jesus spoke in parables, in dark sayings, for the very purpose of making the Way of Life then opened up a "narrow way." And so we read in the Scriptures that some said of the Master's words: "This is a hard saying! Who can hear it?" Who could believe it?

The particularly hard saying referred to was that His "flesh was meat indeed, and His blood was drink indeed," and that by eating and drinking of these they might gain eternal life. And so we read that after this many forsook Him and abandoned the thought of

being His disciples, so blinded were they to their own interests. Instead of following on patiently, they said, This is all foolishness! We do not understand it!

Jesus was anticipating this condition of things when He spoke these words to them. He would put them on their guard. It was as though He would say, You have declared that "never man spake like this man!" Already you have heard words very different from the words of the Scribes and Pharisees. Now continue; hold on for a little while. If you will do this, you will grasp the situation in due time. Exercise faith—exercise patience. You have begun to have interest in these things, and as you fully become My disciples you will be granted a knowledge of the Truth. And this Truth will make you free; it will give you all the blessings and privileges that come to the children of God. Greatly blessed were the few who took heed to the Master's counsel!

BLESSINGS BEGUN AT PENTECOST

These words of Jesus were not addressed especially to the twelve Apostles, but to the Jews in general who were sympathetically drawn. Nicodemus may have been one of these; he was inclined to stumble over the spiritual things; he could not see how one could be born again. The Holy Spirit was not yet given, we read, "because Jesus was not yet glorified." St. Paul tells us that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Corinthians 2:14.

But some saw enough in Jesus to attract them to Him. These, in honesty of heart, said, Surely His words are true, and His criticisms of our nation are true. We do not see how He is going to fulfil these prophecies; but He says to us, Hold on and you will understand later. And some did hold on—"above five hundred brethren." As Jesus had promised, these were given the privilege of becoming disciples indeed.

When Pentecost came, the Heavenly Father received all who had continued in Jesus' Word, and they were begotten of the Holy Spirit into the Lord's family. Then they began to see spiritual things—they were illuminated. All the light did not come at once, but they progressed as the days and years went by. They were indeed Christ's true disciples—such followers of Jesus as the Father was pleased to recognize. They were not only made free from the condemnation of the Law Covenant, but made free from sin and death. They received a new *will*, a new *mind*, and the Holy Spirit showed "the deep things of God" unto them.

In His prayer to the Father, our Lord said, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." By the word Truth Jesus was here referring to the Father's revelation of His Divine Plan through the Holy Spirit; and the sanctifying influence would come through the knowledge of that Truth, received into an honest heart. This sanctification, or setting apart, strictly speaking, began with the Pentecostal blessing, and still continues to operate. And this sanctification progresses as long as the individual allows the Truth to have its designed influence in his life. We see a difference between our text and the one just quoted. In the latter case it is the Word of Jehovah, and in the former it is the Word

of Jesus. Jesus says, If you continue in *My Word*, you will become more and more acquainted with the Heavenly Father, and will know His will, His way, His method; thus you will know His Word. All things are working out His will—the will of the Father—and seeing and doing the will of the Father, the sanctifying process will follow. Jesus says to all, "I am the Way; I am the Truth; I am the Life." I am the only One through whom you can come to the Father and become His sons; and abiding in Me will bring you the grand consummation.

THE CHANNEL OF ALL OUR BLESSINGS

We perceive, then, that Christ is the sufficiency which God has provided for us in all respects. "He of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness [Justification], and Sanctification, and Redemption [Deliverance]." (1 Corinthians 1:30.) We first receive, through learning of His sacrificial work on our behalf, necessary wisdom, instruction and guidance, by which we may through His merit come to the Father. And He is our Wisdom all along the way. The Heavenly Father had a glorious Plan before the foundation of the world; this was hinted in Eden, just after the fall. In due time He gave a further intimation of that Plan through Enoch and through Abraham, and still later through Moses and the Prophets. But how the world was to benefit from it was all hidden, all kept secret.

Not until Jesus came was the way of life opened up, made manifest. "He [Christ] hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." The essence of the Gospel was never even declared, much less known, before Jesus came. The Apostle Paul says that this salvation "at the first *began* to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him." (Hebrews 2:3.) Our Lord *began* to speak it; but the secret of the Gospel, its *Mystery*, was not fully revealed until after Pentecost. It was not until after Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit that He Himself began to comprehend it clearly—not until then did He begin to set before us the way of life and immortality. And even then His words were parabolic, and it was not until His followers were begotten of the Holy Spirit that they were able to enter into "the deep things of God."

JESUS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

In addition to His being our Wisdom, Jesus becomes our Righteousness. He covers our sins. He imputes to us His own righteousness, the merit of His own sacrifice. And this imputation brings us to a condition of complete righteousness—not *actual*, but reckoned, which God is pleased to recognize in the way He has arranged.

Our Lord does not become the Righteousness of everybody—not even of those who give some heed to His Words—but to those alone who come to the point of full submission to the Father's will. And there is a good reason for this; for only those who offer themselves to become members of His Body during this Gospel Age, only the spirit-begotten, would be profited by a justification by faith. Others would be condemned to death by it now. In the next Age, others will come to Him. But only those who come to Him now, to walk in His steps, have a faith-justification.

JESUS OUR SANCTIFICATION

The step of consecration on the part of those who become Jesus' disciples is in the Scriptures called *sanctification*. But it is not the same sanctification which comes to us through Him. God says, "Sanctify yourselves, and I will sanctify you"—that is, Set yourselves apart, and then I will set you apart; I will put you into this place where you desire to come. So, to all of us who come to the Father through Him, Jesus not only becomes our Justification, but through Him we also have Sanctification—the complete setting apart. We are accepted in Him, and His grace and Advocacy enable us to attain complete and final sanctification.

God sets us apart by begetting us of the Holy Spirit to the new nature and making us prospective members of the Royal Priesthood—prospective members of the Body of the Anointed One. This is Scripturally called a foretaste, or "earnest," of our inheritance, which will be experienced to the full when we are changed from the human to the spirit nature—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." But this "earnest of our inheritance" is given us with the intention of our growing in the process of sanctification already begun in us until its completion. We attain this through Christ.

JESUS OUR DELIVERANCE

Those who make satisfactory progress will have in the resurrection full deliverance from sin, from all imperfections of the flesh, and from the flesh itself—full deliverance through the power of the First Resurrection. Christ thus becomes our Deliverance. We shall then attain the full completeness of sons of God on the Divine plane.

In all these things Christ is the Center; through Him alone can we obtain these blessings. While the Father gives them, they are given through His Son, who is the Father's Representative. Jesus received the Spirit of the Father and has shed it forth upon us. This is pictured in the type, in the anointing of the high priest. The holy anointing-oil was poured upon his head, and it ran down over his body. So we are anointed through our Head as members of the great High Priest.

"He who raised up Jesus from the dead will raise us up also by Jesus"; that is to say, Jesus will be the active agent. But there are certain features of the Divine Plan which Jesus will accomplish *in His own name*; for instance, the world's blessing and uplifting. While the Father is the Author of the entire Plan, yet this blessing comes to the world exclusively through the sacrifice of the Son. Christ will do the work of the Millennial Age, and will then deliver mankind up to the Father.

But His work for the Church is different: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us." (1 Peter 1:3.) It is not the Son who has begotten us, though it is through the Son that we receive this Divine favor. The price, or cost, of obtaining this special Divine favor is the sacrifice of our lives. The particular thing which the Church receives more directly from the Son is *justification*. Yet

this justification is *of* the Father, and it is not an *actual* justification, but an imputed justification. It is a special arrangement on the Father's part for us that we may come into His favor now in advance of the world—the First-fruits unto God and the Lamb.

Ours is a wonderful God, and His great Plan of the Ages is marvelous beyond expression! Our hearts rejoice that our eyes have been anointed to see these glorious things hidden to the many during this Gospel Age, knowing that all the blind eyes shall yet be opened, and all the deaf ears be made to hear!

"THEY TURN THEIR EARS FROM THE TRUTH"

The Lord's preaching always produced two opposite effects upon the promiscuous multitudes that heard Him: He attracted one class and repelled the other. Those who were full of pride and conceit, and who preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil and because they realized that if they admitted the light of Truth they must of necessity conform their characters to it—all such were repelled by the teachings of Christ. And if the Lord had undertaken the work of the ministry according to the methods pursued today, depending for support on the good will and contribution of the people, that support would often have been very meager, or at least, very fluctuating.

On some occasions multitudes received His testimony, but later deserted Him, walking no more with Him as He continued to enforce the lessons of Divine Truth. (Luke 4:14-29.) Sometimes the multitudes hung upon His teachings, "wondering at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth"; yet again and again they forsook Him, only the merest handful remaining.—John 6:60-69.

What consternation would follow in the various churches of today, if the professed ministers of the Gospel should follow the Master's example in similarly declaring the whole counsel of God! How quickly they would become unpopular and be charged with breaking up the churches! The congregations of the great temples of fashion ostensibly dedicated to the service of God and the teachings of Christ would not stand it. They go there to be entertained with pleasing and eloquent discourses from titled gentlemen who presumably know the tastes and ideas of the congregation, and will preach to please them. They are quite willing to pay their money for what they want, but they do not want the Truth.

Those who followed the Lord only for a little season and then forsook Him, of course then ceased to be His disciples and were no longer so recognized; nor did they presume longer to claim to be His disciples. A disciple is a pupil, a learner; and when a man ceases to be a student and pupil of Christ, the great Teacher, he is no longer His disciple. This was very manifest when the Lord was present, and when His name was one of reproach among men; but later, when His presence was withdrawn, and when His doctrines were unscrupulously mixed with human philosophies to such an extent as to divest them of reproach, and to make them really void, then men began to claim to be His disciples. This was long after His doctrines had been utterly repudiated.

THE REWARD OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

The Lord's expression, "Then are ye My disciples *indeed*," implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be Jesus' sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: "If ye continue in *My Word*, then are ye My disciples indeed." The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord.

It is a blessed thing to take the first step in the Christian life—that of acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer and Lord and yielding ourselves fully to the Father through Him. But the reward of this step depends entirely upon our *continuance* in His Word, in the attitude of true disciples. The disposition of human pride is to wander away from the simplicity of Divine Truth and to seek out new theories and philosophies of our own, or to pry into those of others who desire to be considered wise and great according to this world's estimate.

The reward of continued discipleship is, "Ye shall *know* the Truth"—not, Ye shall be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth." (2 Timothy 3:7.) Here is the mistake many make; failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies, which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. To those who seek for Truth among these human theories, there is no promise that they shall ever find it, and they never do.

Divine Truth is found only in the Divinely appointed channel—our Lord, the Apostles and the Prophets. To continue in the doctrines set forth in the inspired writings of the Prophets and the Apostles, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and to faithfully conform our characters to them, is what is implied in "continuing in the Word" of the Lord. And this is entirely compatible with the heeding of all the helps which the Lord raises up from among our brethren in the Body of Christ, as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. (Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14.) The Lord always has raised up, and will to the end raise up, such helps for the edification of the Body of Christ; but it is the duty of every member carefully to prove their teaching by the infallible Word.

If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the Truth," be "established in the Present Truth" [the Truth due], and "be rooted and grounded in the Truth"; we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us"; to "earnestly contend for the Faith once delivered to the saints"; to "war a good warfare"; to "witness a good confession" and to firmly "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our conflict.

We do not come into the knowledge of the Truth at a single bound; but gradually, step by step, we are led into the Truth. Every step is one of sure and certain progress leading to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in established character.

The Truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power, bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue and every grace, which time and cultivation ripen to a glorious maturity.

Not only shall the true disciple thus know the Truth and be sanctified by it, but the Lord also said, "The Truth shall make you free." Those who have received the Truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance, superstition and fear. Its health-restoring beams penetrate the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorate the whole being; it quickens our mortal bodies.

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORDS GIVETH LIGHT"

Sin cannot endure the light of Truth; and those who continue to live in sin when a sufficiency of light has been received to manifest its deformity must inevitably lose the Light, because they are unworthy of it. Ignorance and superstition must vanish before this Light. And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions, however, are still under the blinding influence of error. Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation, because they hypocritically claim Divine appointment; and they have been made to fear God as a vengeful Tyrant, consigning the vast majority of His creatures to an eternity of torment. Thank God! We who have received the Truth have awakened from that horrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken. The Light has scattered our darkness.

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see coming upon the whole world as the great civil and ecclesiastical systems that have so long ruled the world are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of anarchy and terror; the alarm of all is increasing as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more apparent. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God as to the terrors of the conflict through which the world will soon have to pass, the true disciples of Christ who abide in His Word are not afraid, but rejoice; for they know that God's object in permitting this mighty storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world, and that after the storm, there shall come, by His providence, an *abiding peace*. Instructed in the Truth, they realize the necessities of the situation, and have confidence in the Divine providence that can make even the wrath of man to praise Him, make all things work together for good.

Blessed promise!—"If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free." Dearly beloved, having received this wondrous favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines but bringing forth its blessed fruitage in our lives? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and bearing its

reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of the glorious Light by our loyalty and faithfulness, working out our salvation with fear and trembling.

SEPTEMBER 26

Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit—Eph. 2:20-22.

Let us, as day after day rolls by, remember our threefold relationship to this Temple: (1) We are still in process of preparation as living stones. (2) As members of the Royal Priesthood carrying the Ark, we are marching from the Tabernacle into the Temple condition; some of our number have already entered in and some are still on the way. (3) As the Lord's people, the time has come for us to know, to sing with the spirit and understanding, the new song of Divine mercy, justice, love and truth. Let us be faithful in each of these respects, fulfilling our parts, and soon our course will be ended and the glory of the Lord will fill the Temple—Z '03, 443 (R 3282).

The Christ is the Temple of the Living God. In it the Apostles and the Gospel-Age prophets are the foundation stones—Jesus, the chief cornerstone, and the rest of the faithful, the other stones. During the Gospel Age the stones are undergoing preparation at the hands of God and Christ. They must submit to the necessary sawing, breaking, chiseling, cutting, grinding, rubbing and polishing, each individually and in harmony with one another. Unity, harmony and diversity mark their preparation. When placed in the building harmoniously, cohesively and beautifully, they will be filled with the Lord's glory and become God's resting place, His meeting place with mankind and His blessing place for the world—P '35, 118.

Parallel passages: Matt. 16:16-18; 1 Pet. 2:4, 5; Isa. 28:16; Matt. 21:42; Psa. 118:22, 23; Eph. 4:14-16; 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; John 14:16-18, 23; Rom. 8:9.

Hymns: 281, 67, 21, 23, 6, 7, 58.

Poems of Dawn, 193: *The Voice in the Twilight*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 188 (R 5713).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What proved helpful or hindering therein? Under what circumstances did they occur? In what did they result?

THE VOICE IN THE TWILIGHT

I WAS sitting alone in the twilight,
With spirit troubled and vexed,
With thoughts that were morbid and gloomy,
And faith that was sadly perplexed.

Some homely work I was doing
For the child of my love and care,

Some stitches half wearily setting,
In the endless need of repair.

But my thoughts were about the "building,"
The work some day to be tried;
And that only gold and the silver,
And the precious stones, should abide.

And remembering mine own poor efforts,
The wretched work I had done,
And, even when trying most truly,
The meager success I had won:

"It is nothing but 'wood, hay and stubble,'" I said;
"it will all be burned—
This useless fruit of the talents
One day to be returned.

"And I have so longed to serve Him,
and sometimes I know I have tried;
but I'm sure when He sees such building,
he never will let it abide."

Just then, as I turned the garment,
That no rent should be left behind,
Mine eye caught an odd little bungle
Of mending and patchwork combined.

My heart grew suddenly tender,
And something blinded mine eyes,
With one of those sweet intuitions
That sometimes make us so wise.

Dear child! She wanted to help me.
I knew 'twas the best she could do;
But oh! what a botch she had made it—
The gray mismatching the blue!

And yet—can you understand it?—
With a tender smile and a tear,
And a half compassionate yearning,
I felt she had grown more dear.

Then a sweet voice broke the silence;
And the dear Lord said to me,
"Art thou tenderer for the little child

than I am tender for thee?"

Then straightway I knew His meaning,
So full of compassion and love,
And my faith came back to its Refuge
Like the glad, returning dove.

For I thought, when the Master-builder
Comes down His temple to view,
To see what rents must be mended,
And what must be builded anew,

Perhaps as He looks o'er the building
He will bring my work to the light,
And seeing the marring and bungling,
And how far it all is from right,

He will feel as I felt for my darling,
And will say, as I said for her,
"Dear child! She wanted to help me,
And love for Me was the spur.

"And for the true love that is in it,
the work shall seem perfect as Mine,
And because it was willing service,
I will crown it with plaudit Divine."

And there in the deepening twilight
I seemed to be clasping a hand,
And to feel a great love constrain me,
Stronger than any command.

Then I knew, by the thrill of sweetness,
'Twas the hand of the Blessed One,
That will tenderly guide and hold me
Till all my labor is done.

So my thoughts are nevermore gloomy,
My faith no longer is dim,
But my heart is strong and restful,
And mine eyes are looking to Him.

R5713: DEDICATING THE TEMPLE

—1 Kings 8:22-30.—

WHAT THE TEMPLE TYPIFIED—DOUBLE ANTITYPES—THEIR DEDICATION—KING SOLOMON'S PRAYER—GOD'S PERSONALITY—HIS DWELLING—PLACE IN HEAVEN—"THE GLORY OF THE LORD FILLED THE TEMPLE"—ITS ANTITYPE.

"My House shall be called a House of prayer for all people."—Isaiah 56:7.

POSSESSED of reverence for the Lord, full of zeal for Him, full of appreciation of the Divine promise that King David's successor should build the House of the Lord, the Temple, for which David had for years made preparations of money and valuables, we find King Solomon speedily giving attention to this matter. In the fourth year of his reign, preparations had reached such a development that the construction of the Temple was begun; and seven and a half years later the scenes of this Study were enacted—when the Temple was ready for dedication. Strange to say, it was dedicated about a month before it was completely finished. Doubtless this contained some important typical lesson, which we may some day more fully understand.

Built of white marble, the Temple must have been a very imposing structure, although not lofty. It was of but one story; nevertheless, its position on the mountain top surely gave it a very commanding appearance, its glittering, white walls overtopping the entire landscape. But we are interested in the Temple of Solomon more than in any other building because it was a type, as well as a reality. Let us note the Apostle's references to it and his declaration that its antitype is found in God's holy people—the Church. We read, "Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" "For ye are the Temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."—1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16.

PREPARATION OF THE LIVING STONES

In the picture which the Apostle thus brings to our attention, the Church corresponds to the Tabernacle rather than to the Temple. As God was with the Children of Israel from the time they entered into covenant with Him until the Temple was dedicated by Solomon, He indicated His presence by a manifestation of the Shekinah Light in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle. And so with us now as Christians: from the time we become sons of God—from the time of our consecration, justification, sanctification and begetting of the Holy Spirit—our bodies are tabernacles, or temporary dwelling-places, of God's Holy Spirit. His Spirit in us is represented originally by the begetting influence which we receive as the start of our new existence as New Creatures in Christ Jesus; and that light, or holy illumination, spread abroad in us fills us with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God more and more. The Tabernacle in one sense of the word was a temple—in the sense that any place where God is would properly be called a temple, a holy place. But, as suggested, it is preferable that we think of our fleshly bodies as tabernacles of God—His temporary dwelling-place. In a fuller sense, by and by, there will be a great transfer. The Lord's saintly ones will be changed from flesh to spirit by the power of the

First Resurrection, and will thus be more perfectly represented by the beautiful Temple which Solomon built.

But there is a still more beautiful thought brought to our attention by St. Peter. He tells us that the various members of the Church of Christ—the saints—are living stones, which are in process of chiseling and polishing, preparatory to the uniting of all these in one grand, glorious Temple of God beyond the Veil. (1 Peter 2:5, 9.) Any not enduring the chiseling and polishing will be discarded as unfit for the glorious Temple.

The bringing together of these living stones beyond the Veil will be by the Resurrection Power, beautifully illustrated in the erection of Solomon's Temple, of which we read that its stones were prepared at the quarry and then finally assembled for the construction of the Temple, and that they were so perfectly shaped and marked for their various places that they came together without the sound of a hammer—without need for chiseling or for other labor upon them at the time of the construction. So, St. Paul says, the Church is God's workmanship. (Ephesians 2:10.) And His work will be so perfectly accomplished that there will be no need of rectification or alteration beyond the Veil.

It is this viewpoint that is especially interesting and profitable to the Lord's people. Such of them as can realize that they have been called of God to this High Calling, to membership in the Temple, can fully appreciate thereafter the necessity for the trials and difficulties of life which are shaping them, fitting them, for Heavenly glory, honor, immortality. These are the "all things" working together for good to them that love God—preparing them for the spiritual blessings and services of the future.—Romans 8:28.

WORK OF THE GLORIFIED CHURCH

When we think of the Church as the Temple under construction, it impresses upon us the thought that there is a future work to be accomplished. Why construct a Temple, and then not use it? Serious injury came to us through various errors of the past: for instance, the thought that the Church alone is to be saved and all the remainder of mankind to be lost; and a further thought, that at the Second Coming of Christ the world is to be burned up, and the Divine Plan ignominiously terminated. With such a view, the construction of the Church as the great Temple would seem to be a waste; since there would be nobody to be blessed by it.

However, as our eyes of understanding open more and more clearly, we begin to see beauty in the Divine Plan and arrangement. So far from God's Plan terminating at the Second Coming of Christ, it will merely begin there, so far as the world is concerned. The Church, in one figure, will be the Royal Priesthood for the blessing of all the families of the earth. (Galatians 3:29.) In the other figure, the Church will be the great Temple through which all the world of mankind may have access to God and return to harmony with Him.

Thus, eventually, this glorified Church, or Temple, will be the House of Prayer for all people, all nations—not that they will pray to a house, but that they will approach God through the glorified Church, in which His Presence will be manifested and His mercy will be available to all. From this viewpoint, the Temple with its Shekinah glory represented the Church in the glory of the future, in association with Christ; and God will dwell in and operate through that glorious Church for the blessing of the world, represented by all those who will worship God looking toward His Holy House.

DEDICATING THE TEMPLE OF GOD

There is an important thought in connection with a dedication which some seem to overlook. It was necessary for the Tabernacle to be dedicated, or set apart to God, before He deigned to recognize it and to use it. Similarly with all of God's people; it is necessary that they should positively and formally dedicate themselves to God and to His service before being recognized of Him and filled with His Spirit. It is not enough that they should know of Him and of the Lord Jesus Christ, and be persuaded of these things—not enough even that they should know something of the glories of the Coming Age as revealed in the Word of God. It is necessary, also, that they make formal dedication of themselves to God, fully surrendering their own wills that God may come into them by His Holy Spirit and, accepting their sacrifices, constitute them thereafter His tabernacles.

When the Temple was ready for dedication, Solomon presented it to God with the prayer which constitutes the basis of today's Study—a prayer beautiful in simplicity and indicative of King Solomon's perception of the great truth that God is a personal God, whose dwelling-place is not everywhere, but in Heaven. It shows us that the king fully understood that the Temple which he had made, like the Tabernacle before it, merely represented God's power and grace amongst His people. The presence of the Temple indicated that there were sinners who needed to be atoned for by its arrangements, and that mercy and forgiveness would be needed and that prayers toward God would be appropriate. "Hear Thou in Heaven Thy dwelling-place; and when Thou hearest, forgive."

So during the Millennium, all the world will have the opportunity of approaching God through His great Temple of which Jesus is the Chief Corner-Stone, and the Church the living stones under His Headship. And God will hear the prayers thus properly presented, and will forgive the sins of the people; and as a result the work of Restitution will progress to a grand completion.

As Solomon dedicated the Temple, so the Church of Christ will be dedicated, formally presented to the Father. The great Antitype of Solomon will do this; namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, presenting us all as His members, as the Temple which is His Body, reared up on the Third Day—the Third Thousand-Year Day from the time of His death—the dawning of the Great Sabbath. (John 2:19-22.) As a result of the dedication, the glory of the Lord will fill the House. The fact that the typical Temple was filled with the glory of the Lord before it was entirely completed seems to imply that at this present time there will be some manifestation of God's favor toward His Church in glorification while yet

the work of construction is not quite finished. However, it is difficult to read prophecy in advance of its fulfilment. We must wait to see what will be the fulfilment of this feature.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

SEPTEMBER 27

Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God—Matt. 4:7.

Temptations continually assail the Lord's people—suggestions to do some wonderful works in His name, and thus to prove to themselves and to others that they are heaven's favorites. The lesson for us to learn is that the work which the Father has given us to do is not the work of convincing the world or of showing His favor toward us and our greatness in Him, but rather that we should quietly and humbly, yet as effectively as reason and propriety will permit, let our lights shine, and show forth the praises of Him who hath called us from darkness into His marvelous light, and from a desire to be wonder-workers to the reasonable position of servants, ministers of the Truth—Z '04, 9 (R 3298).

To tempt God means to banter Him, to presume on His goodness and to tamper with His arrangements. Whoever does so takes his life in his own hands. God does not permit Himself to be mocked, though as in Pharaoh's case, He is long-suffering with the one who tempts Him. He will ultimately make the tempter feel the weight of His displeasure. Our reverence for the Lord should be so great as to prevent our tempting Him. In this, as in everything else, our dear Redeemer gives us an example of that reverential carefulness and obedience which will safeguard us against tempting Jehovah, our God. Reverence for Jehovah is also in this particular the beginning of wisdom—P '34, 128.

Parallel passages: Deut.6:16; Ex. 5:2; Num. 15:30; 1 Kings 20:28; 22:24; Job 15:25; Psa. 19:13; 131:1; Isa. 10:15; 14:13, 14; 45:9; 65:5; Matt. 4:5, 6; Luke 18:11, 12; Rom. 9:20, 21; 1 Cor. 10:9-12; 2 Thes. 2:3, 4; 2 Pet. 2:10, 11.

Hymns: 196, 95, 125, 130, 136, 145, 198.

Poems of Dawn, 80: *Loving Submission*.

Tower Reading: Z '04, 5 (R 3296).

Questions: Have I this week tempted or honored God? How? With what results?

LOVING SUBMISSION

I MAY not understand just why the clouds obscure
the sun,
But I can trust Him still, and feebly say, "Thy will
be done."
I know not why each door of service He sees fit to
close,
But I rejoice to find my will would ne'er His way
oppose.
I can but wonder why it seemeth to my Father best,
To loosen from its resting place upon my throbbing
breast

The priceless jewel fastened there by His own hand,
—but then,
I joy to feel the mother-heart can still respond, *Amen!*

I do not always clearly see the lesson I should learn,
But hour by hour I'll strive to let the hallowed
incense burn.
I know not why the sweet must turn to bitter in the
cup,
But still I press it to my lips, and through my tears
look up
To Him who is "too wise to err, too good to be
unkind,"
Assured that, when the cup is drained, a blessing there
I'll find.

Press hard, then, Master Workman, and refrain not,
If I weep,—
The marble's *fairest* beauty grows beneath the chiseling deep—
Yea, Lord, let skies be overcast, as seemeth best to
thee,
Take from my arms the dearest thing Thy love hath
given me;
Let sweet or bitter fill my cup, according to Thy will,
I'll closer clasp Thy hand in mine and in the flame
hold still.
And thus, although Thou slay me, I will praise Thee
night and day,
I'll lay each burden at Thy feet, and bear a song away!

R3296: SPECIAL TRIALS FOLLOW CONSECRATION.

—Matt. 3:13-4:11.—

Golden Text:—"And lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."—Matt. 8:17.

THIS lesson, relating to our Lord's baptism unto death and his temptations in the wilderness, which immediately followed, illustrates the experiences of all who follow in his steps. In order to become Jesus' disciples at all, we must take a step which he did not take, namely, that of justification from our sins to divine favor and relationship through faith in the blood of Christ. Having taken this step the call of the Gospel age has been for such as are of right condition of heart to forsake all and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth—in trials, difficulties, oppositions and persecutions in this present life and into the glorious honors and divine favors of the life which is to come. Our Lord's

experiences, therefore, furnish a good basis for reflection respecting what is to be expected and endured by all of his faithful.

Our Lord's baptism was more than "John's baptism." The latter was merely for sinners against the Mosaic Law, and indicated a return to harmony with that Law and to the relationship with God which that Law Covenant through Moses established. Our Lord Jesus needed no such repentance and reformation, being holy, harmless, and separate from sinners; hence it was that John was astonished when he presented himself for baptism. At first John declined, asserting that of the two he himself rather than Jesus needed that baptism, since they were both heartily obedient to the divine arrangement and had not at any time been open transgressors of the Law.

LIKE A DOVE.

Without explaining to John what the latter would not have understood respecting the new dispensation and the appropriateness of water immersion as a symbol of his consecration unto death, our Lord merely said, Permit the service to proceed, John. I have a reason for so desiring it, and it is proper that I should do it in the fulfilment of certain things which I recognize to be right. Then John baptized him, and immediately after Jesus' baptism was finished and he had come up from the water John beheld and heard peculiar things, which apparently others thereabouts knew nothing of. He saw as it were an opening in the heavens, and something which he understood to represent the holy Spirit, the power of God, descending upon Jesus. This was possibly a stream of light, which came not violently, like the lightning, but gently, like a dove, and he heard a voice saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Whatever sentiments John entertained toward his cousin Jesus previously, he was now convinced by what he witnessed that his cousin was the Messiah. Then he bore record, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and testified that when he was sent with the mission to baptize, and to preach the Kingdom of heaven at hand, he was distinctly informed that in due time he would know the Messiah by seeing the holy Spirit from God come upon him. Nothing in the account indicates that others than John saw this vision, nor was it necessary for others to see it. John was to bear record, and those who heard him had the same opportunity that we today have of knowing about this matter.

CONSECRATION AND BEGETTING.

To Jesus this was a great moment—the moment of his begetting of the Spirit. He had left the spirit condition that he might fulfil the Father's will and plan by becoming man's representative, substitute, ransom price; but he had been promised that the faithful performance of this would bring to him again the spirit nature, with added glory and greatness and divine favor. Now at thirty years of age, as soon as was possible for him to begin his ministries under the Law, he had made a full consecration of himself as a man—to give his time, his influence, his energy, his life, "all that he had," to purchase the forfeited life and inheritance of father Adam and his entire posterity. The consecration

made by our Lord at the moment of his baptism is represented in the Scriptures in these words, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will O my God; thy law is written in my heart." This full consecration to death involved every human power, and there—as sealing the engagement—the Father gave him the holy Spirit as a firstfruits of the new spiritual nature, which he would receive completely in his resurrection. That anointing of the holy Spirit was the begetting which, in due time, our Lord being faithful, would bring him to the birth of the Spirit in the resurrection. We know from the Scriptures that he was faithful and thus became the firstfruits of them that slept, the firstborn from the dead.

Immediately he was led into the wilderness—Mark expresses it "driven into the wilderness"—by the Spirit, the holy Spirit, which was now his own spirit or mind or will. We can readily understand why the spirit thus forced him away from the society of others. Jesus realized that he had a special mission in the world, different from others; that he had left the spirit plane of being and had become a man, that he might accomplish a work for mankind. He realized that this work was an important one in the Father's sight, and that already for centuries his coming and the great work he was to do had been foretold in the types of the Law and in the words of the prophecies. Even at the early age of twelve years he had felt anxious to be about the Father's business, and as soon as the legal age for his engaging in the Father's business had arrived, he had hastened to make his vow of consecration to do the Father's will in everything. As a man he could not understand and comprehend clearly and fully the meaning of the various prophecies, even as the prophets did not themselves understand these; and, although familiar with the letter of the Scriptures, he had been obliged to wait for a clear understanding of them until the time of his anointing of the spirit;—because "the natural man [however pure and perfect] receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. 2:10.

"LORD WHAT WOULDST THOU HAVE ME TO DO?"

Jesus then hastened into the wilderness, away from friends and acquaintances and every distracting thing, that he might make use of the power of the holy Spirit that had come upon him, that he might use the new sight. The eyes of his understanding had been opened to comprehend the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine love and plan which he was to fulfil. He must not confer with flesh and blood respecting his future course, even if there had been any one perfect like himself with whom he might have conferred. He must confer with the Father. He must take the Father's words through the prophecies, and the lessons through the types, and must hear and see in these the great work mapped out for him. He must make no mistake at the beginning of his mission. He must not hastily conclude that the suggestions of others respecting the course Messiah would pursue were correct. He must not even take his own previous conceptions of his work. He must look at everything from the new standpoint of the spirit. No wonder he wished to be alone with God, and with the Word of God, which he had treasured up in his heart from infancy, and which, having a perfect mind, he unquestionably had before him as plainly as though he had the printed book.

Forty days passed, yet so intent was he upon the study of the work the Father had given him to do, and so perfect was he physically, that he did not hunger until then, as it is written, "He afterward hungered." The season had been a precious one, and undoubtedly the close of that forty-day period saw the Lord fairly well equipped in an understanding of the divine arrangement respecting the necessity for his death. He understood that the payment of the ransom price for the world was a prerequisite to his coming reign of glory and to its privilege of blessing all the families of the earth with an opportunity for attaining all that had been lost through father Adam's disobedience. But just at that juncture, when he was weak from his long fast and probably also from lack of sleep—for he probably was so deeply engrossed respecting the study of the divine plan that he neither ate nor slept those forty days—at this juncture of his extreme physical enervation came the adversary's chief besetments. True, through the forty days, while thinking of the divine arrangements, there were opportunities for questioning the wisdom of the divine arrangement; but these apparently were all nullified in the Lord's zeal to know and do the Father's will, and hence the temptations that are recorded are those following the fasting.

"HE WAS A MURDERER FROM THE BEGINNING."

We may well suppose that the great Adversary—through whose deception mother Eve fell into disobedience, which brought in its train the wreck and ruin of the race—was an interested spectator in everything pertaining to the divine plan. Of course he knew the prophecies. Of course he knew of our Lord's birth and the annunciation of the heavenly hosts that the babe born at Bethlehem was to be the Savior of the world, the one whose coming was intimated to mother Eve—the seed of the woman who was to bruise the serpent's head. No doubt Satan had watched Jesus in all of his course up to this present time, had seen his baptism of consecration and had seen the Father's recognition of him by the anointing of the Spirit. No doubt he had kept track of him while in the wilderness. All this is intimated in the words of one of the fallen angels or demons, who subsequently said, "We know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." It may be noted here, however, that the Greek word *daimonion* (demons) is the word generally translated devils when speaking of the evil spirits which our Lord and the apostles cast out of many, but in the narrative of our lesson this is not the word used. Here we have the word *diabolus*, preceded by the Greek article thus making it the *diabolus*, the devil, the one whom the Jews sometimes called Beelzebub, the prince of the devils—the one referred to in the Hebrew as Satan, an opponent of God and of righteousness.

Satan realized that the most favorable time for an attack upon the anointed Jesus would be when he was weak from his long fast and vigilance, and hence it was at the close of the forty days that the temptations mentioned in this lesson were set before the Lord. It may be wondered by some why the Father would permit temptations, or why they would be necessary, or how they could be temptations to a perfect one. There is a difference between temptations which the Father considers proper and the temptations which come of the adversary. The former are tests of loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness, and are intended to be a blessing and a help to all those who withstand them, and who thus demonstrate their loyalty to righteousness. The temptations of Satan,

on the contrary, are in the nature of pitfalls and snares in evil and wrongdoing, temptations to make right appear wrong and wrong right, putting light for darkness and darkness for light. In this sense of misrepresentation and ensnarements in evil, God tempteth no man. (Jas. 1:12, 13.) It was necessary that our Lord should be tested, and he was tested all through the three and one-half years of his ministry. Since he had consecrated himself and entered upon his work, it was necessary that these testings should begin at once, for if he manifested disloyalty to the Father, if he had a will of his own, a will that was not fully submitted to the Father's will in all points, he would not be worthy to be the Leader, the Captain of salvation to the many sons God intended to bring to glory. And unless proved perfect by testing his death should not have been accepted as an offset, the ransom price for the sin of Adam and for the sins of the whole world. To experience temptation does not imply sin, but it does imply liberty and freedom of will.

The three temptations here recorded practically illustrate all the temptations that came to our Lord during his three and a half years of self sacrifice, and likewise they illustrate all the trials and temptations that come to his followers. We are not to think of the Lord Jesus as being tempted by the weaknesses of the flesh, for he had no such weakness. We are not to think of his being tempted as a father, for he was not a father. We are to remember the statement that he was tempted in all points as we are—not we the world, not we believers merely, but we the consecrated believers, who are likewise begotten of the Spirit and therefore subject to the besetments of the adversary along the lines in which the interests of the Spirit clash with the interests of the flesh, however good and pure the latter may be.

"COMMAND THAT THESE STONES BE MADE BREAD."

The first of these temptations related to the Lord's hunger. He had possibly been hungry before, but not until endued with the holy Spirit after his baptism had he that divine miraculous power at his command which would have permitted him to turn stones into bread. This temptation, therefore, did not signify that it is wrong to eat nor that bread is an improper food, but merely that the method of obtaining the food would not have been a proper or legitimate one. But why not, if he had the power, if he were the Son of God and God had given him this ability—why not use this power to satisfy his legitimate cravings? We reply, that the power that was given him was to enable him to carry out the consecration which he had made, and which involved the sacrifice of his flesh instead of its preservation. He might use this holy power upon others, to demonstrate his mission and to draw the attention of the people to the glorious restitution times prefigured in his miracles; but he might not use this holy power in any selfish manner for anything personal. To have done so would have been to misuse it and would therefore have meant sin.

Let us stop here and notice the lesson there is in this temptation for the Lord's followers. We also have received of the begetting of the Spirit; and although we have the Spirit in less measure than our Master, it is for the same purpose—not to be used selfishly for the feeding of our material bodies nor for the healing of our bodily ailments, but simply and only for the service of the Lord, the brethren, the Truth. As our Lord declared

in the garden, he could have asked the Father and have had twelve legions of angels to protect him; and so he could have asked the Father and have had the stones turned into bread, which would have nourished his body; but as our Lord declined to do both of these possible things, so should his followers, having consecrated their lives to the Lord, refuse to ask for divine interference for their own personal and temporal convenience or advantage. To do so would be to ask amiss, to ask selfishly, to ask what would be in opposition to the consecration made.

"THOU SHALT NOT TEMPT THE LORD."

Satan then tried another plan, suggesting a use of our Lord's divine protection which would bring him suddenly into notoriety amongst the people, and demonstrate that he was not an ordinary person but a special object of divine care. The suggestion was that he should go to the highest part of the temple structure, which overlooked the Valley of Hinnom, at a height of six hundred feet from its bottom—that he should leap from this prominent place in the sight of the people, and thus demonstrate his own faith in the Lord and in his mission as the Messiah, and attach to himself the awe and reverence of the people who would see the transaction or hear about it;—for all would know that without divine protection such a leap would mean certain death. The temptation had its plausible side. It seemed to imply great faith in the Almighty, and a refusal to follow the thought would seem to imply doubt on our Lord's part respecting his Messiahship and lack of faith in the divine power. It was a shrewdly put proposition. Additionally, it was backed up by Scripture texts: for Satan can quote Scripture when it suits his purpose just as, under his guidance, Spiritualists and Christian Scientists and other rejectors of the Word of God are ready at times to quote what they think will serve their purposes. The Scripture quoted was a very able one, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up lest at any time thou shouldst dash thy foot against a stone." (Psa. 91:11, 12.) It would almost appear that this Scripture implied that our Lord was to make such an exhibit as Satan proposed.

First we inquire wherein such a course would have been an improper one—what Scriptural injunction or righteous principle would have been violated? We reply that if our Lord had been pushed from the pinnacle of the temple, or if he had been in a dangerous position in discharge of duty and his foot had slipped, and he thus had been precipitated to the valley below, he would have been quite right in assuming that the divine power could protect his interests and cause that all things should work for his good according to promise. But to deliberately place oneself in danger and to call upon or expect God to offset the deliberate act with divine protection would be a mistake. It would be tempting God. And this was our Lord's reply to Satan, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

We are here furnished a practical lesson in the interpretation of Scripture. Where two Scriptures seem to conflict we must examine the principles which underlie them, and the spirit of a sound mind, the holy spirit of loyalty to God and reverence for him, must assist us in determining the proper relationship of these Scriptures, or which one should be followed when they seem to be in conflict. It is quite possible that the time had not yet

come for the Scripture which Satan quoted to be rightly understood. It is possible, therefore, that our Lord at that time did not know the proper interpretation of the words quoted by Satan; for if he had there would have been little temptation in the suggestion. He was guided by the principles of righteousness as well as by the Scriptural testimony which he quoted. He perceived that it would be wrong to do a foolish act and to tempt the Lord to shield him from the natural consequences of the act. This conclusion of our Lord's mind was fully backed up by the Scripture which he quoted.

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH.

The Scripture quoted by Satan we may now understand clearly, and this proves that the due time for its comprehension has come. We now see that the Psalm from which this is taken refers to the whole Church of this Gospel age—Jesus the Head, and his faithful, the members of the body. We now see that while there have been feet members in some respects all the way down through this Gospel age, yet in a particular sense the Lord's people of this present time are the "feet of him that bringeth good tidings of peace." (Isa. 52:7.) We see that as the feet, the last members of the Jewish house, stumbled over Christ as the stone of stumbling and rock of offence in the end of the Jewish age, so now we see the feet members of the spiritual Israel in the harvest or end of this Gospel age will be in danger of stumbling over the rock of offence. As it is written, "He shall be for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel"—the fleshly and the spiritual. (Isa. 8:1, 4.) We see that as the fleshly house stumbled over the cross (1 Cor. 1:23), so the spiritual house is to stumble over the same obstacle—the cross.

We see this stumbling now taking place, that higher criticism is undermining true faith in all denominations, and that the Evolution theories are making the cross of Christ of none effect—implying that Jesus and the sacrifice for sins was wholly unnecessary, that men have been evolving and progressing upward under a natural law of progression and evolution, that he needed no redemption, and that restitution to a former estate (Acts. 3:21) would be the worst thing which could happen to him. We see that in fulfilment of this promise the Lord has given his ministers a message for the feet class, designed to be helpful to them and to assist them over these peculiar stumbling stones of our day—to enable them to "stand" (Eph. 6:13); and this we see corresponds exactly to the assistance rendered to the feet members of the Jewish house—the Israelites indeed of that time. We remember how the Lord's dark sayings were not for any except those in a special attitude of heart, so that others hearing might hear and not understand, and seeing they might not perceive. So it is now: the great mass of Churchianity hear not, see not, and rejoice in conditions which they fail to recognize as stumblings and in falling away from the faith once delivered to the saints.

"TEMPTED IN ALL POINTS LIKE AS WE ARE."

Coming back now to the temptation, let us see whether or not there are temptations before the body of Christ similar to this one recorded of our Head. There are. Temptations continually assail the Lord's people—suggestions to do some wonderful works in his name, and to thus prove to themselves and to others that they are heaven's

favorites. The lesson for us to learn is that the work which the Father has given us to do is not a work of convincing the world of showing his favor toward us and our greatness in him, but rather—"Hast thou faith, have it to thyself," as the Apostle says. Rather that we should quietly and humbly, yet as effectively as reason and propriety will permit, let our lights shine, and show forth the praises of him who hath called us from darkness into his marvellous light, and from a desire to be wonder-workers to the reasonable position of servants, ministers of the Truth. Let us fix our Lord's answer clearly in our minds, "It is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Let us as members of the feet of Christ not accept outward deliverances from the trials and difficulties and responsibilities of life, but expect that our protection, our upholding, will be along spiritual lines—that we shall be kept from falling and from injury as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, because our faith is stayed on him.

We do not know that Satan was personally visible to our Lord during these temptations: we must assume that he was not visible, that he did not appear as a man, nor in any other tangible form. Undoubtedly, as the holy angels had power to appear as men, Satan and the fallen angels at one time had the same power or privilege. But the divine sentence against them after the flood is distinctly recorded in the Scriptures. They are "restrained in chains of darkness" until the judgment of the great day, until the dawning of the Millennial morning. However, it matters not to us in what way Satan communicated to our Lord these tempting suggestions. In the third temptation, however, it is evident that the taking of our Lord to a high mountain and showing him therefrom all the kingdoms of the earth, was not a literal taking, but a taking in spirit or in mind or in thought. There is no mountain in the world from which all the earth could be seen, and even if the Roman world were understood there was no mountain anywhere in Palestine from which any considerable portion of the Roman world could be seen. But the mind can be projected to any part of the world in an instant or to any part of the universe in imagination.

Satan called to our Lord's mind, imagination, a great mountain or great kingdom, having supervision of the entire world. He suggested to our Lord that his mission would be accomplished if he should succeed in thus establishing a kingdom over all the kingdoms of the earth. This to some extent is the spirit of prophecy; namely that it is God's purpose to establish through Christ a world dominion which will rule all the people of the earth to their blessing and uplifting from sin and degradation to life, joy, and peace—or so many of them as will respond to the blessed influences of that Millennial Kingdom. Our Lord certainly understood that this was his mission—to lay the foundation for such a Kingdom: we cannot, however, suppose that he as yet fully understood or comprehended all the steps incidental to that Kingdom's establishment. Had he understood this, there would have been no temptation in Satan's presentation.

SATAN AS AN ANGEL OF LIGHT WOULD MISLEAD.

Having stated the proposition in a form that would at once appeal to our Lord as being largely in accord with the Father's plans he had come to execute, Satan would have our Lord feel that he sympathized with Jehovah's project and with our Lord Jesus in the

execution of it, and was willing to render co-operation and assistance. In effect he said, Such a universal Kingdom, for the civilization, enlightenment, uplifting and blessing of all the world I know is your proposition, and I am fully in sympathy with it; but there are different ways of getting at the matter. If you attempt this great work in the wrong way you will merely bring disaster upon yourself and failure to your plans, but if you get at the matter in the proper manner you will succeed. I am the master of the situation—the whole world is under my influence. I admit that in many respects it is a painful influence, and I shall be very glad indeed to have it rectified and the world's government made righteous. My leading of mankind into sin and rebellion and superstition was not so much because I wish them evil as because I knew that only in this way could I hold my power over them. Now all that I ask for co-operation with you in this scheme of a great kingdom to bless the world is that I receive a share of the dignity and honor with you—that you recognize me. Let us be partners. I will recognize you and you will recognize me, and together we will effect this great work of reformation for the whole world, for which you have so grandly and nobly sacrificed every interest up to this moment. Now be wise, for I assure you that any other method will meet only with disaster and bring needless and fruitless pain upon yourself.

As already intimated, the Lord had been studying the Scriptures from childhood; his perfect memory had grasped every detail of the prophecies, and now, since his anointing with the holy Spirit, he had come into the wilderness to determine this very point—how the great object of his coming into the world was to be made effective to the blessing of mankind—how he must proceed in order to fulfil the divine projects and become King of kings and Lord of lords amongst men for their blessing and uplifting. He heard Satan's proposition carefully, he noted the weight of the argument, he realized the truthfulness of much that Satan had said; but he saw in the Scriptures enough to indicate to him that the Father's plan was not the smooth one that Satan had suggested. He noticed in the Scriptures suggestions not only about glory, honor, dominion and power, and the bowing of every knee, and the confessing of every tongue, and the desire of all nations coming, and the knowledge of the Lord filling the whole earth, and the time coming when there would be no need to say to one's neighbor and to one's brother, Know thou the Lord, because all should know him from the least even unto the greatest; but he noticed also Scriptures and types which clearly intimated that there was to be a sacrificing work accomplished. All the sin-offerings implied this, and the testimony, "he shall be led as a lamb to the slaughter," etc.

Reasoning on the question he could readily see that this sacrificing, slaughtering, etc. could not come after the glory and blessing and enlightenment of the world, and hence that it must precede the glory; for, as the Apostle Peter points out, the prophets "spake of the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow." Doubtless by this time the Lord had come to see that it was a clear teaching of Scripture that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins, and that this meant that in some manner he should die for the people. Supposing that he saw this at the time, it meant that the temptation he experienced was all the stronger, because here Satan was proposing to him a method for dealing with the question from the opposite standpoint, without suffering, with exaltation and honor from the very commencement.

COMPLETE CONSECRATION ESSENTIAL TO VICTORY.

Our Lord was saved from any vacillation or manifestation of weakness on this subject by reason of the fulness, the completeness of his consecration, which he had symbolized at Jordan. There he had said, in heart at least, "I delight to do thy will, O my God, thy law is written in my heart." This desire to please the Father, to obey the divine law in his heart saved our dear Redeemer from any yielding to Satan's wiles, and similarly our consecration as members of his body must be thorough if we would hope to stand the testing which must come to each one of us as we pass along the narrow way, following in his footsteps, seeking the glory, honor and immortality which he has promised us. Our Lord's prompt and allsufficient answer was, Leave me, Adversary; for it is written, the Lord thy God shalt thou worship and him only shalt thou serve. I cannot be a co-worker with you in any sense of the word; to do so would be disloyalty to the great Jehovah. I must be loyal to the Lord and to the commission he has given me and to the doing of his will in his way whatever the cost.

Members of the body of Christ following in his footsteps have temptations from the Adversary along similar lines. Not that he offers to divide the kingdom of earth with us, for so great a proposition would not appeal to us, being incredible; but to us he does propose deviation from the close following in the Master's footsteps. He suggests continually to the Lord's followers easier ways by which as much or more good can be accomplished and without sacrifice and self-denial. These ways of avoiding sacrifice and yet of seemingly attaining good ends always imply more or less of co-partnership with the Adversary directly or indirectly, an acknowledgment of him, a bending to evil—to evil men or evil principles.

Under such circumstances we should note carefully the Lord's method and walk in his steps. We should refuse to have any partnership with sin or evil influences or methods in our endeavors to serve the Lord and his Truth. Satan does not approach us in human form nor in diabolic form, but generally through human agencies, through human ambitions, parties, sects, etc. If our Lord had made inquiry of Satan as to what would be the program, doubtless he would have advised him to become a Pharisee of the Pharisees at once, and through such steps gradually he would have proceeded to elevate our Lord over the Jewish people and ultimately over the world—if indeed he who was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the Truth could be trusted in respect to any promise.

Similarly, today, he proposes to the Lord's followers identification with nominal Churchianity. He flatters them with some trifling office larger in name than in fact or service; he persuades them that they have a large influence and that to withdraw from Babylon would be to incur suffering upon themselves and their families and to do general injury to the work which they seek to forward. By this means, if he cannot lead them onward step by step to full co-operation with him in the blinding of others, he at least can hinder those who yield to his propositions from ever stepping out boldly and courageously on the Lord's side and in opposition to superstition and error. He can hinder them from being more than conquerors and having a place in the body of Christ. What

shall our answer be to his suggestions? Let us answer with our Lord that we can enter into no partnership, be members of the institution, nor co-operate with any along lines that would be either dishonoring to the character of our heavenly Father or in any measure contrary to those which he has marked out as the pathway for those who love him—the pathway of self-denial, and incidentally of suffering for the cause of right and truth.

"ADD TO YOUR FAITH, FORTITUDE."

Another thought: one great difficulty with the Lord's people is that, even when determined for a right course and thus resisting the temptation, they do not take sufficiently positive action. Many say to the tempter, I have concluded not to yield at this time. Thus they leave in their own minds an opportunity open by which the tempter may return. Our Lord's course was the proper one: we should dismiss the tempter once and forever. We should take our stand so firmly that even the Adversary would not think it worth while to come back at us along that line; "Leave me, Adversary," I will worship and serve my God alone.

Our Lord's temptations thus terminated. Henceforth he had Satan for his Adversary, but the Father his protector and ultimately his deliverer. Had he not reached this final decision we may presume that Satan's temptations would have continued for days or weeks or years, and would have been a hindrance to the Lord in the work he had come to do. So with us, we must settle it if we would be on the Lord's side; we must decide that in no sense of the word will we yield to the Adversary, either from policy or to enter into any transaction either to protect life, name or fame. Our decision must be a firm one, somewhat as expressed by the poet:—

"Vain, delusive world, adieu,
With all thou callest good!
To my Lord I would be true,
Who bought me with his blood."

"MARVEL NOT IF THE WORLD HATE YOU."

When the Lord's followers take a firm stand on this subject as their Leader did, the results are the same. Satan is their implacable opponent; he will see to it that they do suffer, that there will be opposition not only by himself but by the world, which is largely under the influence of his spirit and in various ways. Taking this stand they must not marvel if the world hate them, and if all manner of evil be said against them falsely for Christ's sake. And the more prominent they may be, as in our Lord's case, the more virulent we may expect attacks against them to be—the more interested will the great Adversary be in overcoming them. This thought of Satan's opposition to us, and that we are contending not merely with flesh and blood but with principalities and powers and wicked spirits in high positions of power, would be appalling to us did we not on the other hand realize that by this same positiveness of decision we acquire great helps and assistances by other unseen powers. From that moment of our positive resistance of

temptation and positive standing up for the Lord and his cause, we become stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might, and greater is he that is for us than all that be against us.

It was so in our Lord's case. At once he was ministered to by the unseen messengers of Jehovah, and whatever terror lay in the intimated opposition of the Adversary was more than counterbalanced by the assurances of divine favor and assistance. So it is with us. If God be for us who can be against us—what will all the oppositions of the world, the flesh and the devil amount to since God declares that we are his and all things are ours, for we are Christ's and Christ is God's?—1 Cor. 3:21-23.

SEPTEMBER 28

Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith—1 Pet. 5:8, 9.

This thought of Satan's opposition to us, and that we are contending not merely with flesh and blood but with principalities and powers and wicked spirits in high positions of power, would be appalling to us did we not on the other hand realize that by positiveness of decision we acquire great helps and assistances by other unseen powers. From that moment of our positive resistance of temptation and positive standing up for the Lord and His cause, we become stronger in the Lord and in the power of His might, and greater is He that is for us than all that be against us. ... Hesitancy after the wrong is seen increases the power of the temptation—Z '04, 11; '00, 32 (R 3300, 2565).

Satan is not only the enemy of mankind in general, but especially of the Lord's people, and that because of their loyalty to God. Satan desires to destroy their lives; and nothing gives him more pleasure than the destruction of the new heart, mind and will. A veritable lion he is, seeking to devour us as his prey. Mere passivity on our part will not overcome him. Nor will even a strong temporary resistance finally repulse him. We must persevere in resistance, using not carnal but spiritual weapons, even the Word and Spirit of the Lord. The Spirit, cutting with the keen, Damascus blade of the Word into his vitals, effectually drives him away from us—P '33, 147.

Parallel passages: 1 Pet. 1:13; Luke 21:34; Rom. 13:13; 1 Cor. 16:13; 1 Thes. 5:6, 8; 1 Pet. 4:7; Job 1:7, 9-12; 2:2-7; Luke 22:31; John 8:44; 1 Chron. 21:1; Zech. 3:1, 2; Matt. 4:1-11; 13:19, 38, 39; John 13:2, 27; 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:3, 14, 15; Eph. 6:11-17; Jas. 4:7.

Hymns: 145, 1, 13, 20, 130, 136, 183.

Poems of Dawn, 130: *Be Vigilant*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 54 (R 5183).

Questions: Have I this week soberly guarded myself against Satan? How? With what results?

BE VIGILANT

UP then, and linger not, thou saint of God,
Fling from thy shoulders each impending load;
Be brave and wise, shake off earth's soil and sin,
That with the Bridegroom thou mayst enter in.
O watch and pray!

Clear hath the voice been heard, Behold I've come—
That voice that calls thee to thy glorious home,
That bids thee leave these vales and take swift wing,

To meet the hosts of thy descending King;—
And thou mayst rise!

Here's a thick throng of foes, afar and near;
The grave in front, a hating world in rear;
Yet flee thou canst not, victory must be won,
Ere fall the shadows of thy setting sun:—
And thou must fight.

Gird on thine armor; face each weaponed foe;
Deal with the Sword of heaven the deadly blow;
Forward, still forward, till the prize Divine
Rewards thy zeal, and victory is thine;
Win thou the crown.

R5183: THE ARCH-ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

"Your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith."—1 Peter 5:8, 9.

THE Authorized Version of the New Testament makes frequent use of the word *devil*, and leaves the impression that there are many devils; but this thought is not borne out by the Scriptures in general. In the New Testament two Greek words are thus translated, *daimonion* and *diabolos*. Of these two words, the first should be properly rendered "demon"; and the second "devil." The *demons* are the unclean spirits, the familiar spirits, the fallen angels; while the *Devil* is Satan. The term Satan signifies *adversary*, opponent; for the Devil is the opponent of righteousness and of Jehovah.

Whoever has failed to discern that there is a Devil is all the more liable to come under the influence of this great, malevolent being, who is portrayed in the Scriptures as the greatest foe to God, to men and to righteousness. St. Paul speaks of the "wiles of the Devil" and warns the Church that her warfare is with "wicked spirits in the heavenlies." (Eph. 6:11, 12, margin.) He also mentions "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2), and intimates that it would be impossible for us really to contend with him; for he is too wily, too wise for us.

There is an evil influence constantly exerted in the world, operating against truth, righteousness and purity, and therefore operating against God. The Scriptures inform us that this influence is exerted by the Devil, Satan, who was once a holy angel. It was by permitting pride and ambition to gain control of his heart, that Satan became an opponent of God and of righteousness.—I John 3:8; I Tim. 3:6; Isa. 14:12-14.

Although mankind cannot see Satan, yet he can see them, and by means of mental suggestion can gain control of them. He has a variety of ways by which he exercises his influence. The most potent way is through human agents—using one person against

another. His favorite method of operating is by putting darkness for light. This he does by making the *good* appear *evil*, the *true*, *false*, and the *right*, *wrong*.

St. Peter tells us in our text that Satan goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. The lion has a very stealthy walk. On his feet are soft cushions, which enable him to come very near to his prey before his approach is recognized. It is said that, at this point, when the beast is *about to spring upon his prey*, he roars so loudly that the victim is paralyzed with fear and thus is easily caught.

Satan, the Adversary of the Church, is strong and lion-like, vigilant and fully awake. As the Apostle Paul declares, he seeks to use every opportunity against us. He lies in wait, seeking to devour us. Although he is alert, yet he never *approaches* us with a roar, but creeps stealthily upon us in some unlooked for place or time, to devour us, to overcome us, to crush out our spiritual life, and particularly to destroy our faith in God. As those whose ears are trained to detect the footfalls of the lion will hear his steps, while those who are unfamiliar with his habits will not hear the slightest sound, so may we, whose ears the Lord has opened, and whose eyes have been anointed with the eyesalve of consecration and submission to the Lord's will, be of quick perception to recognize the approach of our arch-enemy and to resist him. Let us stand, clad in the full armor which the Word of God supplies, and in His strength wielding the Sword of the Spirit.

St. Paul shows that the most subtle attacks of the Adversary are to be expected through human agencies. Satan works in the hearts of the children of disobedience; and the more honorable they are, and the more closely identified with the Lord and His people these children of disobedience may be, the greater service they may render to the Adversary. For this reason, Satan presents himself as an angel of light, and *not* as a messenger of darkness; for well he knows that error and sin will repel the children of light.—Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4; 11:14, 15; Eph. 6:11, 12.

Satan uses various methods against those whom God is seeking and calling. As an angel of light, he has done much harm. His constant endeavor is to lead the people of God astray from the Lord and from their covenant of sacrifice. While we know that God is able so to succor His people that the Adversary could not touch them, yet His providences inform us that this is not His way. He permits Satan seemingly to gain a great triumph over the Lord and His people; but in no way does this seeming interruption affect the Divine Plan of the Ages.

By this we do not mean that God is co-operating with Satan and his evil work. God is testing His people, by permitting those conditions that make the way so narrow that only the faithful will walk perseveringly to the very end. All others will sooner or later fall out of the way.

PROPER METHOD OF RESISTANCE

The Christian's warfare is a fight of faith. St. James' statement, "Resist the Devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7), does not mean that we are to battle with him in order

to confound him. Whoever thinks that he is able to battle alone with Satan surely must possess great self-conceit, or else must overestimate his own ability and underestimate that of the Adversary. In any contention, Satan would surely gain the victory.

Malice, envy, hatred and strife, the Apostle says, are the kind of works which Satan supports and into which he endeavors to lead mankind. (Gal. 5:19-21; I John 3:8.) His methods are deceptive. His suggestions come along the line of pride and self-conceit. The mental suggestion, "You can do it; you are a person of great ability; do not be afraid; show people what is in you," has led to the downfall of many.

In order to deceive the children of light, Satan transforms himself into an angel [messenger] of light; for well he knows that he would not deceive them, if he were to present himself as a representative of sin. Ever since the fall of Adam, the Devil has sought to entrap mankind. Particularly for the past eighteen centuries, he has been endeavoring to introduce error into the Church, in order to produce false Christians—Christians who would be a detriment to the cause of Christ. Evidently he has had much to do with formulating the creeds of Christendom.

The Lord's people are to resist the Devil by not allowing his seductive arguments to have weight with us. We have the sure word of prophecy and the instructions of our Lord and of His Apostles; and if we love the Word of the Lord, we shall seek to be guided by it. "He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not."—I John 5:18.

The experience of our Lord in the Wilderness affords a good example for all the people of God to follow. He did not seek to keep up the controversy, the discussion with the Adversary; but when the evil thought was presented, He promptly resisted it. Satan was well versed in the Scriptures, portions of which he presented with a view to misleading our Lord into taking a wrong course. Jesus did not say to the Devil, "Merely because that is a Scripture, I yield to your argument." On the contrary, He immediately thought of the principle involved, and showed the Adversary wherein he was mistaken. When prophecies were quoted out of order, our Lord made very positive statements to that effect.

This course is a very good one for us to follow. If one of the Lord's people should be drawn by Satan into a discussion about some Scriptural text, and if he should recall, or if another brother should suggest, a text which would answer right to the point of discussion, he should decide, "The Scripture which tells me to 'resist the Devil' is the proper guide to my course of action. I will not stop to discuss what I do not understand." Thus he would "resist," and at the same time *rebuke* the Adversary.

St. Paul urges the Lord's people to put on the whole armor of God, that they may be able to withstand the wiles of the Devil. His statement seems to imply that none will be able to withstand Satan without Divine aid. The Apostle points out the fact that *these* are the days when the whole armor of God will be *necessary*. (Eph. 6:13-18; Rev. 3:10.) The question may be asked whether those only who are furnished with the whole armor will

be able to stand. The answer is that the Lord is supervising the affairs of His people and that He will see that all who are putting their trust in Him shall have opportunities for putting on the whole armor of God.

Many devote to frivolity the time which they could employ in putting on the armor which God has provided for His people. The Lord is so arranging the matter that such will not be able to withstand the darts of the Adversary; for He wishes none to stand in this evil day except those who are thoroughly consecrated to His will. To these He will render assistance, so that all things shall work together for good to them. His grace is sufficient to carry all through who have come to a knowledge of Him and have made a consecration to Him. This grace may be supplied through the Scriptures, through reading matter, through a service or through a hymn; but the protection will be along the lines of the Truth. When we lose the Sword of the Spirit, we lose our only protection against error.

THE LESSON OF CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S WISDOM AND LOVE

The Adversary's method of attack is well illustrated in the fall of our first parents. Mother Eve should have resisted the suggestion which came to her through the serpent—that God had forbidden that which was for their highest interest in life. She should have said, "I will not entertain such a thought; for to do so would be disloyal to my Creator." When the suggestion to eat came to Father Adam, apparently the thought came also, "You may as well join with her in the partaking of the food. It will be better to die together, for there will be no pleasure in life without her." Adam stopped to reason on the matter, but he did not have a sufficiency of knowledge to permit him to do so successfully. He should have said, "God knows; He arranged it. What He has said is enough for me. I will be true to Him, and trust the results to His Wisdom and Love."

Obedience is the lesson for us to learn from the experience of Adam and Eve. We have not a sufficiency of knowledge with which to reason on some subjects, even if our reasoning faculties were fully developed. Consequently when a suggestion of evil of any kind is made, our only proper course is to say, "No! The Lord our God has said that we must not touch it, lest we die." Mother Eve allowed reasoning to come in and thus was persuaded. We should profit by her mistake. A proper confidence in God and a recognition of our own lack of wisdom should decide us immediately. There should be *no controversy*. We should say, *No!*

Evidently God is seeking those who are in this attitude of mind. Christ and the Church have been called for this very work of bringing mankind back to perfection of character. Many times the Divine Plan may not seem to us to be the wisest course; and if we should not learn the lesson of absolute trust in the Divine Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power, we *could not* trust God in everything. The Father seeketh such to worship Him as will do so in spirit and in truth, and who have perfect confidence in Him as the One who is all-wise and all-loving to direct and guide their affairs. Those who do not learn this lesson of trust,

will not be fit for the responsibilities to be put upon the glorified Church. Let us learn this lesson and be very positive in our endeavors to be in harmony with God.

Faithfulness in trial will develop the overcomers. The Lord does not wish to have in the Little Flock any who are disloyal in any sense of the word. They may be weak in many of the essentials of character, but they are all *loyal to God*. The Lord is seeking those who will *remain loyal* under trials and difficulties, and thus develop characters pleasing to Him. These are not alarmed at Satan's onslaughts, which are seen to be an occasion for an increase of faith; for greater is He that is on our part than are all that are against us!

In Pilgrim's Progress this inability of the Wicked One to touch the faithful people of God is very beautifully pictured. While walking in the narrow way, Christian beheld two lions; and for a moment he was terror-stricken. Christian studied the situation and decided to go forward. When he came near the lions, he found that *they were chained*. So it is with our adversaries. They can do no *harm* to the children of God. Although they may roar, yet they cannot injure the *New Creature*.

The New Creature may develop even when the outer man is perishing. Satan succeeded in having the chief priests and Pharisees cause the death of our Lord; but this was the very means by which He entered into glory. In His dealings with our Lord the Father has given us an illustration of His dealings with us. So we may know that even if Satan should appear to get the victory over us, these "light afflictions" will, as we are told, "work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17.

We know that we have no power with which to oppose Satan. None is sufficient for these things except the Lord. But He is greater than are Satan and all his angels. We are looking forward with the eye of faith to the things that are unseen. So it behooves us to be steadfast, immovable, full of faith, and therefore able to meet whatever the Father permits to come upon us.

SEPTEMBER 29

Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD—Prov. 16:5.

One of the severe ordeals of the Christian is the conquering of the love of the spirit of worldliness under the leadership of pride. Worldly pride challenges faith in God and obedience to Him, and only those who are of good courage and full of confidence in the Lord can overcome this giant. It is necessary, too, that the victory should be made complete—that pride should be thoroughly humiliated, killed, so that it can never rise up again to destroy us. It is an individual battle, and the only proper armament against this giant is a stone from the brook, the message of the Lord, showing us what is pleasing and acceptable in His sight, and assuring us that he that humbles himself shall be exalted and he that exalts himself shall be abased. As the poet has expressed it:

"Where boasting ends, true dignity begins."

—Z '03, 329 (R 3230).

Pride is exaggerated self-esteem. It may manifest itself in an overweening self-respect and self-confidence as well as in self-satisfaction and self-exaltation. The one who is proud in heart loves these qualities in himself, though he invariably despises them in others. Such a spirit leads one to contempt for others. It is one of the most dangerous characteristics to a Christian. It unfits one for every good word and work. It estranges one from God, Christ and his fellows. God cannot use such for His purposes. Knowing their wicked hearts, He resists them and thrusts them aside, and when they prove incorrigible completely, He rejects and abhors them—P '32, 136.

Parallel passages: 1 Sam. 2:3; Psa. 10:2-7, 11; Prov. 3:32; 6:16-19; 11:20; 12:22; 15:8, 9, 26; 21:27; 24:9; 28:9; 29:27; Jer. 9:23, 24; 13:15; Mark 7:21, 22; 2 Tim. 3:2; Jas. 4:6; 1 John 2:16.

Hymns: 125, 95, 130, 136, 145, 183, 198.

Poems of Dawn, 299: *"Pride Goeth Before Destruction."*

Tower Reading: Z '12, 110 (R 5000).

Questions: Was I this week proud or lowly in heart? How did I become so? What were the results?

"PRIDE GOETH BEFORE DESTRUCTION"

A KING in procession had come to the town,
Riding an ass that was playing the clown:
For as people hailed and saluted their king
And started in joy his great praises to sing,
The ass made a curtsy and smiled and bowed
And sat down to salute the worshiping crowd.
The king in his rage had the ass fully stripped,

And there on the street had him publicly whipped.

Which reminds us of some that our Master has used
Who, puffed up in pride, their office abused;
And not honoring Him in all their ways,
They took to themselves His honor and praise—
But pride brings destruction, or something quite near it,
And so they were stripped of the Truth and its spirit;
For they are devoid of true wisdom, alas,
Who possess the audacity of the ass!

R5000: BEWARE OF PRIDE IN THE HEART

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord."—Prov. 16:5.

PRIDE IS VERY DECEITFUL and frequently cloaks or covers itself with humility. Because of our own imperfections it is well for us not to become *judges* of others, but merely limit our judgment to the outward manifestations. The Lord says, "By their *fruits* ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:20.) We are to judge the outward conduct, but we cannot go beyond and say what is of the *heart*. Errors of judgment are not an abomination to the Lord. He may look upon mistakes with sympathetic eyes. People are not responsible for those qualities which have come down to them by inheritance. Without judging individuals we may see certain conduct sometimes which may seem to be pride, yet is not pride.

We have seen people who have a great lack of self-esteem, a great lack of vanity, but who may have large approbateness. They do not think so much of themselves as they wish others to think of them. They say, "If people knew me as I know myself, I would simply be a cypher in the world." There is a certain amount of truth in this. People with small self-esteem are often taken to be proud, when it is really not the case. In trying to look as though they were somebody they will carry themselves as though they thought they were everybody. Such persons are simply laboring in an unfavorable condition in which they were born. We cannot think that the Lord would abominate them. They are very often little to themselves and very humble with the Lord. Yet they try to make themselves appear in as favorable a manner as possible. We must admit that there is a propriety in this to a certain extent. It is wise for them to try to overcome their weaknesses of nature. They should try to think soberly of themselves (that is, to be of sound mind), and they should try not to overdo matters. They must act with meekness, as well as feel and think meekly.

There is another class who have a large amount of self-esteem, yet who think, "I do not wish others to know that I have this high opinion of myself, therefore I will cloak it. I will endeavor to speak very humbly. The Scriptures say that we should be humble, therefore when I speak of anything I will try to speak from this standpoint." Such people very frequently get a gloss of humility of an *outward kind*. Some people really think that

this course is right. If they are sincere in their conduct, we cannot suppose that the Lord would abhor them.

Our thought, then, is that in this text "The proud in heart" are the haughty-minded—those who feel haughty toward others and are not sympathetic, who think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, who despise others. The heart of such a one is not that which God could love or that anyone could love; *it is an abomination in the Lord's sight.*

WHY PRIDE IS AN ABOMINABLE TRAIT

An abomination is that which is extremely displeasing—that which is repulsive—that which a person should not wish to entertain—should not harbor—must reprove. There *must be some reason* why God declares Himself thus in opposition to pride. We perceive that no one really has anything whereof to be proud. As the Apostle suggests in one place (I Cor. 4:7), "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" What have we that we have not received of the Lord? If whatever we have received is a gift, where is our right to be proud of it? Evidently, such would be a very wrong condition of mind to be in—to be proud of things not our own, not of ourselves, but a gift.

There is, therefore, no reason for any to be proud; but there is every reason to be thankful to the Great Giver of all good. And that which is true of us is true also of the angels. Hence, there is nothing in all the Universe for any of God's creatures to be proud of. Whatever conditions they are in are not of themselves. God seems to have arranged the conditions for humility, so that there could be *no ground* for pride.

Pride is merely selfishness, self-laudation; and selfishness is another name for sin. Sin and selfishness, therefore, are in opposition to the Divine Character and the Divine Plan—totally in opposition to it. It is, therefore, the right and proper thing that God should have the proud in detestation. Not having used His blessings aright, they could not have His favor. Whether they be proud of mental attainments, proud of physical strength, proud of wealth or ancestry, or proud that their "ancestors were monkeys," matters not. It is all pride, and an abomination to the Lord.

THE MOST DETESTABLE FORM OF PRIDE

But evidently the most detestable form of pride is *pride in the Church*—as though we had made the Plan and could boast in it! We do, indeed, see that anyone making the Plan might justly feel proud of it. But when we remember that none of us made the Plan, but that we are privileged to see it, we should be filled the more with humility, and should try day by day to better glorify His Name for the blessings which He has provided for the whole world.

We cannot suppose that any kind of pride would be more detestable in God's sight than pride of the Truth. If anyone should continue in such a course, manifestly it would

lead him out of the light. We see this principle illustrated well in the case of Satan. Noble, grand, he allowed pride to enter his heart and said, "I will ascend above the others; I will have *an empire of my own*." And this pride made him the opponent of God. (Isa. 14:12-17.) He is known in the Scriptures as the Adversary, Satan, the Devil.

All those who have the spirit of pride fail to recognize that "every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of Lights." (Jas. 1:17.) Every such one, therefore, has the spirit of the Adversary instead of the Spirit of God. If it be allowed to grow and bring forth fruit, it will lead eventually to the Second Death. It is appalling to see the nature of the temptations that come to God's people! But we are not to judge their hearts, to determine whether it is a pride of heart or not; for it may be merely a deception for a time. And even though they may miss the "high calling," they may get a place in the "great company." And when we see that the conduct is not at all in accord with what we should expect in those blessed with the Truth, it should make us all search our own hearts to see to what extent *we* have the *same traits of pride*.

Perhaps this quality of pride is nowhere more manifested than in some of those who have been in the Truth for quite a while. Sometimes it is on the part of the sisters. Sometimes they are very proud of what they know and very domineering in their manner, seeming to think that they know it all. Sometimes it is on the part of the brethren, in whom a spirit of pride appears. They have been placed as Elders. They see that they themselves are right and others are wrong. Sometimes this leads to an attempt to override the liberties of the congregation and to hold power in their own hands.

"BE NOT MANY TEACHERS"

It may not always be our privilege to mention such a matter. Such things may be matters that belong to a class. But, as one Pilgrim brother remarked some time ago, "Brother Russell, I sometimes think that, when we get beyond the veil, we shall be astonished to find how few of those who have exercised positions of prominence in the Church will be amongst the elect." It behooves us all who are associated in the Lord's work to watch ourselves closely, that if we find the slightest tendency in this direction of pride we may stamp it out as we would some contagious disease, knowing what the effects are upon others. We should be sympathetic with those who are beset, but not with the difficulty. We are reminded of the Apostle's words, "Be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." Those who have seen the Truth clearly and have some talents and opportunities will have the severer trial on that account.

Recently we have heard of some trials in the Class Extension work. The opportunities of Class Extension have resulted, in some cases, not advantageously. Some of great self-esteem have felt that they should be in the work, determining that they would tell the Class what to do. Some good brethren may have done this; some noble men may have done it. But in doing it, they were not acting wisely, we believe.

As we said at first, it is not well for us to judge the heart. Everyone is privileged to preach as he may have opportunity. He may go forth entirely at his own expense and

opportunity. He may preach all that he can. Good men have done so. There is nothing in the Scriptures to prohibit it. But to try to coerce a Class—trying to recognize the Class in some sense and to ignore that Class in another sense—is not the right thing. If the Class is supposed to express the Divine will, the individuals should acquiesce in what the Class decides.

SEPTEMBER 30

The love of Christ constraineth us—2 Cor. 5:14.

It seems impossible to describe love itself; the best we can do is to describe its conduct. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it—it is of God, Godlikeness in heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts, supervising all the human attributes and seeking fully to control them. As disciples or pupils of Christ, we are in His school; and the great lesson which He is teaching us day by day, and the lesson which we must learn thoroughly, if we would attain the mark of the prize of our calling in all its various features and ramifications, is the lesson of love. It takes hold upon and relates to all the words and thoughts and doings of our daily lives. As the poet has said:

"As every lovely hue is light—so every grace is love."

—Z '03, 55, 58 (R 3150).

By the love of Christ we may understand three things: the love that our Lord Jesus has in His heart; the love that we have in our hearts for Him; and the love that we have in our hearts like that which He has in His heart. The latter two meanings apply in this verse. Our love for Christ animates us to do and suffer. Loving Him we keep His teachings. In even a fuller sense a Christlike love for God, Jesus, the brethren, the world of mankind and our enemies prompts us in our conduct. Beautiful indeed is the heart in which such a love reigns supreme! And rich and choice blessings indeed does it receive and bestow unto God's glory!—P '26, 126.

Parallel passages: John 14:15, 21, 23, 28; 15:9; Rom. 5:5; 8:28; 1 Cor. 8:3; Gal. 5:6, 22; Eph. 3:17-19; Phil. 1:9; Col. 3:14; 2 Thes. 3:5; Heb. 6:10; 1 John 2:5, 15; 3:16-18; 4:12, 16-21; 5:1-3; 2 John 6.

Hymns: 165, 166, 201, 95, 198, 196, 113.

Poems of Dawn, 223: *My Beautiful Secret*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 182 (R 4836).

Questions: What has the love of Christ constrained me to do this week? How? What were the results?

MY BEAUTIFUL SECRET

I HAVE learned a beautiful secret,
I know not how nor where—
But I know it is sweet and precious,
And true, and glad, and fair;
And that God in heaven reveals it
To all that have ears to hear.

And I know that ere I learned it,
My way was weary and hard;
And somewhere in life's music
There was always that which jarred—
A hidden and dreary discord,
That all its sweetness marred.

But my harp of life was lifted
By One who knew the range
Of its many strings—for He made it,
And He struck a keynote strange;
And beneath the touch of the Master
I heard the music change.

No longer it failed and faltered;
No long sobbed and strove;
But it seemed to soar and mingle
With the song of heaven above;
For the pierced hand of the Master
Had struck the keynote—Love.

Thy heart's long-prisoned music
Let the Master's hand set free!
Let Him whisper His beautiful secret
To thee, as He hath to me:
"My Love is the Golden Keynote
Of all My will for thee."

R4836: THE WORK OF GRACE IN THE HEART

"The love of Christ constraineth us."—2 Cor. 5:14.

THE WORD *constrain* has the double thought of drawing together, holding together. The Apostle had been recounting his own activities in the Lord's service, and had stated that with some his course seemed to indicate an unbalanced mind. He explained that this was not so; that he had a sounder mind than ever before. He felt himself bound to Christ, constrained by love of Christ to love Him and all who were His with a pure heart.

Why should this love *constrain*? For this reason: If we reckon that all are dead, then all need the service of the Life-Giver; and if Christ died for all, and if we now have come to life through Him, we should hereafter live not according to, or after, the flesh. We should give up the flesh entirely and live the new life which we have received from Christ. St. Paul would say, I am not mad; but I am so closely drawn to Christ that I have the same sympathetic love for others that He had. As He had laid down His life for the brethren, so would I.

Our Lord's love was specially manifested toward His disciples, and chiefly toward those who were the most zealous and energetic—Peter, James and John having the particular love of the Lord. Similarly the Church is thus instructed. There is no exhortation to lay down our lives in the service of the world, but specially for those of the household of faith. We see that the benefits of Christ's sacrifice are to reach the whole world of mankind, every member of Adam's race.

Assuming, however, that the Lord knew from the very beginning who would betray Him, and that Divine discernment would know all who would go into the Second Death, we could not think that the Lord would do anything on their behalf. In other words, the blessing of God is only for the "Israelites indeed." Only those who will come into harmony with Him will have the rich blessing and favor of the Lord. These are included in the redemptive work, not because of anything in themselves, but because of the love of the Lord, which is broad enough and deep enough for all who will receive it. But God cannot love wicked characters. His blessings are only for those who are His children now, or who *will be*, under the blessings and privileges which He later on will grant. It is our duty to bless all to the extent of our ability.

THE CHIEF OBJECT OF OUR TRAINING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOVE

The work of grace for the Church during this Gospel Age is the transforming of our perverted characters and the re-establishing of them in the likeness of the Divine character, *Love*. Whoever fails to attain this transformation fails to attain God's will concerning him, and must, necessarily, fail to win the prize set before us in the Gospel. We are, to begin with, very poor material out of which to form likenesses of God's dear Son. We were "children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. 2:3.) The original likeness of God, possessed by Father Adam before he transgressed, has been sadly lost in the six thousand years intervening. Hence, instead of finding ourselves in the Divine likeness of love, we find that we were "born in sin and shapen in iniquity" to such a degree that instead of love being the natural, ruling principle in our characters, it is in many instances almost entirely obliterated; and what remains is largely contaminated with evil, self-love and carnal love—perversions which are in direct antagonism with the wholly unselfish love which is the essence of the Divine character.

"This is life eternal, that they might *know Thee*, the only true God"—the God who is Love. (John 17:3.) To *know God* means more than to know something of His loving Plan and character; it means to know God in the sense of *personal acquaintance* and intelligent appreciation of His character; and no one can have this except as he partakes of the Spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of love. And this spirit of holiness and love cannot be acquired instantly; it is a growth; and its development is the *chief business* (and *should be the chief concern*) of all who hope to know God in the complete sense which will be rewarded with life eternal.

But since our transformation of mind or will is not accompanied by a physical transformation, or restitution, it follows that so long as we are in the flesh we shall have to contend against its inherited weaknesses and disposition to selfishness and sin. But this sharp and continual conflict not only selects a special, overcoming class, but serves to develop the desired character more quickly than will the more easy processes of the Millennial Age. In consequence, while it will require nearly a thousand years for the world's perfecting, the perfecting of the saints in character may be accomplished in a few years, under the special training of sharp discipline and the special course of instruction designed for the "little flock." But whether in a few years or many years, and whether with little or much friction with adversity, *the transformation and polishing of character must be accomplished*. This *love-likeness* of our wills to the will of God is *the end to be sought*, if we would finish our course with joy and with good hopes for the eternal glory.

WE MUST LEARN THOROUGHLY THE LESSON OF LOVE

If we possess the love of God in our hearts it will rule all the affairs of our lives and will make us God-like in thoughts, actions and words. In the School of Christ, the great lesson which the Master is teaching us day by day is the lesson of *love*, which we must learn thoroughly if we would attain "the mark for the prize of our high calling."

In the School of Christ, all the instructions of the Divine Word and providences are intended to develop our hearts and influence our conduct in harmony with the lines of *love*. While the fruits and graces—meekness, gentleness, patience, etc.—are manifestations of the Spirit, yet the Holy Spirit must be present before these manifestations could appear at all; and while the *spirit* might be perfect, its manifestations might be imperfect. The vine may be good, but for a season the grapes will be immature. So with these graces of the Spirit. They are outward manifestations of the inward condition of the *heart*, which may attain perfection before these graces are perfect. Indeed, these graces may never be perfect on this side of the veil.

At the moment of making consecration, before we had borne any fruits of the Spirit, we were not at the mark of perfect love. We were consecrated and had the right spirit, so far as we had knowledge. But we had not a sufficiency of knowledge to recognize what would be expected of us. For this we needed some development, some instruction in the School of Christ. The knowledge of what it would cost to follow Christ came gradually. If the will kept up with the knowledge, one would reach the mark of perfect love in the heart. The manifestations of the graces of character which this condition of heart produces may never be fully perfect in the present life, but only when we have the perfect bodies. The heart which shall have reached this condition will be in perfect tune with the conditions which will obtain on the other side.

"BY THEIR FRUITS SHALL YE KNOW THEM"; YET PERFECTION IN THE FLESH IS IMPOSSIBLE

We must recognize each other, in the good professions which we make to each other and in the evidences of these professions which are manifest. As a gardener might go to

his vine and look through the different branches for grapes, so the Lord knows whether the heart is in the proper attitude to bring forth fruit. Of those who have openly professed a thorough consecration to the Lord, all those whose lives do not contradict their profession, and who are walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, may be known and recognized by us in the same way by which they will recognize us. "By their fruits we shall know them"—by the outward obedience, but not by the full fruit-development. We know each other, therefore, not by the full development of the fruits, but by the measure of the obedience and striving to obey the Lord.

Absolute perfection would mean perfection of thought, word and deed, which is not our condition at the present time. The most that any of us can have now is perfection of love in our hearts; that is, a perfect love for God, for the Truth and for the brethren. Perfect love leads to sacrifice. "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." (John 14:15.) Those who have perfect love will fulfil their sacrifices. But at any time one may pass from the stage of perfect love to that of alienation and opposition. The person might come into such a condition of heart that the fervency of his love would become cool. Gradually he would become estranged from the Lord, and might become identified with the "great company" class. Then, if the chastisements of the Time of Trouble did not lead to a thorough reformation, he would pass on to the Second Death.

After Love's provision of the Lamb of God (the Ransom-price for all mankind laid down by Him, and the imputation of His merit to the Church, all the various steps for our deliverance from sin are along the line of developing us in the character of *love*, the character of God, which alone, according to the Divine standard, will make us acceptable before the Father and bring to us His grace of everlasting life. How important, then, that we should be "taught of God" and develop this character!

The work of grace for the world, during the Millennial Age, will be to make known to all mankind the gracious character of God and His provision for the salvation of all; and to transform all who are willing, from the depravity of sin to perfection of character—Love; making mankind once more images of God. This transformation of their wills, accompanied by a gradual physical transformation, will remove from them all the blemishes of sin and all hereditary inclinations thereto and leave them in the likeness of God, with a recollection of the undesirability of sin and its evil consequences.

OCTOBER 1

I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me—Psa. 39:1.

Probably every person of experience will fully agree with the statement that the tongue is potent in its influence beyond any other member of the body, for either good or evil. Experience teaches also that with the vast majority it is easier to control any other organ than the tongue. So skillful a servant is it that every ambition and passion and inclination of the fallen nature seeks to use it as a servant or channel for evil. It requires, therefore, on the part of the Christian, increased vigilance, wisdom and care so as to govern this member of his body and bring it into subjection to the new mind in Christ, that it shall be, not a hindrance to himself or to others, but, on the contrary, a help in our narrow way—Z '97, 156 (R 2156).

Those who lack secretiveness are liable to sin with their tongues, uttering things unjust to God, themselves or others. Even those who have a large degree of secretiveness are not wholly free from this wrong. For both classes, especially the former, it is necessary to take heed to their dispositions, thoughts, motives, words, acts, surroundings and the influences operating upon them, in order to say the right thing and to avoid saying the wrong thing. God's people at all times must seek to control their tongues; and especially must they do this when in the presence of the wicked, who will pervert their words with selfish intent and wicked design, as all history proves—P '36, 110.

Parallel passages: Psa. 10:7; 12:3, 4; 15:1-3; 37:30; 141:3; 34:13; Job 38:2; 16:5; 27:4; Prov. 10:11, 13, 19-21, 31, 32; 11:12-14; 12:14-23; 13:2, 3; 14:3; 15:1, 2, 4, 7, 14, 23, 26, 28; 16:21-24; 17:7, 27, 28; 18:6, 7, 13; 29:11, 20; Eccles. 5:3, 7; Amos 5:13; Zech. 8:16; Matt. 12:37; Luke 6:45; Eph. 4:22, 25, 29; Col. 4:6; Jas. 1:19, 26; 3:2, 13; Rev. 14:5.

Hymns: 183, 130, 277, 150, 1, 116, 260.

Poems of Dawn, 273: *Three Gates of Gold*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 126 (R 4804).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? What were the circumstances? What were the results?

"THREE GATES OF GOLD"

LET every thought thy lips would utter pass three
gates of gold,—
But, if through these it fails to pass, then let it not
be told;
And o'er each gate in silver letters written thou wilt
find,
Above the first one, "Is it *true?*" the second, "Is it *kind?*"
And "Is it *necessary?*" o'er the third one and the

last.
Then guard thy thoughts, let none escape, save those
these gates have passed!

R4804: SIN NOT WITH YOUR TONGUE

"I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me."—Psa. 39:1.

OUR general *thoughts* have much to do with our *language*, our general conversation. Whoever, therefore, possesses a proper control of his *heart*, will govern himself in every sense of the word. If our ways please the Lord, if our ways are ways of righteousness, then out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak to the edification of the hearer. The ways being right, the utterances will be right. People generally love themselves and avoid saying anything bitter, unkind, about themselves. But the man who hates his neighbors will have very little difficulty in saying something bitter or unkind of them.

Though the tongue is one of the most useful members, yet it is necessary to put a bridle, a restraint, a controlling influence upon it. With the tongue we may honor our God or we may blaspheme him. When in the presence of the wicked, we need to be still more on guard than with the righteous; for with the former the tendencies and thoughts are toward evil. When with the wicked or in their presence we are in contact with a degrading influence. At such times, some of sympathetic disposition may find special difficulty in bridling their tongues; but it is better to do so than to speak of even good things to the wicked, as we would feel at liberty to do with the righteous. The Lord has suggested, "Cast not your pearls before swine, ... lest they turn again and rend you."

Besides the evilly inclined of the world there is another class Scripturally called the wicked; namely, people who have a knowledge of the Lord, but who take their stand in opposition to him. Judas was of this class. So there are about us those who are in an adverse attitude. None seem to be so cynical as those who have been partakers of the Holy Spirit, but who have turned their backs upon "the Way, the Truth and the Life." Such seem to be more wicked than others in that they are in a more reprehensible attitude. No matter how careful we are, these will distort our words and assert that we have said something that we have not said.

The warning of the Scriptures is not against the tongue itself, but against the *power we exercise against others* by the use of our tongues. Probably every person of experience will fully agree with the statement that the tongue is potent in its influence beyond any other member of the body, for either good or evil.

**THE TONGUE OFTEN A POWER FOR EVIL AMONG THE
LORD'S PEOPLE**

As the bit in the horse's mouth will control his strength; and as the small rudder of a vessel will direct its course; so the tongue, and the pen, its representative, may influence large numbers of people for good or ill. How important, therefore, is the tongue! And how much more frequently do we find it employed as an agency for evil than for good; to pull down rather than to build up the faith; to implant seeds of discord and discontent rather than those which will produce righteousness and peace! While this is specially true in the worldly, it is also true among God's people; and each should remember that to some extent he is a teacher, and day by day is either forwarding or hindering the cause of truth, righteousness and peace.

In the unregenerate world the tongue is a "fire" causing no end of burning of wrath, envy, hatred, strife and everything that defiles the entire body, stimulating all the fallen passions and desires. No wonder the Apostle declares that, figuratively, the tongue is set on fire of *gehenna*—the Second Death. Its burning tends to bring, not only its owner, but others to destruction.

As imperfect beings we may not always be perfect in word and deed. Despite our best endeavors we sometimes err in word as well as in deed; *yet the perfect mastery of our words and our ways* is to be sought by *vigilant and faithful effort*. But, nevertheless, for *every idle word* we must give an account in this *our* day of Judgment.

WE SHOULD DAILY RENDER OUR ACCOUNTS

If, in the daily scrutiny of our ways, which is the duty of every Christian, we discover that our words have in any way been dishonoring to the Lord, we should remember that, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous" (I John 2:1); and in the name of our Advocate we may approach the throne of grace. There we may explain to our Heavenly Father our realization of our error, our deep regret at our failure to honor his name and his cause by a holy walk and conversation, and humbly request that the sin be not laid to our charge; but that it may be blotted out by his gracious provision for our cleansing, through Christ, humbly acknowledging that in his precious blood is all our hope and trust.

Thus we should render up our account for every idle word; and by our words of repentance, supplemented by the merit of Christ applied by faith, shall we be acquitted. Otherwise, the idle words dishonoring to the Lord, will stand against us and condemn us, and we shall be obliged to suffer the consequences. The first consequence will be *self-injury*, for every evil thought or word indulged hardens the character and inclines it the more toward unrighteousness. The second consequence is that by setting a bad example to others we stir up evil in them. "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger." (Prov. 15:1.) Thus, as the result of unwise or unkind words, we may stir up about us difficulties which will become agents of retributive Justice to teach us the lesson of self-control and consideration for the feelings and opinions of others.

It is often the case that the Lord (or the Devil) is blamed for sending trials, which are simply the natural results of our own mistakes. Those who fail to locate the root of the

matter (*in themselves*) pray in vain for the Lord to remove miraculously what they themselves could obviate by obedience to the Word and vigorous self-discipline. "If we would judge [and correct] ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord [largely by the experiences through which our own faults put us], that we should not be condemned with the world."—I Cor. 11:31, 32.

THE TENDENCY OF FALLEN NATURE IS TO BLAME OTHERS RATHER THAN OURSELVES

But even should it be admitted that the difficulties are not directly caused by God or by the Devil ("Every man is tempted [tried] when he is drawn away by his own lusts [desires] and enticed"), the natural tendency is to blame some one else, and to think that our lack of patience, our hasty word or act, was the fault of another. How many deceive and encourage themselves with the thought, "If everybody else had as reasonable and generous a nature as I have, our family or Church gathering or community would be a veritable heaven upon earth!" Beloved, let us examine *ourselves*, let us be very humble lest the thoughts of self-congratulation and self-satisfaction which we may consider in our hearts, even if we do not utter them aloud, bring our condemnation.

"If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye [what merit is there in it]? (Luke 6:32, 33.) It is only when we "endure grief, *suffering wrongfully*," that our suffering is acceptable to God as a sacrifice of sweet incense. "What glory is it if, *when ye be buffeted for your faults*, ye take it patiently? but if, *when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently*, this is acceptable to God; for even *hereunto were ye called*." (I Pet. 2:19-21.) Beloved, let us see to it that *our sufferings* are for *righteousness' sake only*, and let us not charge God or our neighbors for tribulations resulting from the indulgence of our own inherited or cultivated faults.

In view of the fact that we *now* stand before the bar of Judgment, which, if we are truly the Lord's people, we will endeavor more and more fully to realize, "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" (2 Pet. 3:11.) Godlikeness certainly cannot include any harmful gossip, any unclean or unholy conversation, any disloyal or rebellious words. Let us remember daily to settle our accounts with the Lord, to make sure that no record of idle words not repented of, and, consequently, unforgiven, stands against us. "Let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ."

HOLY THOUGHTS PRODUCE HOLY WORDS

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, *think on these things*." (Phil. 1:27; 4:8.) Thus out of the good treasure of the heart we shall speak the words of truth and soberness, and honor our Lord by a godly walk and conversation, subduing the tendencies of our fallen nature, and "having our conversation honest among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you

as evil-doers, they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."—I Pet. 2:12.

If daily we render up our accounts to God and seek his grace for greater *overcoming power* with each succeeding day, we shall be acquitted in judgment and stand approved before God, through Christ, having the testimony of his Holy Spirit with our spirits that we are pleasing and acceptable to him. So, dear brethren, let us "take heed to our ways, that we sin not with our tongues." (Psa. 39:1.) There is nothing that is of so powerful an influence as the tongue. The influence of a good word, a good thought, may become world-wide; an evil thought, an evil word, may also extend *its* influence to the end of the world.

OCTOBER 2

Forgetting those things which are behind—Phil. 3:13.

We forget the things that are behind, because it is right that we should do so; because God forgets them and declares that He has cast all of our imperfections behind His back, that our imperfections are all covered from His sight, by the merit of Him who loved us and who died for us, and whom we love, and in whom we are trusting, and in whose steps we are seeking to walk, though having more or less of imperfection according to the defects we have inherited in the flesh. We are not meaning to suggest that slips or failures should be lightly esteemed or quickly forgotten; they should be rectified to the extent of our ability, and Divine forgiveness should be sought for these defects daily—Z '04, 23 (R 3304).

The things that are behind include the things given up in justification, *i.e.*, sin and error, and more especially the things given up in consecration, *i.e.*, the things of self and the world. To forget these things implies the detachment of our affections from them, suppressing their efforts to control us and presenting an impenetrable heart and mind to their enticements. Not only a consideration of their small value, unsatisfactoriness and danger to the new heart and mind, but also more especially of the great value, satisfactoriness and safety to the new heart and mind of the spiritual things, will enable us to forget them. Let the latter things so fill our affections that the former will have no appealing effect upon us—P '30, 165-166.

Parallel passages: Prov. 4:25; 17:25, 26; Matt. 10:37-39; John 12:25; Psa. 45:10; Gen. 19:26; 24:58-61; Luke 9:62; 17:32, 33; Gal. 4:9; Phil. 3:7, 8; Heb. 10:39; 12:1; 1 Pet. 1:14; 4:1-4; 2 Pet. 1:9.

Hymns: 312, 192, 193, 88, 150, 47, 127.
Poems of Dawn, 179: *Beyond the Shadows*.
Tower Reading: Z '12, 193 (R 5044).

Questions: Have I been forgetting the things of sin, error, selfishness and worldliness this week? What has helped or hindered therein? What have been the results?

BEYOND THE SHADOWS

FARTHER on—beyond the shadows
Falling darkly o'er my way,
There is home, and rest and shelter,
Where no storms can e'er dismay.

Though the way be rough and narrow,
And a cross must needs be borne,
Farther on—the night is waning
Soon will dawn the welcome morn.

Meekly to His will submitting,
In His love secure and strong,
Jesus whispers, "Bide the shadows,
It is better farther on."

Farther on—O blest assurance!
How it thrills my raptured heart,
Just to know that I shall see Him
When the shadows all depart.

Let me still be strong and patient,
Trusting where I cannot trace,
Farther on—beyond all darkness
Faith can see God's smiling face.

Only waiting, ever praying,
Let my heart be filled with song.
Sweet the promise Jesus gives me,
"It is better farther on."

R5044: "THIS ONE THING I DO"

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."—1 Cor. 2:2.

THE TALENTED APOSTLE PAUL gives in another place his testimony as to the wisdom of shaking off some of our plans and arrangements and of relaxing our efforts in various directions in order to concentrate our energies upon those things which we can best bring to perfection, saying, "This *one thing* I do." (Phil. 3:13.) The Apostle's one business in life was to be, so far as he was able, acceptable to the Lord, personally, and to do with his might what he could to assist others into the same condition.

In harmony with this, the thought of our text seems to be that whatever the Apostle knew respecting other matters prominent in his day—customs of the Age, scientific questions, etc.—he would ignore. He would be a *specialist*. He would confine his thoughts, words and teachings along this *one line*; for he thought it was *worthy*. He had been at Corinth as an ambassador of Christ. He was not there to air his knowledge, but to tell the *message of the Kingdom*. He would make preaching the Gospel his one business, to accomplish which he felt that all of his knowledge and energy were too little.

The Apostle did not determine to ignore all of his knowledge without having a good reason, or purpose therefor. It was because he wished to concentrate all of his attention and influence upon one great subject. That subject was Jesus Christ, Jesus the Anointed; Jesus the Messiah was the main thought of all his preaching. He realized that the great

Messiah was a part of the Divine Program which had been promised—the "Seed" which was to bless all the families of the earth; that Jesus was that great Messiah, and that all men should recognize Him, should flock to His standard.

But St. Paul would preach, not only that Jesus was the Messiah, but that He was the *crucified* Messiah, for he would not be ashamed of the Divine teaching. He would preach that God sent forth His Son; and that the Son had left the glory He had with the Father, had lived on the earth, and had "died, the Just for the unjust," for this very purpose—that He might manifest His obedience to the Divine arrangement. In thus preaching Christ and His crucifixion, the Apostle was not ignoring the fact that there was to be a Church; Jesus was the Anointed Head over His Body, the Church. Hence, in preaching Jesus the Anointed One, St. Paul was showing how the Divine Plan was being outworked under Divine supervision, and what the glorious results would be. To these things he had determined that all his time and attention should go.

How evident it is that today many ministers have lost something possessed by the Apostle, who thus recognized the importance of the Gospel of Christ! This loss very largely accounts for the various peculiar topics advertised for religious meetings; sometimes the topic is politics; sometimes temperance; sometimes woman-suffrage. The reason for this change from the old-time style of preaching is that during the Dark Ages the Gospel became perverted, misrepresented; and that now people are ashamed of what was formerly preached—"Be *good* and go to *heaven*; be *bad* and go to *hell*!" It is not a *great* message. We cannot wonder that an astute mind grasps the whole thing in a few minutes. We are rather glad, indeed, that ministers are ashamed to preach what their creeds profess, and that, therefore, their creeds must be kept in the background.

"NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST"

For us, however, who see the importance of the Gospel, the case is different. We know that this Gospel of the Kingdom, of which the Apostle was not ashamed, teaches that the elect Church is to be the Bride of Christ; that Messiah is to bless the whole world; that Jesus is the Messiah; that He was crucified, dead, buried, raised from the dead by His Father; that His crucifixion was a part of the great Divine Plan, and that without this very arrangement no salvation could be effected, either for the Church, or for the world in the future. Therefore, as the Apostle did, we are preaching Jesus, the Crucified One, who died for our sins, who rose again for our justification, and who, coming in glory with His Church, is the great Messiah, to bless the world through natural Israel.

Because we have found the Truth we, like St. Paul, feel constrained to preach nothing but this Message. The same truth that influenced Him should influence us. If, therefore, any of the brethren feel disposed to go out after the manner of Babylon and preach something else, here is the *reproof*—"Not ... *anything* save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." This is the *only subject*. St. Paul would be as though he *knew nothing else*. This subject would be the *one* thing to which he would give his time and attention. Let it be so with us!

Beloved, as you value the glorious hope set before you, we beseech you that you give no heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, as the Apostle terms them (I Tim. 4:1); but that with fixedness of purpose you apply yourselves to the one thing to which you are called, and which as prospective heirs of Messiah's Kingdom you are privileged to do. Let us not forget that we are a "peculiar people," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions, and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into His marvelous light. Thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the spirit of the world, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us!

We expect such opposition; and we know that it will continue until our course has been finished in death. If we endure hardness as good soldiers for the Truth's sake, no matter how that hardness may come, in our efforts to do the Lord's will and to advance the interests of His Kingdom, then we are presenting our bodies as living sacrifices in the Divine service. To be really in His service includes both the careful and continual study of God's Plan, and the imbibing of its spirit, leading to an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment, and to activity to the extent of ability in its service, whatever the cost or sacrifice it may require.

If faithful in this service we have neither time nor disposition to give heed to other themes having no bearing on the *one thing* to which we have solemnly dedicated our lives. If we have consecrated all to *God* our time is not *our own*; and consequently we have none to spare for the investigation of theories built upon any other foundation than that laid down in the Bible. Nor have we time to devote to the ideas and pursuits which engross the world's attention, many of which are harmless or even elevating in themselves, but which would be harmful and degrading to us if we allow them to occupy consecrated time and to divert our attention from the *one thing* we ought to be doing.

The Apostle warns us to "Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness"; but counsels, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth"; "*Teach no other doctrine*, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith."—2 Tim. 2:16, 15; I Tim. 1:3, 4.

HOW NARROW THIS WAY!

Is not this a very narrow way? Yes, so narrow that our Lord foretold respecting it, "Strait [difficult] is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto [*the*] life, and *few* there be that *find it!*" (Matt. 7:14.) It is so narrow that it is wide enough to admit only the Lord's Plan and those who are willing to discard all other plans, projects and questionings, and to devote themselves fully to its service; and who are quite willing to bear any reproach it may bring.

Are you endeavoring from day to day to vindicate the Divine character and to make known God's righteous ways? Are you diligently studying to make yourself thoroughly

familiar with the Truth, so that you may indeed be a living epistle known and read of all men within the circle of your influence? Are you indeed a workman that need not be ashamed (2 Tim. 2:15)? Are you of those who have really given themselves to the Lord, saying truthfully to Him:

"Take myself—I will to be
Ever, only, all for Thee"?

If so, you are just narrow minded enough to say, "This *one thing* I do; and I make everything else bend to this one thing of showing forth God's praises and of helping others into His marvelous light; and to this end I cultivate and use what talents I possess as a wise steward of my Heavenly Father."

Dearly beloved, *we* impose neither vows nor bondage upon each other, but the *call* has its own limitations; the Master has directed us to teach all nations (for the Gospel is no longer confined to the Jewish nation), not astronomy nor geology nor any of the vain philosophies about which the world speculate, but—"*Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*"—Matt. 28:20.

This is what the Apostle Paul did. Hear him in his zeal for this *one thing* to which he had devoted his life: "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with the excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the mystery of God; for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. [I *riveted* your attention on this one thing! I kept this one thing continually before you.] ... And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power [of the Truth], that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—I Cor. 2:1-5.

St. Paul was an outspoken, uncompromising teacher. When he *knew* that he had the Truth, he spoke it with confidence, and boldly declared that everything contrary to it is *false doctrine*. He also taught believers that it was not only their privilege, but their duty to be *established* in the faith, to know on the evidence of God's Word, *why* they believed, and to be able to give to every man that inquired a reason for the hope that was in them.

Let it be so with us also. Each consecrated believer should ask himself, "How carefully have I studied that which I recognize as Divine Truth? How fully capable am I of handling the Sword of the Spirit?" Few indeed are those who can say they have fully digested and assimilated all they have received; and that they have let none of these things slip from memory; that they have so treasured it up in their hearts that it is their meditation by day and by night; that they have a ready answer—a "Thus saith the Lord"—for every man that asks them a reason for the hope that is in them, concerning any point of doctrine; that they can clearly and intelligently portray the Divine Plan, quote the Divine authority for each successive step of it, and, if need be, point out its place in the Divine system of types. To gain such proficiency in the Word is the work of a lifetime; but every day should see a closer approximation to that proficiency, and will if we are faithful students and faithful servants of the Truth.

If all the consecrated were thus busily engaged in putting on the armor of God, and in proving it by actual use in zealous endeavor to herald the Truth and to help others to stand, there would be no time left for even good temperance reform work, nor for work among the slums of the great cities, nor for the doctrine of healing, nor any such things. We have no consecrated time for these matters, which are only side issues and not harmful in themselves, except as they divert attention and consume time which has been consecrated to another and higher use. All these works will be effectually accomplished in the "Times of Restitution" (Acts 3:19-22), now in the near future. Besides, there are others engaged in these works; we recognize and seek to accomplish the work set before *us* in the Divine Plan.

In all the history of the Church there has never been a time in which the great Adversary has been so active in diverting attention from the Truth by introducing unprofitable and irrelevant questions as at present. Just now, when the exaltation and glory of the Church are soon to be accomplished, and when the faithful are about to be received into the joy of their Lord, Satan is resorting to every device in order to beguile them of their reward and to frustrate this feature of the Divine Plan.

But really to frustrate any part of the Divine Plan is impossible. God has purposed to take out from among men a "little flock," "a people for His name"; and such a company is assuredly being gathered. Yet whether all those now in the race for the prize will surely be of that company, is still an open question. Take heed, beloved, that no man take *thy* crown. (Rev. 3:11.) If any come short of their privileges and prove unworthy of the rich inheritance, there are others who will quickly fill their places.

Our observation of those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than this "Gospel of the Kingdom" to engross time and attention, leads us to advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the Gospel, leaving all subjects outside of this, however interesting they may be, to those who prefer to devote time to them now; and to the future life for ourselves, when all knowledge shall be ours. We have invariably observed that those who, for any avoidable cause, have turned aside from the true and only Gospel, are quickly turned out of the way or greatly hindered in their course toward the "prize" of our "high calling."

May we, dear brethren, be able truthfully to express our position in the words of the Apostle: "This *one thing* I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"; "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."—Phil. 3:13, 14; I Cor. 2:2.

OCTOBER 3

Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them—Psa. 119:165.

Our requests should be, increasingly, for grace and wisdom and the fruits of the Spirit and opportunities for serving the Lord and the brethren, and for growing more and more into the likeness of God's dear Son. ... Under these conditions who can doubt that the promised "peace of God beyond all understanding" would "guard" such "hearts" and their "thoughts"? This peace would of itself dispel one of the great evils that afflict the hearts of many. Selfishness and ambition would find little room in a heart so filled. Divine peace can dwell in our hearts, and rule in them, so as to keep out the worry and turmoil of the world, even when we are surrounded by these disadvantageous conditions—even when the Adversary himself is besetting us through deceived agents—Z '04, 24 (R 3304).

God's law for His consecrated people consists of duty love and disinterested love. Thus it embraces the precepts of the Word. But many Scriptures use it in a much wider sense, *i.e.*, to mean also the doctrines, promises, exhortations, prophecies, histories and types of the Word, *i.e.*, the contents of the whole Bible. In the widest sense of the word, to delight in the Lord's law means to take keen pleasure in its meditation, spread and practice. Lovers of God's law, knowing that all things are working together for their and humanity's ultimate good unto the Lord's glory, have rest of heart and mind. Amid trials these are kept from falling from God's favor, and thus retain it through the help of the Lord's Word and providence—P '35, 131.

Parallel passages: Psa. 4:8; 25:12, 13; 29:11; Prov. 3:17, 24; Isa. 26:3, 12; 28:12; 32:2; 54:10, 13; 57:1, 2, 19; Luke 2:14; John 14:27; Rom. 5:1; 8:6; Eph. 2:14-17; Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15.

Hymns: 128, 3, 27, 56, 57, 93, 244.
Poems of Dawn, 213: *Doubt Him Not*.
Tower Reading: Z '11, 397 (R 4898).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? What were the circumstances? What was helpful and hindering therein? In what did they result?

DOUBT HIM NOT

FIGHTING, waiting, struggling, trusting,
Is He sure to bless?
Prophets, fathers, martyrs, Christians,
Answer, Yes!

Fearest sometimes that thy Father
Hath forgot?

Though the clouds around thee gather,
Doubt Him not!

Always hath the daylight broken,
Always hath He comfort spoken!
Better hath He been for years,
Than thy fears.

R4898: THE PEACE OF GOD

"The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." "Great peace have they which love Thy Law: and nothing shall offend them."—Phil. 4:7; Psa. 119:165.

GOD'S LAW represents God's will. All who are right minded, rightly disposed, will rejoice in having God's will well done. Originally, God's will was written in man's nature. After sin had effaced it there, God wrote it upon tables of stone for Israel. It is the righteousness of this Law that Christians obey (the Divine regulations, the Divine requirements, whatever they may be) so far as possible. We delight to do God's will.

To love God's Law, then, would be to appreciate the fact that God has a great purpose; to take delight in finding out what God's will is; and to have full confidence in His Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power. Great peace have all those who so do. They do not understand every dealing of Divine Justice, but their faith holds to the fact that He is too wise to err. Thus they have peace in confiding their interests to Him.

In this text the Apostle differentiates between the mind and the heart. The heart represents the affections. The Apostle urges not only that we should have good feelings in the matter, but that our minds should be at rest. If after we have made a consecration of ourselves to the Lord we should do something to violate our conscience in some respect, we would feel estranged from Him. Then our hearts should know that we might draw near to the Lord again; and we should endeavor by prayer to get back into harmony with God and thus to effect a reconciliation. Our Lord has made provision on our behalf, that we should have an Advocate with the Father. (I John 2:1.) He who appeared in the presence of God for us at first is the same One who ever liveth to make intercession for us. So we come to the Lord through the arrangement which He has made; and we rejoice that we may obtain forgiveness and grace to help in time of need.

The text does not refer to our own peace, but to the peace of God, the peace which comes to us through a realization of God's power, of His goodness and willingness to hold us by His right hand as His children. This peace stands guard continually, as a sentinel, to challenge every hostile or worrying thought or fear. It so keeps the Christian's mind that he at heart has peace with the Lord, fellowship, communion; and it guards his mind also, his reasoning faculties, instructing him and assuring him respecting the Divine power, wisdom and love.

We should make request increasingly for grace and wisdom and the fruits of the Spirit, for opportunities for serving the Lord and the brethren, and for growing more and more into the likeness of God's dear Son. Under these conditions the promised "peace which passeth all understanding" will guard our hearts and our thoughts. Selfishness and ambition would find little room in hearts so filled. Even when in "deep waters" Divine peace can dwell in our hearts and keep them.

The Apostle's thought seems to be that those whom he addresses have come into harmony with God through acceptance of His terms. Turning from all opposition, they have become the children of God through faith, obedience, self-sacrifice and consecration to death. The Apostle urges that God's peace should be in these and should continue. They should be guarded by that peace. The expression, "through Christ Jesus," suggests that, as we entered into this peace through our great Advocate, so we can continue in this peace only by His continuing to be our Advocate; otherwise, through imperfections of the flesh, we would get out of harmony continually.

"Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:16.) Thus as we come daily and say, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," we abide in the peace; for we have this great Advocate. Therefore, this peace abides—a continuing supply of grace through the great Advocate.

OCTOBER 4

Jesus saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men—Matt. 4:19.

All of life's affairs will teach us lessons profitable throughout its future, if we will receive them. Perhaps there was something peculiarly helpful in the fishing business—something peculiarly like the great work in which the Apostles were to engage the remainder of their lives. Our Lord intimates this in His call. Fishing requires energy, tact, proper bait and that the fisherman keep himself out of sight. And these four things are requisites in the spiritual fishing in which the Lord privileges us to engage. We are to remember that as fish are easily alarmed when they find that anyone wishes to take them, so humanity is shy of being captured by anything, especially if they have the least suspicion that they may lose their liberties; and thus consecration appears to the world—Z '04, 26, 27 (R 3307).

As fishermen, we must be watchful, active, temperate, persevering, self-oblivious, tactful and lovers of symbolic fish and fishing. We must be equipped with proper language, the Truth, knowledge of human nature, versatility and imperviousness to disagreeable surroundings. We must seek to "catch men" at all seasons, inside and outside the churches. We must use the hooks of justification and consecration, and the bait of such truths as will appeal to the taste of the symbolic fish. Great care must be exercised as to how we cast in the hooks and lines, and as to how we act before and during bites as well as in drawing the symbolic fish in and in stringing them, if we would "catch men" for the Lord—P '34, 143.

Parallel passages: Ex. 28:1; 1 Sam. 3:4-10; 1 Chron. 23:13; Isa. 6:8-10; Matt. 4:18, 20-22; 9:9; Luke 10:1, 2; John 1:43; Rom. 10:14, 15; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Heb. 5:4; Matt. 10:7, 11-13, 16, 25, 27, 28; 28:19, 20; Luke 24:48.

Hymns: 309, 70, 116, 164, 210, 260, 275.

Poems of Dawn, 166: *Enter In*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 308 (R 5554).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences as to this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

ENTER IN

FELLOW-CHRISTIAN, enter in—
Into the work that calls for you,
Into the promises grand true:
Into the joy of faith that waits:
Why stand idly without the gates,
When the fields are ripe?

You sadly say you cannot know

What God has here for you to do,
Or the way wherein your feet should go;
But if you enter in today,
He'll show you, in His own sweet way,
Your privileged place.

And when the sheaves are gathered in,
We may be sure, in that blissful day,
To sowers and reapers Christ will say,—
"You who well toiled and labored and bore,
And zealously sought for more and more
Of God's blessed work,—

"Come in, beloved, come in, come in—
Into the rest prepared for you,
Into the glory now brought to view."
Our heavenly Bridegroom will await
Our triumphant entrance within the gate
Of Immortality.

R5554: CATCHING FISH WITH THE GOSPEL NET

**"Jesus saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."—
Matthew 4:19.**

OUR Lord's parables, figures of speech, and more or less "dark sayings," such as this one, were usually based upon incidents connected with His ministry. We remember the context here—He had been preaching at the Sea of Galilee, and had put out in a boat because of the crowd of people. (Luke 5:1-11.) The boat was one that was used in the fishing business, conducted by Peter, James and John. Following this discourse, Jesus invited these men to become His disciples, using the words, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

The expression, "fishers of men," suggests many good features illustrative of the work of the Gospel Age. In fishing for fish there is a carefulness exercised that is very necessary to success. The skilful fisherman studies what kind of fish-hook to use and what kind of bait to put on the hook. Then he catches the fish individually. Likewise very much of the work of this Age has been an individual work, accomplished by talking to people; those engaged in it should seek wisdom from on High to put the Message into such form as would be most helpful to people—that they may be caught by the Gospel.

The Lord uses an illustration of a drag-net to represent the work of the Gospel Age. During the past eighteen centuries the drag-net of the Gospel has been passing through the world. It has not caught all the fish; for it has been drawn only through certain parts of the earth which God chose especially to favor. Thus He has drawn a net full; and He

says that at the end of this Age there will be a sorting of these fish—a putting some back into the sea, as not worthy, and a retaining of others. Throughout this Age there have been some drawn by the Gospel who have been unsuitable for God's work; they have not been the kind of people God has wished to choose. Therefore He did not make things so plain for such that they would stay; but rather has left some subjects obscure, in order that such would reject the Truth and turn aside.

THE NATURE OF THE HARVEST WORK

However, aside from this Parable of the Drag-net, which represents the Lord's people as fishers of men, and which might in some respects seem applicable only to the close of the Gospel Age, there is another commission. The general commission to all of the Lord's people applies today. It reads, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the good tidings to the meek; to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to the bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion; to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."—Isa. 61:1-3.

We read that when Jesus was speaking to the people He made some remarks, and gave some parables forth, which they could not understand. For instance, He said that unless they would eat of the flesh and drink of the blood of the Son of Man there would be no life in them. They said, Who can understand that? Who can accept that teaching? So they walked no more with Him—they got out of the net. Throughout this Age the Lord has been gathering in the fish. But the great work of selecting is to be accomplished in the end of this Age. To a certain extent in this Age thousands of people have been caught in the Gospel net and have been more or less brought under the influence of the Truth; and yet they are not fit for the Kingdom. Without any unkindness towards them, the Lord now simply puts them out of the place not suitable to them.

We are not to think of this comparison as perfectly representing this matter—but it has an illustrative power to be made useful in this connection. We do not really catch men as a fisherman catches a fish. The fisherman does the fish more or less harm in taking it out of the water, whether with a hook and line or with a drag-net; and those fish which are brought up in the drag-net are not honored in any manner. Our Lord used this illustration merely to represent how the Gospel fishing was to be done. His followers were to fish for men for the Kingdom—not to do them violence, but to do them good. Those who catch fish exercise a great deal of care. While catching the fish, they usually hide themselves, so that the fish will not see *them*, but the *bait*. So in drawing men to the Truth we should hide ourselves and throw out as bait those features of God's Word which would apply to this one or that one with whom we might be dealing.

Coming down to the present time, the question might arise, Is this Gospel Message still to be sent out, or have all the fish been caught and the Gospel net drawn to the shore, and will there be no more received? We answer that we do not so understand. We believe

that we are away down in the Harvest of the Age; if not fully at the end of the Age, we believe that it must be very near.

OUR PRESENT ATTITUDE

Looking at the Harvest of the Jewish Age, we see that it was forty years long in one sense of the word; yet the beginning of that forty years was a very indefinite thing—and the closing seemed to extend over six months, perhaps. We remember that in the beginning of our Lord's ministry there came forty days of His temptation; and that then came the time during which His disciples were being gathered to Him. For a year there was very little of importance accomplished. If we consider His experiences as typical, we might consider that the early part of the Harvest was not very sharply marked. The Harvest seemed to increase as it progressed, and did not culminate until after the destruction of Jerusalem. This fact leads us to wonder if there are not six months more of the Harvest here.

The Lord evidently saw that it would be better for us that we should walk by faith, not by sight, and that we should have the experiences we are having. These experiences are excellent. We have been receiving things so good, so refreshing to us, that if they continue for six months longer, or six years longer, we shall be very glad that the Lord has given us this longer opportunity of testifying to His goodness. On the other hand, it may be that the work of the Harvesting of the "wheat" has been fully accomplished, and that the work of the present time is for the Great Company class and for the world.

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

The consummation of the Gospel Age is now upon us. We are expecting wonderful things, glorious things. The thing especially looked for now is the ending of Gentile dominion. The dissolution of the nations is at hand, and that disintegration precedes the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom.

At what time the Lord's people will be taken beyond the veil the Lord has not fully indicated. But we have the assurance that when He shall appear, be manifested—when His Epiphania shall occur—we shall be with Him, we shall be like Him and see Him as He is. He will not begin His great work of establishing the Kingdom until the Church shall be with Him. We may not understand all that this implies. Perhaps we may be with our Lord, in service on this side the veil for a while. We had not thought so; but we are simply willing that the Lord's will shall be done, whatever it may be, and we are waiting for the indications of His providence.

"We know not what awaits us,

God kindly veils our eyes,
And o'er each step of our onward way
He makes new scenes to rise;
And every joy He sends us comes
A sweet and glad surprise.

"One step we see before us, 'Tis all we need to see,
The light of Heaven more brightly shines,
When earth's illusions flee;
And sweetly through the silence comes
His loving 'Follow Me.'"

OCTOBER 5

Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds—Heb. 12:3.

Alas, how many of God's true children become weary and faint in their minds, and are in danger of losing the chief prize because they have failed to think upon, to study out, to comprehend, to *consider* the Lord and what He faithfully endured of opposition! As they would *consider His* perfection and how, as represented in Him, the light shone in darkness and was not appreciated, so they would expect that the light shining from them would not be appreciated either. As they would *consider* how the Lord suffered in every sense unjustly and for righteousness' sake, and then would reflect that their own conduct, even though well-meant, is imperfect, it would strengthen them to endure hardness as good soldiers, and not to be weary in well-doing, and not to faint under opposition—Z '04, 38 (R 3312).

During His ministry and sufferings, our Lord was opposed by His enemies' words and acts. These contradictions He endured with long-suffering and perseverance. He suffered none of them to sway Him from His steadfast purpose of doing and suffering the Father's will and of attaining the goal. One of the best methods by which we will be enabled to endure successfully similar experiences, which must come to all God's faithful, is a constant and devout contemplation of our dear Redeemer's conduct amid the contradictions that sinners so abundantly gave Him. This will not only prevent our weakening in and giving up the good fight of faith, but also will strengthen and encourage us therein to an ultimate and glorious victory—P '33, 147.

Parallel passages: Matt. 10:24, 25; John 15:20-24; Matt. 27:24-31, 38-44; Luke 4:28, 29; Phil. 2:6-8 (ASV); 1 Pet. 2:21-23; 4:1; Psa. 31:22; Isa. 35:3, 4.

Hymns: 299, 167, 168, 276, 93, 179, 305.

Poems of Dawn, 25: *Let Not Doubts O'erwhelm*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 122 (R 4802).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

LET NO DOUBTS O'ERWHELM

HOW oft we doubt
And fear we shall be overwhelmed in sin,
Because temptation grows so strong without,
Because our courage is so faint within.

And thus we sigh:
Then can it be that I have known the Lord?
Can I be one with Him that sits on high?

Have I e'er felt the power of His Word?

Is this poor life
Fit prelude for a high eternity?
Alas! Have I not yet begun the strife,
Or must I fail before the victory?

O heart of doubt!
When wilt thou, O thou foolish heart, be wise?
Thou lookest everywhere, within, without,
Forgetting only to lift up thine eyes.

No more despair,
There is no help for thee in things below;
Search not within for hope—it is not there,
But unto Christ do thou for comfort go.

Christ is thy Rock;
Doubt not this firm foundation, true and tried;
Fear not the gathering tempest's angry shock;
It harms not those that on this Rock abide.

Christ is thy Friend,
He knows thy weakness, He will give thee strength;
Trust! In His name is victory; He will end
The conflict for thee; thou shalt win at length.

Christ is thy Peace;
From penalty and stain He sets thee free;
And in the white robe of His righteousness,
Before the approving God presenteth thee.

Christ is thine ALL:
Forget thyself, and in Him sweetly rest;
And thou shalt enter, whatsoever befall,
The everlasting mansions of the blest.

R4802: "CONSIDER HIM LEST YE BE WEARIED"

"Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

TO "CONSIDER HIM" seems to be to take note of, to have in mind, to reflect upon and not to easily forget how our Lord endured various trials and oppositions of sinners against himself. In our own experiences we have, as the Lord's followers, endured some

opposition of sin and sinners against ourselves; but we have not yet resisted unto *blood*. We have not yet passed through the trying experiences through which he passed. When we remember that while we are poor, imperfect creatures like our neighbors, he was "holy, harmless, undefiled," then it is good to reflect that he endured patiently the opposition of sinners. When trying experiences came to him, he did not consider them as being merely from the individual with whom they originated, but as being, on the other hand, under the supervision of the Father. If, therefore, the Father permitted such experiences to come to him, he was bound to prove his loyalty by patient endurance. As he said, "*The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*"—John 18:11.

So it is with us, Spiritual Israel, "*The Lord your God proveth you.*" (Deut. 13:3.) In proportion as we are able to take our Lord's viewpoint in our experiences in life, we may be calm. If the Father permits trying experiences for our testing, or for the testing or proving of others, in ways we may not understand, it is for us to rejoice to have his will done. The poet has beautifully expressed this thought when he says:—

"My times are in thy hands,
My God, I wish them there."

If we faithfully endure to the end, the reward will be ours. If we prove our loyalty and *keep our faith that God is supervising our affairs*, and that no good thing will be withhold from those who are walking uprightly, we shall some day hear his "Well done, good and faithful servant."

We know that our Lord endured *physical* opposition. But our English word "*contradiction*" properly translates the original, implying *verbal contradiction* of *his words*. As we consider our Lord's case, we see that the people opposed him, not physically, but *in his words*, his *teachings*. It was left for the high priest and Sanhedrin and soldiers to do him *physical* violence and put him to death; and he could have resisted them if he had so chosen.

"WHEN HE WAS REVILED, HE REVILED NOT AGAIN"

The Apostle, therefore, seems to refer to the contradiction of his words. This is implied by St. Peter, who says, "When he was reviled, he reviled not again." (I Pet. 2:23.) So when we consider the three and a half years of Christ's ministry, we find that his doctrines were disputed, and that he was slandered. The Jews said that he had a demon; that he performed his miracles by the Prince of demons; that he was a blasphemer. These contradictions and oppositions on their part might have called out from him some very just, truthful statements, respecting them. He might have given them as good as he got, and better. He might have told them that the *Devil* was working with *them*, etc. His perfect power of language would have given him ability to more than cope with them. When they thought to entrap him in his *words*, he entrapped them in *their words*. But he reviled not. He did not render evil for evil, nor railing for railing. This, the Apostle shows, is the proper course.

But in the daily affairs of life, when people say all manner of evil against us, when they revile us, it is natural to the fallen flesh to think of something evil to say in return. Thus these things become tests upon us. If we yield to such a spirit, we are following the course of the enemy and not that of the Lord. "*Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds*" when attacked by the Adversary—whoever may be his agents and whatever may be their missiles. He cannot harm but will only increase our reputation in the Lords' sight, if we *endure faithfully*; and he can do no outward harm that God cannot overrule for the *good* of his cause—though that *good* may mean "siftings" of "chaff" and "tares" from the "wheat."

Evil speaking, backbiting and slandering are *strictly forbidden* to God's people as *wholly contrary* to his spirit of *love, even if the evil thing be true*. As a preventive of anything in the nature of slander, the Scriptures very carefully mark out *only one way of redress of grievances*.—Matt. 18:15-17.

PROFESSED CHRISTIANS OFTEN WORST SCANDALMONGERS

Many, among even advanced Christians, seem to be *utterly in ignorance of this Divine ruling*, and hence professed Christians are often the most pronounced scandalmongers. Yet this is one of the few *special, specific commandments* given by our Lord; and considered in connection with the statement, "Ye are my *friends*, if ye do whatsoever I command you," the constant violation of this, our Lord's command, proves that many are not far advanced in friendship—discipleship.

Let us look carefully at this rule, which if followed would prevent gossip, "evil speaking," "backbiting." See, as above cited, Matt. 18:15-17. Its first provision, for a conference between the principals *alone*, implies candor on the part of the accuser, who thinks that he has suffered. It also implies his thinking no evil of the accused. They meet as "brethren," each thinking *his own course* the *right* one, to discuss the matter; to see whether they can come to the same view. If they agree, all is well; the matter is settled; peace prevails; the threatened break has been averted, and no one is the wiser. In the great majority of cases, a frank, open discussion between the principals will bring about harmony. But both must be equally candid and governed by the Spirit of the Lord.

Thus did our Lord guard his true disciples from the insidious sin of slander, which leads onward to other and grosser works of the flesh and the Devil, and stops growth in the Truth and its spirit of love. Let us also note that those who *hear* slanders and thus encourage slanderers in their course of wrongdoing, are *partakers of their evil deeds*; guilty partners in the violation of the Master's commands. God's true people should refuse to listen to slanders and should point the offender to the Lord's Word and the *only* method therein authorized. Are we wiser than God? Experience teaches that we cannot trust to our own judgments and are on safe ground only when following the voice of the Shepherd implicitly.

WE SHOULD REFUSE TO HEAR GOSSIP AND SLANDER

If any Brother or Sister brings to you an evil report of others, stop him at once, kindly but *firmly*. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:11.) Refuse to have any share in this violation of the Master's commands, which does great mischief in the Church. If the Brother or Sister be only a "babe" in spiritual matters, call attention to the Lord's ruling on the subject. (Matt. 18:15; I Tim. 5:19.) If the conversation is not addressed to you but merely in your hearing, promptly show your disapproval by withdrawing.

If, after having had his attention called to the Lord's command on this subject, the slanderer still persists in "evil speaking," "backbiting" and telling you his "evil-surmisings," reprove him more sharply, saying as you go, "I cannot, must not, hear you; for if I did, I would be as criminal in the matter as you are, violating the Lord's command. And even if I were to hear your story I could not believe it; for the Christian who does not respect the Lord's Word and follow his Plan for the redress of grievances, shows so little of the Lord's spirit that his word cannot be trusted. He who twists and dodges the Lord's words would not hesitate to twist and misrepresent the words and deeds of fellow-disciples." Then withdraw fellowship from such until his error has been confessed with promises of reform. If to any extent you listen to such conversation, or express "*sympathy*" with it or with the gossip or slanderer, *you are a partner in the sin and in all its consequences*; and if a "root of bitterness" is thus developed, you are more than likely to be one of those "defiled" by it.—Heb. 12:15.

Be pure: maintain a conscience void of offense toward God and men. Begin with the heart; harbor no thoughts that in any sense of the word would be evil. To make sure of this, have Christ Jesus as your pattern, well and much before your mind. When evil is obtruded upon you, either from without or from within, lift up your heart in prayer to him for the grace promised in every time of need. Keep constantly before you the prayer, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer."—Psa. 19:14.

LET US CULTIVATE APPRECIATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF DIVINE LAW

While seeking to follow the various specific commands of Scripture, let us seek more and more to understand and come in sympathy with the *principles which underlie* the Divine Law. These will enable us to judge of the right and the wrong of such of our words, thoughts and acts as may not be particularly specified in the Lord's Word. Indeed, as we come to understand and sympathize with the principles of Divine Law, to that extent we are getting the spirit of the Divine Word. Note the testimony of the Psalmist on this point, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou, *through thy commandments*, hast made me wiser than mine enemies, *for they are ever with me*. I have more understanding than all my teachers, *for thy testimonies are my meditation*. I understand more than the ancients, *because I keep thy precepts*. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, *that I might keep thy Word*. I have not departed from thy judgments,

for thou hast taught me. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore, I hate every false way. Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."—Psa. 119:97-105.

Shun a contentious and fault-finding disposition as contrary to the spirit, or disposition of Christ—contrary to *love*. A certain amount of combative courage is demanded in overcoming the world, the flesh and the Devil and their various snares. This fighting disposition may become a valuable aid to ourselves and to the Master's cause if rightly and wisely directed against sin, *first* in *ourselves* and *secondly* in others; if used for the Lord and his people and against Satan and all his powers of darkness and superstition. This, in the Scriptures, is called fighting the *good fight*, and we all should be gallant soldiers in this battle for Right and Truth, lovingly defending our Captain's honor and his people's liberties.

THE POWERS OF EVIL WOULD MAKE COMBATIVENESS A CHIEF VIRTUE

But such a good use of combativeness is not pleasing to the Prince of this world, who will seek to *pervert* what he cannot directly *use*. Consequently, he attempts with some to make combativeness a chief virtue. He encourages them to fight everything and everybody; the brethren, more than the powers of darkness; nominal churchmen, more than the errors and ignorance which blind them and make them such. Indeed, his desire is to get us to "fight against God."

Let us be on our guard on this point. Let us, first of all, *judge ourselves*, lest we cast a stumbling-block before others; let us fight down in *our own hearts* the wrong spirit which seeks to make mountains out of trifles and disposes us to be captious and contentious over non-essentials. Greater is "He that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16:32.) Let us guard ourselves that our defense of the Truth be, not from motives of self-glorification, but from love for the Truth, love for the Lord, for his people, the brethren. If *love* be the impelling spirit, or motive, it will show itself accordingly in a loving, gentle, patient, humble course toward all the fellow-servants. Let us be "gentle toward all." Let "the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God," which is quick and powerful, do all the *cutting*.

Beware of all thoughts, feelings and conditions of heart directly or remotely connected with malice, envy, hatred, strife. Give these no place in your heart even for a moment; for they will surely do *you* great injury, aside from leading to the injury of others. Keep your heart, your will, your intentions and desires full of love toward God and all his creatures—the most fervent toward God, and proportionately toward all who have his spirit and walk in the way of his direction.

DO NOT TRUST TO CONSCIENCE ALONE

If conscience were a *sufficient* guide you would have no need of the Scriptures. The majority of people have as good as no conscience; for they are blind to the principles and

laws of God given to *guide* conscience; and still worse off than these are those mentioned in I Tim. 4:2. Hence the imperative necessity for carefully heeding the Lord's Word, and *walking circumspectly* according to its light.

We are not to faint in our minds nor become discouraged, feeling that so much has been said against us that we must give up the race. On the contrary, we are to feel assured like our Lord, that nothing can befall us except with the knowledge of the Father, who is working all things for our good. It was thus our Lord was prepared for his exaltation. So we, if we are rightly exercised by our various experiences and follow as closely as possible the commands laid down for our guidance, will find that even revilings, slanders, oppositions to righteousness, will work out blessings for us, as they did for our Lord.

But how many become weary and are in danger of losing the prize because they fail to consider what *the Lord* faithfully endured of opposition! If such would consider that the Lord, who was *perfect*, suffered in every sense *unjustly* for righteousness' sake, and that their own conduct is *imperfect*, they would not be weary in well doing, but would learn to fight and to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ"; they would continue to "fight the good fight of faith." "*We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we [the Church] are, yet without sin.*"—Heb. 4:15.

OCTOBER 6

Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them—Luke 9:55, 56.

So with all the Lord's disciples: their continual study should be to avoid that hypercritical disposition to sentence and to destroy other people, while desiring mercy for themselves. The rule which the Lord establishes is that we must expect from Him mercy only in proportion as we shall exercise this grace toward others. The fault-finding disposition that is ready to accuse and condemn everybody, indicates a wrong condition of heart, one against which all the Lord's people should be on guard. Mercy, goodness, love, are the elements of character which He desires to see in the spiritual Israelites, and without which we cannot long continue to be His children—Z '04, 43 (R 3315).

Like John and James many of the Lord's people, when indignity is offered the Lord and His cause, have felt like calling down destruction from God upon the wrongdoers. They did not realize the disharmony between such conduct and their service of the Gospel. It is for the servants of the Truth to remember that as Christians it is for them to seek, by sacrificing themselves for the world, to save the world from the death state and the dying process. Hence they cannot nullify the purpose of their consecration by desiring to wreak vengeance upon their enemies in any sense of the word—P '32, 150.

Parallel passages: Deut. 32:35; Matt. 1:21; 5:44; 18:11; 20:28; Mark 10:45; Rom. 12:17, 19; 1 Thes. 5:15; 1 Pet. 2:23; 3:9; Luke 19:10; John 3:15-17; 10:10; 12:47; Rom. 3:21-27; 4:24, 25; 5:6-11; 12:19-21; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; Heb. 10:30.

Hymns: 167, 5, 15, 28, 132, 168, 246.

Poems of Dawn, 226: *The Minister's Daughter*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 205 (R 4849).

Questions: Have I this week experienced Jesus' delivering works? How? How did it affect me?

THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER.

IN the minister's morning sermon,
He told of the primal fall,
And how thenceforth the wrath of God
Rested on each and all.

And how, of His will and pleasure,
All souls, save a chosen few,
Were doomed to eternal torture,
And held in the way thereto.

Yet never, by faith's unreason,
A saintlier soul was tried,
And never the harsh old lesson
A tenderer heart belied.

And after the painful service,
On that pleasant, bright first day,
He walked with his little daughter
Through the apple bloom of May.

Sweet in the fresh green meadow
Sparrow and blackbird sung;
Above him its tinted petals
The blossoming orchard hung.

Around, on the wonderful glory,
The minister looked and smiled:
"How good is the Lord, who gives us
These gifts from His hand, my child.

"Behold in the bloom of apples,
And the violets in the sward,
A hint of the old, lost beauty
Of the Garden of the Lord."

Then up spake the little maiden,
Treading on snow and pink,
"O father! These pretty blossoms
Are very wicked, I think.

"Had there been no Garden of Eden,
There had never been a fall,
And if never a tree had blossomed
God would have loved us all."

"Hush, child!" the father answered,
"By His decree man fell;
His ways are in clouds and darkness,
But He doeth all things well.

"And whether by His ordaining
To us cometh good or ill,
Joy or pain, or light or shadow,
We must fear and love Him still."

"O, I fear Him!" said the daughter,

"And I try to love Him, too;
But I wish He were kind and gentle,
Kind and loving as you."

The minister groaned in spirit,
As the tremulous lips of pain,
And wide, wet eyes uplifted,
Questioned his own in vain.

Bowing his head he pondered
The words of his little one.
Had he erred in his lifelong teachings?
Had he wrong to his Master done?

To what grim and dreadful idol
Had he lent the Holiest Name?
Did his own heart, loving and human,
The God of his worship shame?

And lo! From the bloom and greenness,
From the tender skies above,
And the face of his little daughter,
He read a lesson of love.

No more as the cloudy terror
Of Sinai's Mount of Law,
But as Christ in the Syrian lilies,
The vision of God he saw.

And as when, in the clefts of Horeb,
Of old was His presence known,
The dread, ineffable glory
Was Infinite goodness alone.

Thereafter his hearers noted
In his prayers a tenderer strain,
And never the message of hatred
Burned on his lips again.

And the scoffing tongue was prayerful,
And the blinded eyes found sight,
And hearts as flint aforetime
Grew soft in his warmth and light.

R4849: THE LOVE REQUIRED OF THE NEW CREATION

"If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us."

—1 John 4:12.

THERE IS a great difference between human or animal love, such as the members of a family have for one another, and that love to which this text refers. The love required of members of the Body of Christ is a love resulting from mutual relationship to the Lord, and comes from the Spirit of God dwelling in them—a God-like love, which marks them as of His Spirit, having been begotten to His disposition. There should be something about the character of the Lord's people which would demonstrate on all occasions that they possess true love for one another. If this is not the case the lack of love would be a reflection upon them all.

As we learn to love one another the love of God is being perfected in us, the true, benevolent love which the Lord commands. The Lord said that we should love one another as He has loved us—to the extent of being willing to lay down our lives for one another. We are not to love *some* of the brethren *some of the time*, and *some* of the brethren *all of the time*; but we should *love all of the brethren all of the time*; and overlook their frailties and imperfections, taking that high standpoint from which God views them, forgiving one another, as God, for Christ's sake, overlooks *our* blemishes. We ought to forgive those who trespass against us as we hope and trust that God will forgive our trespasses. No one can be of the "elect" class unless this love be perfected in him. He may not gain so full a control of the flesh that he will never speak sharply, hastily, etc., but he must reach the place where he will be perfect in intention before he can be accepted as a member of the Kingdom.

The Apostle Paul says that "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the Law." (Rom. 13:10) The Divine Law which the Apostle had specially before his mind was the Law given to Israel—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might"; and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18.) This Law of God fulfilled—filled full, completely met—requires that the heart shall be full of love. All the mind and soul and strength are required to fulfil this Law. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." Yet one might work ill through ignorance and superstition and misunderstanding, through imperfection of the flesh, while his heart intentions were good. Saul of Tarsus worked much ill to his neighbors. With good intention, doubtless, some of our Catholic friends and some of our Protestant friends have worked ill to their neighbors. We cannot say that because they worked ill to their neighbors they had no love, but that they did not have it to the degree required by the Law; for *perfect love* would work *no ill* to his neighbor. Whoever would work ill to his neighbor, with full knowledge, would not have love.

GOES BEYOND THE JEWISH LAW

There is a force in the word *therefore* in the text, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, *therefore*, love is the fulfilling of the Law." The Law was given to restrain wrong deeds,

wrong words, wrong sentiments toward another. That Law was evidently not intended to enumerate all the things that should not be done, for it *works no ill*. One might, therefore, fulfil the Law of the Ten Commandments if he works no ill to his neighbor, but loves him as himself. The word *therefore* gives us the thought that the Apostle had in mind the Jewish Law and not the Law of the New Creation. Merely abstaining from evil and loving our neighbor as ourselves would not fulfil the Law as given to the New Creature by the Lord; but it would fill the Law of Justice given to the Jews.

But our Lord magnified that Law and also gave us a *new* command. The Love that would be in His followers, His disciples, was shown in His words, "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12.) To do this would be far more than to do no injury to another. It would be *laying down our lives* for one another. This is far beyond any requirement of the Law. Justice could not say, "You must go over and clean the snow from your neighbor's pavement"; but Justice would say, "You must not throw any snow upon your neighbor's pavement." But Love says more than this. The new Law that is given to us is the Law of Sacrifice. We who are in the Body of Christ must love one another as Jesus loved us, to the extent of sacrificing our interests, our comforts, our privileges, in the interest of others.

He who does not find his heart in harmony with this Law of the New Creation—love, mercy, kindness, gentleness, goodness—lacks the evidence, or proof, that he is in any sense accepted of God as a joint-heir with Christ. If we have not love in our heart for the brethren, and the love of gentleness and benevolence toward all men, and even toward the brute creation, we have not the spirit which will carry us through in making the sacrifices necessary under present conditions. It will be only a question of time with such when the power of pride or vainglory holding them in the way of self-sacrifice will snap asunder and selfishness take full control. We are to keep the Law in our *minds*. But while our *minds* are *perfect*, we find imperfections of the flesh which hinder us from doing all that we wish to do. Hence, we need the sufficiency that is in Christ. We are trusting that God will accept the good intentions of the heart, of the mind, instead of counting against us the imperfections of our flesh.

AN AGGRESSIVE AS WELL AS DEFENSIVE WARFARE NECESSARY

God would have us watch for evidences of His will and profit by all the experiences which He permits to come to us in our every-day life, humbly accepting any discipline; and having this spirit we shall be led on from grace to grace and from victory unto victory. Merely to stand and battle on the *defensive* is very wearisome and gains no victory. To gain the victory we must not only put on the whole armor of God, but we must be heroes in the strife and wage an *aggressive* warfare upon the lusts of the eye and flesh and pride of life and all the foes of righteousness and purity.

Love—love for the Lord, for the Truth and for righteousness—must inspire us or we shall never be victors. Love will keep us faithful even unto death and make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Where fervent love rules in the heart it implies that

the heart is *fully submitted* to the Lord, and that means that nine-tenths of the battle is already won. But even then, as the Apostle Jude says (Jude 21), we must *keep ourselves* in the love of God, in watchfulness and prayer and zeal; and grace will abound where love abounds.

We keep ourselves in the love of God by striving to do always those things that are pleasing to Him. He can love *only perfection*; and it is impossible for us to be perfect. He perceives, however, that our weaknesses are not of the will but of the flesh, and He has provided an Advocate for us to whom we may come if we commit trespasses. Thus we keep ourselves in the love of God and walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Where our footsteps may deviate from the way we have the precious blood of Jesus to cleanse us. When we have our new bodies we shall be continually in His love and always pleasing to Him, because we shall have no bodily imperfection to mar the perfection of our will.

LET US BEWARE OF SELFISHNESS

Selfishness is the surest cause of separation from the love of God. When we made our consecration to the Lord and He accepted us as New Creatures in Christ and begat us with the Holy Spirit, it was because we surrendered *self*. If at any time we turn back to walk after the flesh, we are departing from our consecration. This might be manifest in many ways: in slackness instead of zeal; in carelessness instead of carefulness; in a selfish feeling of jealousy of spirit; or in anger, hatred, strife. All these are so much of the Old Creature—wrong conditions from which we thought we had escaped. In proportion as the Old Creature triumphs the New Creature will fall; and thus we will gradually cease to be in the love of God. These wrong conditions will hinder the keeping of ourselves in the love of God, which signifies the keeping of ourselves in the proper attitude toward God and Jesus. We are to press on and make our sacrifice, if possible, larger every way to the Lord and the brethren.

Daily and hourly we may keep ourselves in the Lord's love by obedience to the principles of righteousness and faithfulness to our covenant and a growing love for these. We are to rejoice in every experience of life—its trials, difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, no less than in its pleasures, if by any or all of these means the Lord shall instruct us and give us clearer insight into our own deficiencies and a still clearer insight into that perfect law of liberty and love which He has established and to which He requires our full and loyal heart-submission.

In such faithful obedience to the truth and earnest endeavor to conform to its principles, the way and the truth grow more and more precious and our willing feet with joy are led in the paths of righteousness and peace—into life everlasting.

OCTOBER 7

Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand—Matt. 7:26.

The hopes built upon the Lord's promises and unaccompanied by works are hopes built upon the sand. It is only a question of time until the great testing time shall come and such hopes will be shown to be worse than useless. They will be shown to have deceived their possessor, who thought himself safe in his assurances of a share in the Kingdom. On the contrary, those who build with obedience, their hearts as well as their tongues confessing and honoring the Lord, their deeds corroborating their faith, and their fruits bearing testimony of their vital relationship with the Lord—these shall pass through all the storms of life and shall never be moved, never be shaken, because they are on the foundation—Z '04, 36 (R 3317).

Jesus' sayings and the teachings of the Bible are equivalent terms, because God gave the Scriptures through His Son, both during and since His pre-existence. To hear His sayings means to understand them. They effect responsiveness in the meek alone. Foolish indeed is he who, understanding them, does not submit to their influence. All his efforts to do wonderful things in the Lord's name will result in failure, so far as the development of a Christlike and thus a God-pleasing character is concerned. His faith structure, like a house built upon sand, will be swept away by the rain, winds, storms and floods of the great Time of Trouble that will come upon him as well as upon the world—P '26, 156.

Parallel passages: Prov. 10:8; Matt. 5:6; 7:24, 25, 27; 13:7, 14, 15, 19-23; Ezek. 33:30-32; Rom. 2:13; 10:14-21; Jas. 1:19, 22-25; Luke 6:49; 11:28; 13:24-27.

Hymns: 49, 22, 79, 296, 306, 311, 332.

Poems of Dawn, 217: *One Here, One There*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 59 (R 5407).

Questions: What kind of a hearer of the Word am I? How did I hear the Word this week? What were the causes, spirit and results?

ONE HERE, ONE THERE

OF all we meet in life's great stream,
There's but one here and there
Who treasure most the better things;
Each man to self most tightly clings,
For self he toils, for self he sings,
Except one here, one there.

The world would be a desolate place,
But for one here and there,

Whose heart with self hath not been filled,
Whose love for God hath not been killed,
Whose thankful praise hath not been stilled;
There's one such here and there.

And this hath been the Lord's wise will,
To find one here, one there,
Who counting earthly gain but dross,
Would daily take the Christian's cross,
E'en at the risk of any loss:—
God finds one here and there.

'Tis not the numbers that He seeks,
But just one here, one there;
He seeks not souls, but jewels fair,
For those who will His suffering share,
And for His sake reproaches bear;
They're few; one here, one there!

But oh! The grandeur of the work
For this one here and there,
To join in lifting up our race,
To wipe away of sin each trace,
To make of earth a perfect place,
Put glory everywhere!

R5407: WHAT DOTH JEHOVAH REQUIRE?

"What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah 6:8.

JESUS sought to impress upon His hearers that it was not sufficient for them to hear that a Kingdom of God was coming, and that it would bring certain blessings to the world. It was not sufficient that they should know that a Kingdom class was being called out of the world to be Messiah's joint-heirs in that Kingdom. Action would be necessary on their part if they would attain to this high privilege which God had granted to them. "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works," wrote St. James. Not that we are to attain the Kingdom by our works; for, imperfect through the fall, we are unable to do perfect works, acceptable to God. It will be our faith in God and in the Lord Jesus that will bring us the victory, if we gain it; but the victory will be accounted only to those who shall, to the best of their ability, work out their salvation with fear and trembling. God will work in such, and through Christ bring them off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors.

Jesus gave an illustration, or parable, declaring that those who heard His Message and rendered obedience thereto would be like a wise man, who built his house upon the rock, where the descending rains would not wash away the foundation from underneath, nor in any wise harm it. The storms of life are sure to come; and the great crisis of life, death, is sure to come. Amidst those trials there will be calmness, confidence and security for such as have accepted the Lord's arrangement and have been walking to the best of their ability in the footsteps of Jesus. To them death will be merely a transition from the earthly state to the Heavenly, by the power of the First Resurrection—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 15:50-52.) Their faith and confidence, built upon God's promises, can never fail them. For such there is laid up a crown of life, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give them at that Day.—2 Timothy 4:8.

On the other hand, Jesus intimates that many who heard His words and expressed great appreciation of them, would fail to take the proper steps to attain the glorious Kingdom privileges which He presented. They would allow custom, habit, love of pleasure, love of ease, the spirit of the world, to hinder them, either from making the proper, full devotion of themselves to God, or from carrying out that purpose. Such indeed might to some extent encourage themselves with hopes of the Kingdom which would never be realized, because they never took the proper steps. They did not build their faith upon the proper foundation. Perhaps some of them built upon the Law, and thought that they could commend themselves to God by their own endeavors, without the imputation of the merit of Christ. Such would be greatly mistaken. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which God has laid—Jesus Christ." His death is our redemption-price, and His appearance in glory as our Advocate is to make good for our unintentional shortcomings.

With all such, the day of stress and trial will surely come; and their faith structure, being without a proper foundation, will give way. They will suffer the loss of all their hopes. This, however, does not signify, as many of us once supposed, that they will go to eternal torment. Evidently nearly all Christian people, misled by the creeds of the Dark Ages, read into the Word of God many things which it does not at all contain.

COMPARE ST. PAUL'S PARABLE

The Apostle Paul used a similar illustration, saying, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid—Jesus Christ." "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon"; for the Day that cometh shall try every man's work of what sort it is. Those building with the gold, silver and precious stones of Divine Truth, developing their faith and character in harmony with the Divine requirements and arrangements, will suffer no loss in the great trial day at the end of this Age. But others who build with the wood, hay and stubble of human tradition and self-complacency, will find that their entire faith structure will be consumed; for the fire of that Day shall try every man's work of what sort it is.—1 Corinthians 3:10-15.

Nevertheless, the Apostle tells us that even those who will suffer the loss of their faith structure, if they have built upon Christ, will themselves be saved, though so as by fire. They will be what is sometimes termed a tribulation class, described in Revelation 7:14-17: "These are they that have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and serve Him in His Temple day and night." On these, God has various blessings to bestow. These will be in proportion to their obedience and loyalty and faith.

The class that the Apostle mentions as building with gold, silver and precious stones, will be a Little Flock, a Royal Priesthood, who will sit in the Throne, wearing the crowns, and be joint-heirs with Jesus in the Kingdom. But the class building upon the Rock without proper materials, yet saved so as by fire, will be the Great Company class, the antitype of the Levites, who instead of being in the Throne, will before the Throne serve those in the Throne; instead of wearing crowns, they will be granted palm branches, indicating a victory of an inferior kind. The priestly class will be the antitypical Temple of God; the Levite class, the Great Company, will serve God in and through that Temple class.

Nor is this all of the salvation which God has purposed. These two classes include merely the spirit-begotten ones of this Gospel Age. The Ancient Worthies are to constitute another class of saved ones—saved to an earthly perfection, to be princes in all the earth, glorious representatives of the invisible, spiritual, Heavenly Kingdom class. Then finally will come the blessing of all the families of the earth who shall prove willing and obedient during the thousand years of the Kingdom Reign, and who will be gradually lifted up, up, out of sin and degradation, by resurrection power, back to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed through the precious blood of Jesus. On the other hand, all intelligent, wilful opposers of God and righteousness, after a certain period of opportunity, will be destroyed in the Second Death—whether they belong to the class that is now on trial, a class of spirit-begotten ones, or to the class which will be on trial during the period of Messiah's Reign. "All the wicked will God destroy."

THE PEOPLE WERE ASTONISHED

No wonder the people were astonished at such doctrines as Jesus gave forth, even though they but imperfectly understood these, for none could perfectly understand except through the enlightening influence of the Holy Spirit, which was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:39.) The teachings of Jesus had a positiveness quite different from the various speculations and wonderings of the scribes. So it is always with the Truth. Wherever there is confusion and mysticism, we may be sure there is error and ignorance. Hence the necessity that all who preach Christ should have the anointing, or ordination, to preach, which God alone gives through the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

OUR GOLDEN TEXT

"What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" At first one might be inclined to say, Why, that is different!

There is nothing in that text of Scripture to say that in order to be an heir of the Kingdom one must take up his cross, deny himself and follow in the footsteps of Jesus, self-sacrificingly!

This is true; but we should notice that the one is a requirement and the other a privilege. God does not require sacrifice. What He requires is loyalty and obedience, but not sacrifice. Whatever is sacrificial is so much more than the Divine Law requires. Thus in the case of Jesus, the Divine Law could not require Him to do more than to obey it—to love God with all His heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love His neighbor as Himself. But could not all this have been done by Jesus without the laying down of His life at all! Surely! Hence the Scriptures represent that when Jesus presented Himself at Jordan, He consecrated all that He had to do the Father's will, even unto death—not merely to keep the Law. He delighted to do the Father's will, even beyond what the Father demanded in the Law. (Hebrews 10:5-7.) And so must it be with all who would be acceptable footstep followers of Jesus and attain with Him glory, honor and immortality on the Heavenly plane.

The Prophet Micah addressed the Jews, and his message was from the standpoint of the Law. He was encouraging the Jews to do their best to fulfil its requirements. Nevertheless, we know that no Jew ever fulfilled the Law except Jesus, because all except Him were fallen, imperfect. He alone was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners."

During the Millennial Kingdom of Messiah, this same Law of God, given to the Jews through Moses, will be given to the whole world of mankind through Messiah. The requirements will be to do justly, to love kindness, to walk humbly with God. The reason why Messiah's ministration of this Law will be a success, while Moses' ministration of it was a failure, so far as bringing any to perfection was concerned, is that Messiah's Kingdom will be fully prepared and authorized to forgive sinners and to help them up out of their imperfections—back to the image and likeness of God as it was originally represented in Father Adam.

The privilege and right to thus forgive sins and to thus lift the sinner out of degradation belongs to Messiah, by virtue of His sacrifice for sins which He finished on Calvary. The right to life which He there laid down without forfeiting He will be prepared to give to mankind during the Millennium; and only the wilful rejectors will perish in the Second Death.

"O! we long to see Thy glory
Streaming wide o'er all the earth;
Every error, old and hoary,
Flee to realms that gave them birth.

"For this glorious culmination,
Not for long shall Zion wait:
Soon will come her coronation;

Lo, her King is at the gate."

OCTOBER 8

Be not deceived ... he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting—Gal. 6:7, 8.

We sow to the flesh every time we allow the fleshly, selfish, unjust, unrighteous desires of the flesh to have sway in our hearts and lives, and each sowing makes easier the additional sowing and makes more sure the end of that way which is death—the Second Death. On the contrary, each sowing to the Spirit, each resistance to the desires of the flesh toward selfishness, *etc.*, and each exercise of the new mind, of the new will, in spiritual directions toward the things that are pure, the things that are noble, the things that are good, the things that are true, is a sowing to the Spirit, which will bring forth additional fruits of the Spirit, graces of the Spirit, and which, if persevered in, will ultimately bring us in accord with the Lord's gracious promises and arrangements—everlasting life and the Kingdom—Z '04, 57 (R 3321).

As he deceives himself who sows natural seed of a certain kind and expects to reap a crop of another kind; so he deceives himself who sows a figurative seed of one kind and expects to reap a symbolic crop of another kind. Like produces like. Therefore if one who has received the holy Spirit sows to the flesh, he deceives himself, if he expects to reap of the Spirit. He will from his fleshly sowing reap a fleshly harvest eventuating in death. Consolatory to us is the fixity of the law that a spiritual sowing will produce a spiritual harvest. If, therefore, we sow to the Spirit—faithfully study, spread and practice spiritual things, we will experience no disappointment, for our harvest will be eternal life—P '36, 110.

Parallel passages: Job 4:8; Prov. 11:18; 22:8; Hos. 8:7; 10:12; Rom. 8:1, 6, 7, 12-14; 6:6; 7:22, 23; 13:14; Gal. 5:16, 17; 2 Cor. 9:6; Heb. 6:10; John 4:14; Jude 18-21; 1 Pet. 2:11; Eph. 4:22-24.

Hymns: 192, 4, 47, 74, 78, 196, 198.

Poems of Dawn, 75: *Transverse and Parallel*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 108 (R 5665).

Questions: What have been this week's sowings? In what did they result? How could they be improved?

TRANSVERSE AND PARALLEL

MY will, dear Lord, from Thine doth run
Too oft a different way;
'Tis hard to say, "Thy will be done,"
In every darkened day!
My heart longs still to do Thy will
And all Thy Word obey.

My will sometimes would gather flowers;
Thine blights them in my hand;
Mine reaches for life's sunny hours;
Thine leads through shadow land;
And many days go on in ways
I cannot understand.

Yet more and more this truth doth shine
From failure and from loss:
The will that runs transverse from Thine
Doth thereby make its cross;
Thine upright will cuts straight and still
Through pride, and dream, and dross.

But if in parallel to Thine
My will doth meekly run,
All things in heaven and earth are mine;
My will is crossed by none;
Thou art in me, and I in Thee:
Thy will and mine are done.

R5665: SEEDTIME AND HARVEST OF CHARACTER

**"Be not deceived, ... he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption;
but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."**

—Galatians 6:7, 8.

THE APOSTLE here brings to our attention the fact that there is danger of some of the Lord's people being deceived. Some might think that they could live according to their earthly desires, fleshly desires, and then attend meeting, or observe other religious forms, and it would make them all right with God. Others might deceive themselves into thinking that they might live according to the flesh, and then by going to the Lord in prayer they might have the matter all forgiven and corrected, and still be as far along spiritually as those who live daily a life of faithfulness to God. Another error which has deceived many is the teaching that, after living according to the inclinations of the flesh in sinful ways, they can go to the priest and obtain absolution, and that this will make them all right again.

Now these are deceptions. God has established a general principle which applies both to the Church and to the world. This general principle operates along the lines of sowing and reaping. Suppose a man unfamiliar with the nature of certain seeds should sow seed of thistles or of tares. A little later he might visit his field and say, "This seed seems to have been all right. I see nothing wrong. It has not hurt the ground in any respect; the field looks as well as if I had sown timothy seed or clover seed. The plants are green and

thrifty, and indeed make quite a fine appearance." But later in the season the nature of the crop would make very manifest the dire mistake in the choice of the seed sown.

In the natural world men are sure to reap in kind as they have sown. They would not expect to sow tare seed and reap a crop of wheat. The law of cause and effect is no less inexorable in the spiritual realm. And so the Apostle says that "God is not mocked"—do not think that you can do an evil thing and get good results. Whoever "sows to the wind shall reap the whirlwind"; whoever sows to the flesh will reap accordingly; whoever sows to the Spirit will reap in kind.

THOUGHT THE BEGINNING OF CHARACTER

What is meant, then, by this word "sowing" when referring to spiritual things? Apparently it means a course of life, or conduct, that would bring good results or a course that would bring evil results. We sometimes hear the expression, "That young man is sowing his wild oats." The thought is that the conduct of such a one is evil; and that the conduct of the individual will react upon his character. We might go further and say that all conduct must be incited by previous thought. In other words, our thoughts are the initiative in what we are! To illustrate: When God would create the world He first had a Plan respecting it. All that He has been doing since has been the following out of a Plan that He originally had. We might say that it was the good thoughts of God which led to the good results.

So it has been in the case of Satan. Satan's course in the world has been that of sowing evil things, sowing tares. His course has been fatal to himself and injurious to others, and it was the result of the wrong thought he had before he committed the sin. He had said in his heart, "I will ascend into Heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; ... I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." (Isaiah 14:13, 14.) He had a covetous spirit, a selfish, presumptuous spirit, a spirit in opposition to God.

These two spirits are still operative in the world—God's Spirit and the spirit of the Adversary. In referring to things pertaining to humanity, the Apostle speaks of this Adversary spirit as being the spirit of the flesh—not that it is the spirit of the flesh in its original perfection, but the spirit of the fallen flesh. It is the spirit of Satan, which has become dominant in the human family. The Apostle addresses the words of our text particularly to the Church, but with a good application to the world also. If any of the Lord's people who have been enlightened and made partakers of the Holy Spirit should live according to the flesh chiefly, they would surely not receive the prize of the High Calling. If they wish to attain glory, honor and immortality, they must live according to the Spirit of God, the spirit of God's Law, the spirit of righteousness. They must conform their lives to the life of Christ their Exemplar, or they can never hope to attain the things promised them.

Because of the imperfection of the flesh inherited through Father Adam, the Lord's children can never in this life attain the perfection that they would wish. There will be blemishes and weaknesses of brain, of thought, and of the entire body. But they should

live as nearly up to the standard as possible, and the Lord will compensate for their unintentional weaknesses. His grace will be sufficient for them to enable them to overcome. But if they sow to the flesh, they will reap in the flesh—they will reap the evil. However, if they are still loyal to the Lord, and repent of their derelictions, striving to overcome, He will overrule these experiences for their good.

LOYAL HEART THE FIRST REQUISITE

It is therefore for the Church to sow according to the Spirit, to conduct themselves according to the Spirit of God, who is a righteous Spirit Being. In order to do this, we see that the heart must be right. So the getting of our hearts right is the very first thing the Lord sets before us. We cannot even become His children until our hearts are right. We must turn from sin and accept the atonement of the great Sin-Bearer. Then we must heed the words of our Lord, "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me." In so doing we are sowing to the Spirit. If we continue thus to sow, we shall reap the great reward—all the glorious spiritual things the Lord has promised to His faithful ones of the Gospel Age.

But in proportion as we are derelict, as we sow seeds of evil, in that same proportion shall we be sowing to corruption. This does not necessarily mean the Second Death; but there will be corrections and stripes for the things which are improper. Whoever, therefore, sows a little to the flesh will reap accordingly. If he continues to sow according to the flesh, he will reap a much larger measure of results—greater corruption. And if his life be given over to sin, if he has abandoned the life of the Spirit entirely, the effect will be the Second Death, which is the extreme penalty of wilful opposition to God.

Hence, sowing to the flesh might or might not mean certainly to reap the Second Death. It would surely mean to reap difficulty, tendencies away from God, in proportion to the evil sowing. With the spirit-begotten it would surely lead to the Second Death if the course is not changed. We see this matter illustrated in many Christian people. They begin the Christian course, and live to a considerable degree to the Spirit of God, yet they occasionally give way to the things of the flesh and more or less encourage the fleshly mind. They do not perhaps realize any immediate results, but there are evil seeds sown. These evil seeds, evil thoughts in the mind, even if afterwards repented of, may more or less corrupt the mind all the rest of life; they tend away from the Lord, away from the Heavenly things, and make so much more to fight against. The Christian should see to it that all of his course in life, his desires, his thoughts, are brought into accord with the spirit of a sound mind, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit.

Sowing to the Spirit and sowing to the flesh would, we understand, mean either to live according to God's way or, on the other hand, to live according to the spirit of the Adversary—to sow seed that will result either in the blessed fruits of the Holy Spirit of God or in the fruits of the fallen flesh—the corrupted, Satanized spirit with all its accompaniments. If we live according to our flesh, it will mean corruption, moral and spiritual degeneration; for we are in the corruptible condition.

PRESENT COURSE OF WORLD TO BEAR ON FUTURE

In their present condition the world cannot hope to gain everlasting life; for they have not come into relationship with the Life-Giver, although God has provided, as the Church knows, an opportunity for everlasting life to the whole world of mankind. But while the world is not yet on trial for this everlasting life, nevertheless their conduct has a decided bearing on their future. If now they are living according to the lines of selfishness—self-gratification—they will reap correspondingly, according to the influences that are at work in them. And this will leave them in a more and more corrupted condition as they continue so to live, and they will have more to overcome in the next Age, if they would ever gain everlasting life. They would be much more advanced and advantaged if they would follow the things of righteousness, if they would cultivate the principles of justice and love; and they will be much more degraded and handicapped if they follow the things of selfishness and impurity.

We might carry the matter clear back to Eden. In the case of Father Adam, when he sowed to self-gratification, when he ate of the forbidden fruit, he followed the wrong course; he failed to follow his best judgment, his conscience; he followed inclination. As a result he brought upon himself the death penalty, which gradually led to extinction of life; and all his posterity have shared his condemnation. Sad was the sowing, and most bitter and far-reaching has been the reaping. But through the mercy of God even man's terrible experiences with sin will prove a very valuable object lesson to angels and to all of God's intelligent creatures throughout eternity.

OCTOBER 9

Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?—Matt. 8:26.

Each experience should be helpful to us. If at first we were fearful and cried aloud, by and by we received the succor, with perhaps the reprimand, "O, thou of little faith"; but as lesson after lesson has come to us, the Master will expect—and we should expect of ourselves—greater faith, greater trust, greater peace, greater joy in the Lord, greater confidence in His presence with us and His care over us, and in His power to deliver us from the Adversary and from every evil thing, and to bring us eventually in safety to the port we seek—the Kingdom—Z '04, 60 (R 3324).

Sometimes the storms that the Christian mariner meets, as he sails over the sea of present evil conditions, cause the ship of his faith almost to capsize; at other times they cause it to fill with the water of distress, endangering its remaining above water; and nearly always they cause it to pitch to and fro by their violence. In such storms let us not forget that the Lord who commands wind and wave is near as our Protector. This will free our hearts from the fear that our ship of faith will sink. Like the Galilean storm, our tempests of trouble, subject to His mighty "Peace, be still!" will subside into a perfect calm. Knowing this let us neither fear nor lack faith, for He is with us—P '30, 166.

Parallel passages: Psa. 31:22; 42:5, 6; 77:7-9; Isa. 49:14, 15; Matt. 6:30; 14:29-31; 17:17; Mark 4:38-40; 5:36; Luke 8:23-25; 17:5; John 14:1; Gal. 6:12; Phil. 4:6, 7; 2 Tim. 4:16; 1 John 5:4.

Hymns: 56, 57, 124, 93, 330, 333, 60.

Poems of Dawn, 65: *O Thou of Little Faith.*

Tower Reading: Z '13, 60 (R 5188).

Questions: Have I manifested little faith? What occasioned it? How did I overcome it?

"O THOU OF LITTLE FAITH"

O THOU of little faith, why dost thou fear?
The tempest hath no power when I am near;
Will not the angry waves be still at My command?
Step out, I'll hold thy hand,
Then, wherefore dost thou *fear*?

O thou of little faith, why dost thou doubt?
Doth not Mine Angel compass thee about?
Are not My Father's promises as sure to thee
As they have proved to Me?
Then, wherefore dost thou *doubt*?

O thou of little faith, what dost thou dread?

Are not the lilies clothed, the sparrows fed?
Heed not the world, nor marvel that it hateth thee,
For so it hated Me,—
What, therefore, dost thou *dread*?

O thou of little faith, why dost thou shrink?
Why dost thou tremble at the river's brink?
Oh, hark! Above its tumult sweetly sounds My
"Come,
Thou art not far from *home*!
Then, wherefore wouldst thou *shrink*?"

R5188: THE ANCIENT WORTHIES

—Hebrews 11:1-19.—

"Our fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them."—
Psalm 22:4.

ST. PAUL in this lesson throws upon the screen vivid pictures of the wonders wrought by faith in ancient times, and then he gives a partial roll-call of the heroes of those faith-battles, and a hasty word-painting of the nature of their triumphs. The broad foundation for his dissertation is found in the first verse of this study—"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." As water is not a solid upon which our feet can travel, except it be congealed in the form of ice, so likewise *belief*, in the ordinary sense of the word, is not sufficient as a foundation for our trust and onward progress, unless that belief be congealed, solidified, into a substantial *faith*.

Thus we should always clearly differentiate between credulity and faith—credulity, which is reprehensible, and faith, which is commendable. A crystallized faith, such as will carry us safely over the quicksands of ignorance and superstition, and bring us safely to the goal which God has marked out for us, needs more than human assurances, more than our own or other men's imaginations. True faith seeks for a positive Message from the Lord. It requires diligence in its endeavor to find that Message. Then it becomes an evidence, or proof, of things invisible.

By such a faith in God and His promise to give Israel the land of Canaan, the two elders sent to spy out the land brought back a good report. Their companions, lacking that faith, looked merely to the strength of the Canaanites, and brought back an unfavorable report. By faith we believe in the Divine Power which created the planets, and the Divine Power which has ordered the ages and dispensations of human affairs, and which will bring out of these, results which were not at first apparent, except by the eye of faith.

ABRAHAM, ENOCH AND NOAH

By faith Abel offered to the Lord a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, and obtained the witness of his approval by God's acceptance of his offering. His acceptance still speaks to us in Abel's favor, although he is dead. Abel's faith, no doubt, was the result of an endeavor to draw nearer to God—to appreciate what sin is and why the death penalty had come. From this standpoint of faith, he was led to offer sacrificially animals which typified the better sacrifices by which reconciliation will eventually be effected between God and humanity.

On account of faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death. He "walked with God, and ... God took him." The story of Enoch's translation is vouched for more than once; and by faith we may accept it. There is no record as to where he was taken, except that he was not taken to Heaven. (John 3:13.) For aught we know to the contrary, God may have protected his life through all these centuries as an illustration of how human life could have been prolonged by Divine Power, if God had not placed the curse of death upon the race. Indeed, Enoch could be no exception to that curse. He is under the death sentence and could come to full perfection and Divine justification to life only through the merit of the Redeemer, even as others.

Noah's faith manifested itself by his obedience in the building of an ark, at a time when there was no apparent excuse for such a building, since not a drop of rain had fallen from the time of man's creation until that time. (Genesis 2:5.) God blessed his faith, and made him a channel of blessing to his family.

THE FAITHLESS NOT ACCEPTABLE NOW

St. Paul makes a sweeping statement—"Without faith it is impossible to please God." On the basis of this statement we may say, then, that a person is pleasing to God in proportion as he has faith, and displeasing in proportion as he lacks faith. Surely here we have an incentive to growth in faith, since all of God's people desire to be pleasing in His sight.

But faith is not alike easy with all mankind. Some can crystallize their faith in God and His promises into what is the same to them as an absolute knowledge, and on this faith-knowledge they can dare and do anything, and increasingly so. But this is not true of all. Many have less faith and are still children of God, and must needs pray, "Lord, increase our faith," and must seek to emulate the faith of others, and to be encouraged by the rewards of faith given to them. There are still others, however, to whom faith seems to be absolutely impossible. They cannot believe anything beyond their own five senses. They have never developed the sixth sense—of faith, confidence in the Lord.

What shall we say of these? Are they by this natural effect of heredity debarred from Divine favor to all eternity, because they do not please God—because "without faith it is impossible to please" Him? This is not the teaching of the Scriptures. They teach that a time is coming, under Messiah's gracious Kingdom, when the "knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth," reaching all classes. It will not be dependent upon faith, nor be merely for those who can exercise faith. The way will be made so clear and so plain that

even a wayfaring man and a simpleton need not err in his endeavor to find and to know and to appreciate the Truth.

But in the present time faith is an indispensable matter according to Divine arrangement, because the Father is seeking a special class to be the associates, the Bride and Joint-heir of His Son. Since these will thus be ushered into positions of great trust, as well as great honor and great service, they must needs be tempted, tested, in all points. Their faith in the Almighty must be implicit. Similarly, as we shall see, God has provided a special work for the Ancient Worthies mentioned in today's Study; and hence He has recognized as worthy for that work only such as could manifest great faith in Him and in His Word.

ABRAHAM LOOKED FOR A CITY

Coming to Abraham, St. Paul recounts the different steps of his faith-demonstration. He responded to the call and came into Canaan, not knowing the particulars respecting it beforehand. By faith he sojourned in the Land of Promise as a stranger, and dwelt in tents, as did also Isaac and Jacob, who were his associates in the Promise, and heirs through him. Sarah also exercised faith. The Apostle declares that she was thus assisted in becoming the mother of Isaac, and became identified with that Promise, which declares that Abraham's seed, through her, shall yet be as the sands of the seashore—innumerable.

Summing up (v. 13), St. Paul declares that all these noble characters died in faith, without receiving the things that had been promised to them. Their rejoicing was in the faith-view which they had from afar. So strong was their faith that they were content to be pilgrims and strangers—nomads. Their traveling up and down showed that none of the cities or countries through which they passed from time to time were wholly satisfactory to them. Yet they were not discontented in the sense that they wished to return to their former homeland, Haran. They were merely seeking a better country, a heavenly country, for they "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God."

At first glance, there is room for difference of opinion as respects the Apostle's meaning by these words. Did he mean that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were wanting to go to a heavenly country? Did he mean that they were looking for a place in the New Jerusalem, as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, is looking for that City—Messiah's Kingdom?

Such is not our thought. They had no Heavenly promises to think about. They had no Word of God to even suggest to them a change of nature from human to spirit being. All of their promises were of the earth, earthy—"All the *land* that thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed after thee," etc. To our understanding the country they looked for is the Paradise of the now near future, when "the wilderness shall blossom as the rose and the solitary places shall be glad," and "streams shall break forth in the desert," and the blessing of the Lord shall supplant the curse of sin and death. This is the country which God purposes shall be the inheritance of humanity in general, when brought back into harmony with the Divine will, during Messiah's reign of righteousness.

When we read that Abraham sought "a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God," our minds naturally go to the New Jerusalem, the City of God, which is eventually to come down from God to earth. But that will not be a literal city. The entire passage is symbolical. The New Jerusalem will be the Messianic Kingdom. It will be the Capital, or center of Government, for the reorganized social order of earth. From it will go forth the Law of God, the knowledge of God, the blessing of God. From it will emanate power and authority, which for a thousand years will rule the world in righteousness, overthrow sin, death and all who are in sympathy with sin, and uplift all who love righteousness and Truth.

The New Jerusalem primarily will be the Church in glory, on the spirit plane, the Kingdom or rule of God, emanating from Messiah. But it will have its earthly representatives, too. The very ones to whom St. Paul here refers, found faithful in their time—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Prophets and all the Ancient Worthies—will be princes in the earth, representatives of the invisible Messiah and His Bride, backed by their full power and authority.—Psalm 45:16.

Of these Jesus spoke, saying, "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the holy Prophets in the Kingdom." But He Himself has said, "Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more." Of the Church the Apostle declares, "We shall be like Him." We all must be changed. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, on the spirit plane.

In substance, then, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the faithful of the past, waited for the promised resurrection of the dead, to be accomplished under the administration of Messiah's Government—a government being symbolically represented by a city, as St. Petersburg represents Russia; Paris represents France; London represents Great Britain; Berlin, Germany; and Washington, the United States.

OCTOBER 10

Ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him—Col. 3:9, 10.

Only in our minds, in our wills, have the old things passed away and all things become new. Actually, this change will be accomplished when this mortal shall have put on immortality, when this corruptible shall be raised in incorruption—raised in glory, in power, as spirit beings. But meantime, in order to be counted worthy of a share in the resurrection of the just, it is required of us that we shall demonstrate our willingness of mind, our earnest desire to be all that the Lord would have us be; and in no way can this be better demonstrated to the Lord and to ourselves, or prove more helpful, than by keeping a strict surveillance of our hearts and of our thoughts—Z '04, 25 (R 3304).

God's people have put off the old man in the sense of giving up the human will selfward and worldward. They have put on the new man, in the sense of taking God's will as their own, not only in human but also in spiritual respects. Thus the image of God is being daily renewed in them, as they are being changed from the glory of a less near to the glory of a more near likeness, until the image, character, of God is perfected in them. And the means by which this change is wrought is the Word of God understandingly received into, and faithfully practiced by, good and honest hearts, amid life's experiences—P '35, 131.

Parallel passages: Eph. 2:10; 4:22, 24, 25; Rom. 6:4, 6, 13, 14; 12:2; Ezek. 36:26; 2 Cor. 3:18; 4:6; 5:17; Psa. 51:10; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16; Gal. 6:15; Titus 2:11, 12; Gen. 1:27.

Hymns: 105, 78, 198, 114, 196, 74, 4.

Poems of Dawn, 170: *The Changed Cross*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 147 (R 5685).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences with the old man and the new man? How were they met? In what did they result?

THE CHANGED CROSS

IT was a time of sadness, and my heart,
Although it knew and loved the better part,
Felt wearied with the conflict and the strife,
And all the needful discipline of life.

And while I thought of these as given to me—
My trial tests of faith and love to be—
It seemed as if I never could be sure
That faithful to the end I should endure.

And thus no longer trusting to His might,
Who saith we "walk by faith and not by sight,"
Doubting, and almost yielding to despair,
The thought arose—My cross I cannot bear.

Far heavier its weight must surely be
Than those of others which I daily see;
Oh! if I might another burden choose,
Methinks I should not fear my crown to lose.

A solemn silence reigned on all around—
E'en Nature's voices uttered not a sound;
The evening shadows seemed of peace to tell,
And sleep upon my weary spirit fell.

A moment's pause, and then a heavenly light
Beamed full upon my wondering, raptured sight;
Angels on silvery wings seemed everywhere,
And angels' music thrilled the balmy air.

Then One, more fair than all the rest to see—
One to whom all others bowed the knee—
Came gently to me as I trembling lay,
And, "Follow Me," He said, "I am the Way."

Then speaking, thus, He led me far above;
And there beneath a canopy of love,
Crosses of divers shape and size were seen,
Larger and smaller than mine own had been.

And one there was most beautiful to behold—
A little one, with jewels set in gold;
Ah! this, methought, I can with comfort wear,
For it will be an easy one to bear.

And so the little cross I quickly took,
But all at once my frame beneath it shook;
The sparkling jewels, fair were they to *see*,
But far too heavy was their *weight* for me.

This may not be, I cried, and looked again,
To see if any here could ease my pain;
But one by one I passed them slowly by,
Till on a lovely one I cast mine eye;

Fair flowers around its sculptured form entwined,

And grace and beauty seemed in it combined;
Wondering, I gazed, and still I wondered more
To think so many should have passed it o'er.

But, oh! that form so beautiful to see
Soon made its hidden sorrows known to me;
Thorns lay beneath those flowers and colors fair:
Sorrowing, I said, "This cross I may not bear."

And so it was with each and all around—
Not one to suit my *need* could there be found;
Weeping, I laid each heavy burden down,
As my Guide gently said, "No cross, no crown!"

At length to Him I raised my saddened heart;
He knew its sorrow, bid its doubts depart.
"Be not afraid," He said, "but trust in Me—
My perfect love shall now be shown to thee."

And then, with lightened eyes and willing feet,
Again I turned, mine earthly cross to meet,
With forward footsteps, turning not aside,
For fear some hidden evil might betide.

And there, in the prepared, appointed way—
Listening to hear and ready to obey—
A cross I quickly found of plainest form,
With only words of love inscribed thereon.

With thankfulness I raised it from the rest,
And joyfully acknowledged it the best—
The only one of all the many there
That I could feel was good for me to bear.

And while I thus my chosen one confessed,
I saw a heavenly brightness on it rest;
And as I bent, my burden to sustain,
I recognized mine own old cross again!

But, oh! how different did it seem to be,
Now I had learned its preciousness to see!
No longer could I unbelieving say,
Perhaps another is a better way.

Ah, no! henceforth mine own desire shall be
That He who knows me best should choose for me;

And so whate'er His love sees good to send,
I'll trust it's best, because He knows the end.

R5685: THE NEW CREATURE'S CONQUEST OF HIS FLESH

"Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."

—Colossians 3:9, 10.

DEVELOPMENT is necessary to the life of the New Creation. In our text the term "old man" stands for the human will, which once dominated the being. All who become Christians in the Bible sense of the term not only accept Christ and trust in Him as their Savior, but devote their old will, their old nature, to *death*. Thenceforth that old nature is repudiated, and is no longer to control the life of the individual. But the *body* of the "old man"—the fleshly tabernacle—is still retained after the old will has been discharged and the new will has come in. The New Creature, with new impulses, a new purpose, uses the mortal body as its servant. The new will is now master.

This new will is the will of God, or in other words, it is a will to do God's will. Our consecration is a consecration to do the will of God, to be dead to any other will, whether our own natural will or the will of another. This includes the dedication of everything we have or had hoped to have as human beings. It means the laying on the altar our every power, our every ability, our strength, our time, our pocketbook, our influence. Those who make a Covenant of Sacrifice are accepted up to the full number of the Elect. They will, if faithful unto death, receive new bodies in the resurrection.

KNOWLEDGE THE BASIS OF DEVELOPMENT

In our context the Apostle explains how this putting off and putting on is done. This "new man"—this spirit-begotten New Creature—is to develop by acting upon the knowledge that it gains. We had some knowledge before consecration, or we would not have thought of taking such a step. First, the Lord permitted a measure of knowledge to come to us. Then when we had accepted the terms and presented ourselves for sacrifice, the Savior's merit was imputed to us, and we were received of God and begotten as New Creatures by His Spirit, His power; and the good work has been going on in all those who have met the necessary conditions of development.

We must grow in love. The Apostle tells us that we might have all knowledge and yet be as nothing. Knowledge alone will not suffice. However, knowledge is the basis of faith and obedience. Without knowledge we could accomplish nothing. Knowledge shows us the will of God on the one hand and the selfishness that appertains to the fallen human nature on the other. It shows us the love and generosity that belong to the new nature. It shows us the Lord's character—the character that we are to imitate. We are to be "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created us"—created us as New Creatures.

As St. Paul expresses it elsewhere, we are to be transformed—formed over. We have a new *will* from the *beginning*, but it requires some time to transform our *minds*. Our minds being accustomed to reasoning along the lines of the flesh, the old nature, it takes some length of time before they are so entirely renewed as to view things from the Divine standpoint. But only as we thus progress can we form a Christlike character.

RENEWING OF CHURCH AND WORLD DIFFERENT

Not only are we to have our *minds renewed*, but our bodies are to be brought into *subjection* to the *new mind*, our *new will*. Because our bodies are earthly and imperfect through the fall, we can never hope to bring them into *complete* subserviency to the new mind. There will always be more or less of conflict. But we are to deaden, to treat as though they were nothing, these desires and impulses of the depraved flesh. Thus we make progress, being transformed day by day into the image and likeness of our God and of His dear Son. Those who attain this character-likeness to the Master will in due time be granted the Divine nature.

This change of mind comes only to those who are spirit-begotten; it does not come to the world. The Lord will deal with the world during the incoming Age. Mankind also will need to be renewed; but theirs will not be a renewal such as is granted to the Church. The world will need a new mind, and must learn to overcome all their fallen tendencies, but they will be required to give up only that which is sinful. Their renewal will be along the lines of Restitution, a restoration, to the former condition of the perfect man. They will not have a new mind that is in conflict with human nature, as has the Church. The world will not renounce their human nature; they are to renounce only sin and to bring their human nature, by Divine assistance then granted, up to perfection.

ALL MUST ATTAIN THE LIKENESS OF GOD

In the end, we see, every being who will have everlasting life on any plane will be in the likeness of God—the image of God. Father Adam in his perfection had this image; the holy angels have this image; Jesus had this image of the Father; and the Church must have this image. The world, also, by and by, must have this image of God. All must love and serve righteousness. Wrong must always be repulsive. All who attain life everlasting will see Divine Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power, and will thoroughly conform themselves to that standard in all their thoughts, words and deeds. All who do not attain this image of God by the close of the next Age—the thousand years of Christ's reign—will be cut off from life, without remedy.

The Lord Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." (John 17:3.) To know God means to have intimate acquaintance with Him, to be like Him in character, to be able to view matters as He views them. Only those who have the mind of God will be granted eternal life—whether of the Church now or of the world in the next Age.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN MIND AND BODY

St. Paul brings to the attention of the Church the fact that all true Christians are New Creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), and therefore may be spoken of as separate and distinct from their mortal bodies. (See verses 1 to 4 of same chapter.) This will never be true of the world in general; it is true only of those who are begotten of the Holy Spirit. The Lord does not judge these New Creatures according to the imperfections of their flesh, because these are *covered*. They will prove the measure of their love and loyalty by the way in which they fight against sin and the desires of the flesh, and especially against a rebellious spirit in their own flesh.

Each child of God has an enemy in his own body, and the more so because our bodies through the fall have become more or less surcharged with sin. The New Creature wills to do the Lord's will. Hence from the time that the New Creature has an existence there is a conflict between this New Creature and the old body. The Apostle Paul declared that he browbeat his body, kept his body under the control of the new mind; and he intimates that this is the only way to be a follower of the Lord Jesus.—1 Corinthians 9:27.

THE FLESH TO BE THOROUGHLY SUBJUGATED

This matter of keeping the body under had a beginning. All our former lives we had been asking our body, What is your will? What is your desire? What will please you? Therefore it is a somewhat difficult matter now to bring the body under the control of the new will and to be able to say, "Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done." Just as a colt needs to be broken, to be brought into subjection, so it is with our flesh. If it is thoroughly broken, it will remain in subjection. From time to time it will, of course, attempt to assert itself, but it must be conquered; for if it is not thoroughly broken and subjugated, if it is allowed to have more or less of its own way, there will always be danger of a runaway or of some other difficulty, and of final catastrophe.

We are not to take the Apostle too literally when he says that he browbeats his body. His thought is, not that we are literally to handle our body in a rough way, to maltreat it, as some have thought, but that we are to subjugate it, to teach it a thorough lesson. The object of this is that the body may learn to be a good servant of the New Creature. The Spirit of the Lord cannot quicken our mortal body until we have first brought it into subjection. Even if the triumph of the New Creature means the quick death of the body, it must be made submissive; for after we have decided that as human beings our own will is not to be any longer in control, but the Lord's will is to govern, the only thing to do is to set to work to use our body in His service. This will be done more or less thoroughly as we grow as New Creatures. As this battle goes on, if it is faithfully waged, our flesh becomes weaker, and the new mind is renewed day by day. We learn more fully to put our bodies under and bring them into the service of the new will. It should be manifest to all that we are seeking to do the will of the Lord; and that the will of the flesh is dead, and not to be entertained for a moment.

THE TESTING OF THE BELIEVER

The Apostle tells one reason why he kept his body under—lest, having instructed others how they should do, he himself should make a failure and become a castaway. Likewise with every true Christian this is a matter of supreme importance, and should be particularly noted by every one who is a teacher in the Church.

In choosing a Bride for His Son, the Father is making a selection from those who accept the Gospel Message and desire to draw near to Him. The first test is as to whether or not they will make a full consecration to God. The second test is as to whether, after they have made their consecration, they will conquer the flesh and bring it into subjection. The third test is as to whether they will strive always to keep the flesh in subjection, even unto the end of the way.

The Lord is watching our course continually. His eye is ever upon us to see to what extent we are zealous in crucifying our flesh. Those who are in dead earnest in this matter are the ones whom He is seeking. He seeks a godly seed—those who have the disposition of the Master; and the Master's disposition has ever been in direct antagonism to everything sinful. "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows," was spoken by the Father of our Lord Jesus. Moreover, the Master gladly laid down His life in sacrifice to do the Father's will and to save the world.

And so the Father has, during the Gospel Age, been seeking for the Bride of His Son those who preeminently love righteousness, who hate iniquity, and are glad to be living sacrifices, to be used up in God's service. In proportion as we manifest the spirit which actuated our Lord—a love for that which is right, a promptness to fight against all sin in ourselves, and a spirit of loving sacrifice—we shall be copies of God's dear Son. If we fail to have a proper zeal and energy in this respect, we shall be unfit to be granted the reward promised—"the prize of the High Calling"—and shall be rejected, be cast away.

One who had committed the sin unto death would be a castaway in the most absolute sense. Even the Great Company class must prove loyal of heart and mind and must hate sin, though cast away as regards the "prize." The degree of love and zeal we manifest in fighting against the weaknesses of the flesh has much to do with the attainment of the prize, in determining whether or not we shall be inheritors of the highest nature with our Master—the Divine nature.

We find that in our flesh there is a tendency to revive from its condition of reckoned deadness, and to struggle for supremacy. Hence, as we have said, the new nature must be continually on the alert to maintain its ascendancy, to fight the good fight of faith, that we may gain the "crown of life," may be overcomers in the highest sense—"more than conquerors." We are in a position of great responsibility.

TWO CLASSES IN THE WORLD

There are at the present time two classes in the world—the fleshly and the spiritual. The fleshly live according to their natural tendencies; the spiritual live by faith, contrary to the flesh. Those who become footstep followers of Jesus are begotten of the Holy Spirit; hence they have been lifted to a higher plane than others of mankind. To them the old things of their past lives have passed away, have been renounced, and all things have become new.

The Apostle declares that if these live after the flesh—according to their natural inclinations and the desires and ambitions of the world—it means that they have descended again to the plane of the *world*; and they will *die*. It is only if we faithfully endure, if we suffer with Christ, that we shall reign with Him. Our sufferings with Christ are not in the upholding of some foolishness—of wearing a certain cut of hair, or a certain style of dress, etc.—but in active opposition to error, in living apart from the spirit of the world, and in energy and faithfulness, according to opportunity, in the spread of the Truth. The Lord's side is to be our side in everything. This brings us into conflict with the world and with the tendencies and proclivities of our own flesh; for we naturally love the things that the world loves.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY AND OUR DANGER

We are not to blame the world for living according to the flesh; for this course is the natural bent of the fallen nature. But it is different with us, by reason of the fact that we have sacrificed the earthly in order to obtain the spiritual. It would be a disastrous matter with us if we should live after the flesh, should sow to the flesh, instead of to the Spirit. It is not possible for us to live fully up to the Spirit, but it is possible for us to make a strenuous endeavor to do so. We can live *after* the Spirit, though we cannot measure up to the perfect standard. We can do our best; we can make our plans and arrangements in harmony with what God's Holy Spirit would dictate and approve, as God gives us wisdom to discern. This is the only course by which we can reach the eternal life and glory which the Lord has promised to the faithful Church.

We recognize, indeed, that there are two classes which will attain spiritual life; but only one will be granted an abundant entrance into the Kingdom. Those who sow liberally to the Spirit will reap the larger reward. Those who sow sparingly will reap the smaller reward. Those who are striving to live in full harmony with God, and contrary to everything that is in opposition to God, seeking by prayer and the study of the Word to ascertain His will, shall win the promised prize.—Philippians 3:14.

But those who have been spirit-begotten, and who then live according to the flesh, are not to expect any reward—not even Restitution. There can be nothing for them but the Second Death. They have had their chance for life and have abused it. Christ came to give *one* full, individual opportunity to each and all—and *only one*. God gave Adam an opportunity for everlasting life, but he was then inexperienced with sin and its consequences; hence, he is to be granted in his awakening an opportunity equal to that given the remainder of the world. Christ died to redeem *all*, and thus to give to all

mankind, in due time, a full, fair opportunity for life eternal, after experience with the nature and the results of sin.

The Church are having their trial now. This class, which is now receiving its opportunity, is limited. None can come to the full degree of responsibility, except those who have the clear enlightenment and special opportunities now granted to only a comparatively few. These, after having once been begotten of the Holy Spirit, must gain spiritual life, or else fail altogether and go into the Second Death.

In the next Age the world will be brought forth from the tomb—the death state—in an imperfect, blemished condition. The great Mediator will be in charge of the world's interests, having then made satisfaction to Justice on their behalf. It will be His mission to help mankind up to perfection—all who will. But any who continue to live, or to attempt to live, after the sinful cravings of their fallen flesh will eventually be destroyed; for those who prefer sin, after coming to a clear knowledge of the difference between good and evil, and having access to all needed assistance to rise out of their fallen estate, will be cut off as cumberers of the ground and corrupters of the earth. Those who during the incoming Age would attain eternal life on the human plane must seek to live in harmony with God's Law, with righteousness; and thus they will reach full perfection and restitution, under the guidance and assistance of The Messiah.

THE SPECIAL BATTLES OF THE CHURCH

But much more glorious than even this is the prospect before those who are now faithfully running the race for the prize of the High Calling, held out to the Church! There are, however, enemies yet to be vanquished, and victories to be gained, if we would receive the crown. Until the final battle is fought, we must not relax our vigilance for a moment nor lay aside one piece of our armor.

Considering particularly what are some of the battles of the New Creature, we realize that many of them pertain to the weaknesses of the flesh through heredity—sin working in our mortal bodies, seeking to bring us into captivity. After we have become New Creatures, the gross sins of the flesh gradually become distasteful even to those once in bondage to them. When these are conquered, a great victory has been won. But there are subtle sins that lurk in the flesh of all those who have become the Lord's; and these dispositions hide themselves in such a manner that they frequently deceive the new will, which needs to be educated up to a clear appreciation of the principles of righteousness.

It is an advance lesson in the School of Christ that hatred of a brother is murder, that we are not only to hate the *act* of murder, but also the murder *spirit*, and are so fully to cast out this spirit as to have nothing but love and kindly wishes in the heart toward others, even our enemies. Only the more advanced and better drilled pupils in the School of Christ see clearly and distinctly the meaning of the Apostle's words when he denominates anger (fleshly wrath), malice, hatred, strife, envyings, and evil speakings, as the works of the Devil. These must be fought to the finish.

"WE BESEECH YOU, THEREFORE," BELOVED

All the children of God must come to see that "*love* worketh no ill to his neighbor," nor does it *wish* ill. We must see that such evil dispositions originate in the mind, in the heart; and as soon as the true soldier of the cross perceives any of these sins manifesting themselves outwardly or lurking in his heart, he will begin a vigorous campaign against them, and will go to the Throne of Grace for the promised grace to help in time of need. Only thus can the child of God keep his record clear and retain the Lord's favor and blessing.

Let each of us then, dearly beloved, apply earnestly to ourselves these lessons. Let us diligently follow the example of the beloved Apostle Paul, and "keep under" our bodies, lest we become castaways. Let us keep ever before our minds the thought that we have "put off the old man with his deeds"; and that we have "put on the new man," and are now on trial for life or death eternal; that we are being tested, are being given the opportunity to prove the sincerity and depth of our consecration to the Lord. Surely this will spur us on and energize us to faithfulness. Let us remember that the keeping under of our body appertains to food and drink, to the clothing we wear, to the way we spend our consecrated time, to our every thought, word and deed.

These battlings of the new mind against the flesh are a "good fight"—good in the sense that they are fightings against the entrenched weaknesses and besetments of the fallen nature, against temptations from within and without, that appeal to us as human beings. They are a "fight of faith" because the entire course of the New Creature is one of faith; for "we walk by faith, not by sight." We could never succeed in this fight unaided. Hence we must keep very close to the Lord. We must "*watch* and pray," putting on and keeping securely fastened to us the whole armor of God. The time is short in which to complete this work in ourselves. Then let us be diligent!

OCTOBER 11

Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD—Isa. 52:11.

The Divine method seems to be to make a clear separation between the servants of God and the servants of evil. The privilege of testifying for God or being ambassadors for the Truth is a favor reserved for the Lord's own people. He seeketh not the evil one nor the fallen demons nor evil men or women to be heralds of the good tidings. The Lord's people should note this matter carefully and resent the services of any who do not give evidences of being in heart union with the Lord. "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to ... take my covenant into thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee?" (Psa. 50:16, 17)—Z '04, 28 (R 3309).

The vessels used by the typical priests in their ministries in the tabernacle and temple represent the Biblical doctrines, precepts, promises, exhortations, prophecies, histories and types, which are used in ministrations for teaching, refutative, cleansing and character-developing purposes, combined with Bible passages. To bear these vessels would signify to minister with them. Cleanliness from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit is becoming to God's people in their ministrations. Therefore, they should daily wash themselves with the water of the Truth contained in the Bible. This will purify them for their service and fit them properly to administer the Word—P '34, 143.

Parallel passages: Num. 4:1-20; 18:1-7; Ezra 1:7-11; Ezek. 3:4; Matt. 10:5-16, 38, 39; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Tim. 1:18-20; 3; 4; 5:21, 22; 2 Tim. 2:21-26; 3:1-14; 4:1-5.

Hymns: 246, 1, 20, 78, 95, 130, 198.

Poems of Dawn, 45: *The Refining*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 184 (R 5258).

Questions: Has the cleansing work gone on this week? How? What hindered or helped therein? What did it effect?

THE REFINING

MAL. 3:3

"TIS sweet to feel that He who tries
The silver takes His seat
Beside the fire that purifies,
Lest too intense a heat—
Raised to consume the base alloy—
The precious metals, too, destroy.

'Tis good to think how well He knows
The silver's power to bear
The ordeal through which it goes;

And that with skill and care
He'll take it from the fire when fit,
With His own hand to polish it.

'Tis blessedness to know that He
The piece He hath begun
Will not forsake till He can see—
To prove the work well done—
His image, by its brightness known,
Reflecting glory like His own.

But ah! how much of earthly mould,
Dark relics of the mine,
Lost from the ore, must He behold—
How long must He refine,
Ere in the silver He can trace
The first faint semblance of His face!

Thou great Refiner! sit Thou by,
Thy promise to fulfil!
Moved by Thy hand, beneath Thine eye,
And melted at Thy will,
O may Thy work forever shine,
Reflecting beauty pure as Thine!

R5258: SPIRITUAL VISION PROPORTIONATE TO HEART PURITY

"Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord."—Isa. 52:11.

THE VESSELS of the Lord in the Tabernacle, and also in the Temple, were those vessels which were connected with the holy services—in the Court, in the Holy and the Most Holy. They consisted of hooks, censer, pans snuffers, cups, bowls—a variety of precious vessels. Those used in the Holy and the Most Holy were of gold, and those used in the Court were of copper.

The only ones who were allowed to handle these vessels at all were the consecrated class. The priests handled these in the Holy and the Most Holy in certain parts of the service, and in less important services they were covered up and borne in the hands of the Levites. So the vessels were handled only by the priests and the Levites. They required a cleansing before being used, and so were washed. Every bearer of these was required to be cleansed, typically washed free from sin.

In the antitype, our Lord is the great High Priest. The most faithful of His followers are those who are counted as the Priesthood in God's sight, on trial now to see whether they will constitute the Priests in glory. But all who have made consecration have the

Robe of Christ's Righteousness. Whoever is not thus clothed upon by the righteousness of Christ, whoever is not thus justified in God's sight, can have neither part nor lot in handling the holy things—the precious truths.

The antitypical significance of the Prophet's exhortation in our text is that as in the type God required that everything should be clean, so *we* must be clean, pure of heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart." We have not perfection of flesh at the present time. When we have come into Christ, this imperfection of the flesh is said to be covered by a clean, white robe, representing the righteousness, the merit, of Christ. We must abide in Him. So long as we are in the flesh, we must have the Robe of Christ's Righteousness, in order to be clean.

Moreover, as it was required of the priests that they keep their robes clean, so we are exhorted to put away all filthiness of the flesh and to keep our robes clean. We are told that the Church will be without spot, and clean. (Eph. 5:26, 27.) And if we marvel how this could be, the Scriptures show us how it is. We were cleansed from sins of the past when the robe was given us, and this means also a provision on God's part for the continued cleansing of all the sins that are ours through weakness, through temptation, through unavoidable failures. But nothing in this provision indicates a cleansing from wilful sin.

PURITY OF HEART ESSENTIAL

We as New Creatures could not have wilful sin and still remain New Creatures; for the New Creature represents the mind of Christ, which is holy. Whatever weaknesses and imperfections there may be are attached to the flesh; and all these are covered by the Robe of Christ's Righteousness. We approach the Throne of Heavenly Grace and find grace to help in every time of need.

The context seems to make the text applicable in the present time. It was applicable in our Lord's day. He was holy, harmless, undefiled. It was applicable in the Apostles' day. All these must be clean. One, who was unclean, Judas, went to his own destruction. We believe that he went into the Second Death because he failed to use the opportunities that had been given to him.

As it was possible for Judas to fail, it is also possible for us to fail—to a greater or a less extent. As he was put out of the Divine service because of impurity of heart, love of money, etc., so we may be sure that all not *pure in heart* will be put out of this service. Just as none would be placed in this service if not pure in heart, so if any become impure they will be put out of it.

This is illustrated by the case of Ananias and Sapphira, who were put out of their affiliation with the Priesthood because of their love of money and their attempt to deceive. We remember this also in the case of Simon Magus and others mentioned in the New Testament. There might be some defiled of heart and other people not know of it. As the Scriptures intimate, there might be some highly esteemed among men, and not

highly esteemed in God's sight. And there might be some not much esteemed among men, but highly esteemed of God. "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not."—I John 3:1.

PRESENT-DAY OPPONENTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

No doubt there are those occupying pulpits who may esteem themselves as really the ministers of God, and be thus esteemed of others, who do not honor His Word. We are told that some of the ministers of Satan are thought to be ministers of God. (2 Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 2:2; 3:9.) Some of them confess that they have no faith, no God at all. Some of them say that God is simply the god of nature. And others, again, say that they believe in God, but do not believe in the Scriptures.

We cannot suppose that these are bearing the vessels of the Lord's House in any sense of the word. Probably they never did bear these vessels. Or possibly they might have done so, and then gone into error, gone out of the Court condition altogether, become enemies of the cross of Christ. (Philippians 3:18.) The Apostle speaks of some such who hold *down* (Greek *katecho*) the Truth in unrighteousness. In this text the word *hold* is used, not in the sense of *retaining* the Truth, but of *oppressing* it.—Romans 1:18.

In another Epistle the Apostle speaks of some who preach Christ with contention (Phil. 1:15, 16.); but he is not in any way here referring to those bearing the vessels of the Lord's House. He seems to refer to those who have not known Christ, but who nevertheless were drawing attention to the fact that there is a Christ; that they had heard that there was such a claim put forth—that there is a Christ—just as there are some today who are more or less calling attention to certain features of the Truth. We would not think that these in any sense of the word are bearing the vessels of the Lord's House, but rather that they are opponents.

The passage from which our text is taken seems to indicate that those who bear the vessels of the Lord's House would have a special force and influence at the present time. This is shown in the statement, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him who bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Isaiah 52:7.) This seems to be applicable now in a sense that it never was previously; for the time for the Kingdom reign is practically here, the time for this Message of God is at hand. We believe that the Kingdom of God is in process of erection, and the gathering of the saints now in process of completion. With the completion of this class will come the inauguration of the Kingdom.

The context also shows that the time is near when the Message shall be preached to every creature. We believe that this is even now being fulfilled. Many are seeing the Restitution of all things and the glorious outcome of the Divine Plan. All who would be thus engaged in proclaiming the Message are exhorted to be clean.

THE PURE IN HEART THE TARGET OF THE ENEMY

The intimation of the Scriptures everywhere is that there are adverse influences at work in the world, tending to defile the people of God. They all have, of course, through the weaknesses of their own flesh, a sufficiency of temptation, we might say, to overcome. But the Scriptures say that this is not all they have to contend against. There are fallen angels that operate through occult influences and that are intent upon defiling especially the saintly class. But they are intent upon defiling all.

The purer the person, the more surely will he be the target. You notice that the speckled birds are more a mark for the huntsman than are the others. Thus all who are bearing the vessels of the Lord's House are special targets for the fiery darts of the Wicked One. So we must contend against the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Those who are in the right condition of heart, the pure in heart, earnest as the Lord's children, watch to keep their garments clean. Unless they watch, they will surely get their garments defiled. Satan is specially endeavoring to touch them; and we know that wherever he would touch there is defilement. Whoever the Wicked One touches receives a measure of injury. And there is a measure of culpability in the individual before he is touched.

The suggestion is that to whatever extent one becomes defiled, unclean, in that proportion he would not be fit to be entrusted with the vessels of the Lord's House. Perhaps all of God's people can say from experience that they know something of what this means. Doubtless it is the experience of all of the Lord's children that in proportion as their hearts are clean their spiritual vision is clear. And in proportion as they depart from this purity, in that proportion they would have less and less opportunity for service—for bearing the vessels of the Truth.

OCTOBER 12

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow—Matt. 6:28.

Our Lord calls attention to how such simple things in nature should be studied, be *considered*. The lessons to be learned in connection with all the affairs of life will be helpful to such as approach the study from the right standpoint, of faith in the Creator, and a realization that He is necessarily the embodiment and representative of the very highest and very noblest qualities of which the human mind could conceive; that He is perfect in Justice, perfect in Wisdom, perfect in Power, perfect in Love. ... The heart that thus *considers* makes progress, grows in grace, in knowledge, in love. The heart that fails to *consider* the little things fails to be able to appreciate the larger things, and thus is hindered from a proper consideration of God and from a proper appreciation of His plan, and thus from a proper appreciation of His character—Z '04, 37, 38 (R 3312).

The lesson which the Lord here inculcates is not that we should be inactive and indolent, but that we be free from worry, while co-operating with Him in producing our growth in grace and knowledge; for the lilies of the field do work, but do so without worry or exercise of anxiety. They absorb the sap which they imbibe. In doing this free from worry, as they grow in beauty, they teach us that we are faithfully to imbibe the Truth and absorb its Spirit, and while doing so to be free from worry and anxious care. Such a course will enable us to grow beautiful spiritually, with a beauty surpassing that of the lilies of the field. 'Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished!—P '33, 147.

Parallel passages: Prov. 16:3; Jer. 17:7, 8; Matt. 6:25-27, 29-34; Psa. 55:22; Luke 12:23; Phil. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:7; Job 38:41; Psa. 104:10, 11.

Hymns: 313, 56, 63, 87, 99, 330, 333.

Poems of Dawn, 185: *I Can Trust*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 341 (R 5990).

Questions: Have I this week worried or trusted? Why? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

I CAN TRUST

I CANNOT see, with my small human sight,
Why God should lead this way or that for me;
I only know He saith, "Child, follow me."
But I can trust.

I know not why my path should be at times
So straitly hedged, so strangely barred before;
I only know God could keep wide the door.
But I can trust.

I often wonder, as with trembling hand
I cast the seed along the furrowed ground,
If ripened fruit for God will there be found.
But I can trust.

I cannot know why suddenly the storm
Should rage so fiercely round me in its wrath;
But this I know, God watches still my path—
And I can trust.

R5990: ONE OF THE MASTER'S FORCEFUL AND BEAUTIFUL LESSONS

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

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

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

SOME HAVE HIS PROMISE—SOME HAVE NOT

Undoubtedly much that our Lord said to the Jews would not have been said to Gentiles; for the Gentiles were then under the general curse and condemnation—the whole world was alienated from God. The people of Israel alone had been brought back into covenant relationship with God, through the Law Covenant made at Mount Sinai; hence different words would be applicable to them. Having come into relationship with God, His promises were theirs. All things should work for their blessing—their cattle, their fields, everything, would be blessed of the Lord, if they would be faithful to Him. Our Lord was, therefore, in line with this thought, exhorting the children of Israel to have greater confidence in God, greater trust in Him who had chosen them to be His peculiar people.

We, like the Master, should make a clear distinction between the persons to whom we would give consolation and assurances of God's care, and all others. We are to remember that some have come into His family and some have not! that some have His promises as

theirs, and some have not. We are not to deceive others and to imply that they have a right to claim as their own, promises which were never given to them. Rather, we shall do them more good if we point out that these promises are conditional—only for those who make a covenant with the Lord under the special arrangement open during this Gospel Age. To the Christian this lesson of unflinching trust and confidence in God is a very important one, and to have learned it represents a very considerable growth in grace and in knowledge—in the spirit of love, which casts out all fear. It means a nearness to God, a fellowship with Him, which those who have not learned this lesson cannot enjoy.

THE WORLD'S HEAVY BURDENS

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

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

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

PROPER CONSIDERATION OF THE LILY

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

about me." It simply assimilates what it can absorb from the earth, and from the atmosphere what God has provided for it there. It does not say, "I think that I shall go to another place, I cannot grow here," but it does the best it can wherever it happens to be.

The lilies of Palestine to which our Lord referred were evidently not the kind of flowers that we generally term lilies, but were apparently of some other plant family, and a very numerous species, we should judge, growing everywhere. Those who are accustomed to the flowers of Palestine point to a common reddish flower which they think was meant by "the lilies of the field."

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

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

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

REST AND PEACE IN PERFECT TRUST

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

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

ASKING FOR DAILY NEEDS

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

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

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

"HOW LONG, OH LORD, HOW LONG?"

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

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

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

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

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

* * *

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

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

OCTOBER 13

I will show thee my faith by my works—Jas. 2:18.

While the Lord's people of the present age are not to be judged by their works but by their faith, nevertheless, works will be required. By our works we demonstrate our faith, and, thank God, imperfect works can demonstrate to Him the loyalty of our intentions, our wills. ... If our works demonstrate to the Lord the sincerity of our faith, that faith will be acceptable to Him, and we will be counted perfect and be granted a share in the Kingdom and all the great and precious things which the Lord has in reservation for those who love Him—not merely in word but also in deeds—for those who strive by the deeds of life to show forth, to demonstrate, their love—Z '04, 45 (R 3317).

Faith does not consist simply in belief in understandable propositions, though it requires such a belief as a foundation. It must be fully persuaded of the thing believed, make it its own and act upon it. Such a faith is a living power energizing one's thoughts, motives, words and acts. A true faith will, therefore, evidence itself in works; and wherever these are absent, the presence of a real faith may well be questioned. Let us therefore demonstrate that we possess an enlightening, justifying, sanctifying and delivering faith by corresponding works; for in Christ Jesus a faith that works by love is alone availing—P '32, 150.

Parallel passages: Matt. 5:16; 7:16-18, 20; John 13:38; 15:5, 8; Gal. 5:6; Jas. 1:27; 2:17, 19-26; 3:13; Gen. 22:9, 12; 15:6; Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; 6:9, 10; Phil. 2:12, 13; Titus 3:14; Heb. 11; 1 John 2:6; Rev. 2:19.

Hymns: 196, 198, 34, 4, 114, 125, 78.

Poems of Dawn, 21: *It Is Not the Deed We Do*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 139 (R 5892).

Questions: Have I this week evidenced by works the genuineness of my faith? How? What did they effect?

IT IS NOT THE DEED WE DO

IT is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be ever so fair,
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with holy care
In the heart of the deed so fair.

The love is the priceless thing,
The treasure our treasure must hold;
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
Or tell the worth of the gold

By the love that cannot be told.

R5892: FAITH DEMONSTRATED BY WORKS

"I will show thee my faith by my works."—James 2:18.

FAITH is a mental conviction respecting things not positively proven to the senses, but received on supposedly good authority. There is another quality that seems very closely allied to faith; namely, *credulity*. The difference between these two appears to be that faith requires, and inquires for, good, sound evidence and authority for its basis. There are people who are very much prejudiced, and who seem to reason very little about anything. Sometimes they are credited with having a great deal of *faith*, whereas the truth is that they have a great deal of *credulity*. The faith that is of the responsible kind is that which the Christian is called upon to exercise. He exercises faith in God. If he doubted God's existence, God's character, he would not be in any sense prepared to receive the Message which the Father has to send at this time.

Having gotten a glimpse of the great Divine Character through the Book of Nature, we properly enough, before exercising faith in the Bible, make inquiry into the personnel of the writers—who they were, what were their characters, who did they claim to be, what evidences are there that they were true, and do these evidences agree. In other words, faith does not jump at conclusions, but makes investigations and sees that it has some reasonable ground for its existence. If it were solid ground, it would be knowledge. *Faith* is not *knowledge*. Therefore Faith inquires for reasonable ground upon which to build.

FAITH DISTINGUISHED FROM CREDULITY

With the Bible open, the Christian has before him a field of *faith-knowledge*—*knowledge* of things not seen by the natural eye—all of which he may continually be proving. While ever satisfied with what he has been demonstrating, he must necessarily be manifesting his faith by the way, proving that which is good. His mental processes being active, he should realize how one feature of the Divine Plan fits into another. Thus his faith grows into larger faith, deeper faith, stronger faith. In time his faith becomes a conviction so strong that he might be willing to stake his life on what he believes to be the truth in the Divine promises. He accepts those promises as something real, something that he knows about—not something received in a vague, unsatisfactory manner.

On the other hand, credulity is *prejudice*. The heathen are credulous; for they are blindly prejudiced. Many Christian people seem to be beset by the same spirit of credulity, and seem to mistake it for *faith*. We are not to forget that there are two great powers at the present time—the power of Good and the power of Evil. We are not to forget that for six thousand years the power of Evil has had the upper hand on earth. God has permitted Satan to have a great deal of power in the world. But it is a deceptive power. To Satan's misleading spirit powers we accredit much of the superstition that has fastened itself upon humanity.

For instance, there was a time when we thought it a manifestation of great faith to see three gods in one God, and one God in three gods. From our mistaken viewpoint we said, "One cannot reason this out; it is all of faith." The fact that somebody had said that there are three gods in one God, and one God in three gods, was not a basis for *faith*. So then, it was not *faith* that we had in a Trinity, but *credulity*. With many other things it was the same; we were not exercising faith. And so it would seem to have been with very many in the past. They must have swallowed many things with a very slight amount of mental mastication. We believe that such conditions still exist.

We notice our Christian Science friends. Many of them are very noble people, very estimable people in some respects; yet in our judgment they hold certain doctrines that are not matters of faith, but of credulity. They have theories respecting sin, respecting error. Because these theories seem to fit certain experiences in life, they have accepted these as a basis for what they call faith, and have seemed to receive them aside from all processes of reasoning. The basis for their doctrine seems to be that they have experienced healing as a result of faith. They do not seem to see that Satan has power to mislead. We fear that many of them are being misled by Satan's deceptions. We see a similar condition amongst Mormons. They too have theories, and have healing. It is the same with the Seventh Day Adventists. The Adversary is misleading all these people as respects the Call of this present Age; they are being side-tracked. They are not, therefore, to receive the highest blessing, which goes only to the faithful who walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

COMBATting WRONG DEDUCTIONS IN EARLY CHURCH

The Apostle in our text says, "I will show thee my faith by my *works*." This is part of an argument that he has been putting up. There was a theory prevalent in the days of the Apostle, that works amounted to nothing—that it was *faith* which counted. The Apostle James is combatting that thought. Faith is all very well; but you must have works also! The Apostle says, "You show me your faith *without* works, but I prefer to show you my faith *by* my works." There was some perversion of St. Paul's teachings that had gotten into circulation at that time. St. Paul had said that by the works of the Law no flesh could be justified. The Jews, who had the Law, had not been able to keep that Law; neither would St. Paul or any other human being be able to keep that Law, in order to justify himself in God's sight. The only way to do this was by *faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ, and not by the Law of works.

We are not to understand St. James as in any sense of the word opposing St. Paul in this thought, but rather as opposing the wrong deductions from St. Paul's teaching; to wit, "It does not matter what kind of works I have. I have strong *faith*; God will not pay any attention to the *works*. I can work the works of the flesh; and having plenty of faith in God, I shall be all right." St. James points out that this is not true. Faith in God and in Christ and in the forgiveness of sins is proper; but there must be works to accompany it. Just as surely as we have faith it will manifest itself in some way, and these works, if not

good, will be bad works, indifferent works. A good tree will produce good fruit. A pure fountain will send forth pure water.

This seems to be the Apostle's argument. Surely we all agree with him, and are all seeking to show forth our works. The world cannot appreciate our faith, because they cannot read our hearts. But God appreciates our faith. Abraham was the father of the faithful. God loved him and treated him as a friend. He was called the "Friend of God." But, says the Apostle, God required that Abraham should show his faith by doing some works; he must have some works to prove that he had *faith*; he will test us by our *works* as to the strength of our *faith*.

OCTOBER 14

To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice—Prov. 21:3.

We are to grow in love, and love is the principal thing; but before we can make much development in the cultivation of love, we must learn to be just, right, righteous. It is a proper presentation of the matter that is given in the proverb, that a man should be just before he is generous. It behooves the Lord's people, therefore, that they study this subject of justice continually and daily put into practice the lessons inculcated in the Divine Word. Such as get this proper foundation of character before they begin to build love will find that they are making progress properly. All love that is founded upon injustice or wrong ideas of righteousness is delusive, is not the love which the Lord will require as the test of discipleship—Z '04, 56, 57 (R 3321).

By justice righteousness, and by judgment true instruction are here meant. Sacrifice ordinarily means the good works of love, but here sacrifice means good works done contrary to justice and truth. The text does not mean that sacrifice is not desired by the Lord; nor that the good works of love, when in harmony with justice and truth, are not more pleasing to the Lord than justice and truth without the good works of charity. Rather the thought is that the Lord prefers to have us perform the works of righteousness and truth without sacrificial service to having us perform sacrificial service contrary to justice and truth—P '26, 156.

Parallel passages: 1 Sam. 15:22; Psa. 1:3; 15; 24:3-5; 106:3; 112:4-8; Prov. 2:5-20; Isa. 32:16-18; Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:6-8; Matt. 5:20; John 14:21-24; 15:4, 5, 8; Rom. 6:19-22; 14:17-19; 1 Cor. 13:1-7.

Hymns: 125, 296, 79, 99, 54, 187, 190.

Poems of Dawn, 133: *Steadfast, Immovable*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 100 (R 5430).

Questions: Have I this week practiced truth and righteousness rather than sacrifice in violation of these? What were the circumstances and effects?

STEADFAST, IMMOVABLE

TO play through life a perfect part,
Unnoticed and unknown;
To seek no rest in any heart
Save only God's alone;
In little things to own no will,
To have no share in great,
To find the labor ready still,
And for the crown to wait;

Upon the brow to bear no trace
Of more than common care;
To write no secret in the face
For men to read it there;
The daily cross to clasp and bless
With such familiar zeal
As hides from all that not the less
Its daily weight you feel;

In toils that praise will never pay
To see your life go past;
To meet in every coming day
Twin sister of the last;
To hear of high, heroic things,
And yield them reverence due,
But feel life's daily offerings
Are far more fit for you;

To woo no secret, soft disguise,
To which self-love is prone;
Unnoticed by all other eyes,
Unworthy in your own;
To yield with such a happy art
That no one thinks you care,
Yet say to your poor bleeding heart,
How little you can bear;—

Oh! 'tis a pathway rough to choose,
A struggle hard to share,
For human pride would still refuse
The nameless trials there;
But since we know the gate is low
That leads to heavenly bliss,
What higher grace could God bestow
Than such a life as this!

*R5430: JUSTICE—RIGHTEOUSNESS—THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN
CHARACTER*

**"To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice."
"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."
—Proverbs 21:3; 1 Samuel 15:22.**

THESE words were addressed to God's chosen people, the Jews. The nation of Israel had come into special relationship with God. At Mt. Sinai, they had entered into a Covenant with Him and had pledged themselves to do justice and judgment. This was a requirement of Jehovah. But there seemed to be a tendency to think of sacrifices as being especially pleasing to the Lord. Some seemed inclined to feel that no matter how unjust they had been, they could offer a sacrifice and make it all right. But Jehovah pointed out that this would not do. His Law was a *requirement*, and must come before all else; whereas these special sacrifices of thanksgiving for victories, etc., were *privileges*, voluntary offerings. The Law demanded full allegiance to God.

The relationship of Israel to God as His people was based upon the *Law*. This Law comprised *justice* and *judgment*. The Israelites were to do according to its commands—first Godward, then manward. They were not to steal, not to kill, not to covet, etc. The essence and substance of the Golden Rule was there embodied.

To do justice is to do that which is just, right, equitable; to do judgment would be to render righteous decisions in the mind, to decide justly. One might be very just in his business dealings with his fellows. He might be very careful not to cheat any one out of a cent; and yet in his mind he might have unkind, uncharitable views of others, and perhaps say things about them that would be very unrighteous. This counsel of the Wise Man seemed to guard not only against the *doing* of injustice, but against having wrong *thoughts*. The decisions of our minds, as well as our actions, should be in harmony with the principles of righteousness.

OUR INABILITY TO JUDGE OTHERS

We are not to judge, decide, in an unfavorable manner in the case of any with whom we have to do, without indubitable proof. If they claim to be trying to do right, we should give them credit for sincerity wherever possible. We are not to call them hypocrites, for we cannot judge their hearts. Our Lord called some hypocrites in His day; but He had a superior power of discerning the heart, and we have not that power. We are not to judge the motives of others. We are not to go beyond their declaration, for we are not competent to do so.

We may at times judge the outward action as wrong or improper, but we are not to attempt to judge the heart, where there is possibility of misjudgment. We have pledged ourselves to strive to observe the Golden Rule in our every action and word and thought, and we are to remember that God would be more pleased with us if we did not sacrifice and merely maintained our relationship to the Golden Rule, than that we should manifest ever so much zeal in *sacrifice* and yet violate the rule of *justice*. This rule requires love for our neighbor as for ourself. As the Apostle Paul reminds us in that matchless chapter on *Love*—1 Cor. 13: "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not *love*, it profiteth me *nothing*."

The proper course for us as disciples of Christ is that we observe the Golden Rule in our conduct, watching over our thoughts and our lips; and also that we present

continually all that we have and are in sacrifice to the Lord. But obedience, justice, *must come first*, for this is demanded by the Law of God. Before we can make much development in the cultivation of sacrificial love, we must learn to have a love of justice, righteousness. There is a trite and true proverb that a man must be just before he is generous. It behooves the children of God, as members of the New Creation, to study with diligence this subject of strict justice toward all, and to put into practice day by day this quality of character which is absolutely essential if we would be acceptable to God; for it lies at the foundation of all Christian character.

We are not able while still in the fallen flesh, to keep perfectly this Law of strict justice in act, word and thought. But it should be our prayerful endeavor to do so as far as possible. The merit of Christ will then make up for all unintentional and unavoidable deficiencies. Those only who have this foundation of character well laid can make proper progress. A love which is built on a foundation of injustice, or wrong ideas of righteousness, is delusive, and is not the love which the Lord's Word enjoins and which He will require as a test of true discipleship. Obedience to God demands that we strive to be just in deed and word and thought.

OBEDIENCE A TEST OF LOYALTY

The lesson taught in the Lord's rebuke to Saul at the mouth of the Prophet Samuel, given in our second text, applies with much force to Spiritual Israel. How often today we see the need for this counsel amongst the professed followers of Christ! Many of these are Christian workers in the various denominations of Christendom, and many are their sacrifices of time, strength and money; but inasmuch as they are not obedient to the Lord they fail of the blessing they might have, and indeed cut themselves off from greater privileges and opportunities. Yea, many of them, we fear, are cutting themselves off from the Kingdom—from glory and joint-heirship with the Master in that Kingdom. We should learn from this lesson given us in the experience of Saul that our Heavenly Father wishes us to be very attentive to His Word, and not to think for a moment that we can improve upon it, nor that any circumstance or condition will excuse us from obedience to Him.

Had King Saul obeyed God, and the results had seemed to prove disastrous, he would have had a clear conscience. He would have been *obedient*, and could have left the results with the Lord. God would have been responsible for the results. How many of the Lord's people in Babylon would be blessed by following the instructions in this lesson!

Many have said to themselves again and again: I see that present arrangements and conditions in the churches are contrary to the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ and the practise of the early Church. I see that much is practised and taught that is not sanctioned in the Scriptures. But what can *I* do? I am identified with this system and am engaged in sacrificing for its upbuilding. If I now withdraw myself, it will mean more or less disaster or loss to it as well as to myself. I wish I were free from human institutions and that I had my hands filled with the Lord's work along the lines of His Word, but I cannot let go;

necessity seems laid upon me. This seems to be the most convenient place for me to work and to sacrifice.

The Lord is not pleased with such arguments. His message to us is that to *obey* is better than *sacrifice*, however active and busy we may be. He tells us plainly that no sacrifice we can offer will be acceptable to Him unless we are first obedient to His Word. He calls now to all the followers of Christ who are still in Babylon: "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."—Revelation 18:4, 5.

THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE

We remember that Saul's error was his failure to carry out the command of the Lord in every particular. He slew all the Amalekites, old and young, except the king, whom he kept alive, possibly thinking to exhibit him in some kind of triumphal display. As for the flocks and herds, he consented that his people spare all that were goodly and desirable, but everything that was vile and refuse he destroyed utterly.

As we study the narrative and note the indignation of Samuel, and the Lord's positive declaration of His displeasure and of the punishment to be meted out to Saul, we see clearly that the king had not misunderstood his instructions, but with considerable deliberation had violated them. Consequently we must understand his words of explanation to Samuel to have been to a considerable extent hypocritical. He first saluted the Prophet with blessings and assurances that he had performed the command of the Lord. But Samuel replied: "What means, then, this bleating of sheep and lowing of oxen which I hear?" He understood at once that the destruction had not been complete, that Saul had only partially obeyed the Lord.

Saul, noting the displeasure of the Prophet of the Lord, began hypocritically to assure him that these fine sheep and oxen had been preserved that they might be sacrificed to the Lord. Alas, how fallen human nature ever seeks to justify itself in its course of perversity and disobedience to the commands of God! How much wiser and better would it be to obey under all circumstances! Saul reaped the result of his disobedience in being rejected as king of Israel. How bitter are the fruits of following our own course, of compromising our conscience, of seeking to evade the responsibility which rests upon us as professed children of God! It is sure to bring trouble and spiritual disaster to the Lord's people, and the hiding of our Father's face.

Ordinarily considered, sacrifice is a step beyond mere obedience. Obedience is a *duty* toward God. We ought to obey God. To His creatures God's will is *Law*. This is duty of the very highest type. But the privilege of sacrifice granted to the people of God goes beyond duty, beyond obligation. We may *give* unto the Lord what He has not *required* of us; but what we give in sacrifice is voluntary, not commanded.

The question now arises, How can we apply these texts to ourselves? In the first place, we find some who desire to be the Lord's people, who seem to grasp the thought that there is a privilege of sacrifice in the present time, but who fail to note that the Lord has given some direct commands which must be considered first. Such should come to perceive that obedience is a prime requisite. No one can perfectly keep the Law of God, but he must exhibit the true spirit of obedience, the earnest endeavor to be in harmony with that Law. Then consecration to sacrifice is in order. For all who have met these conditions full satisfaction has been made, and they are accepted in Christ. And "if any man be in Christ, he is a New Creature; old things have passed away, and all things have become new."—2 Cor. 5:17.

St. Paul says of these, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:4.) If we are not thus walking after the Spirit, we are not hearkening to the Lord; and while we are in that condition, He does not take pleasure in what we do. Even though we sacrifice some of our time for the Colporteur work, the Pilgrim work, etc., we shall not be pleasing to God if we do not keep His requirements of justice toward others.

If when one decides to make a consecration of himself to God he realizes that he has been unjust to another, restitution must be made. No one has a right to be generous with the money of another—to take another man's money and offer it in service to God. This is a form of injustice which must be very offensive to the Father—one which He would disdain altogether as a sacrifice. Yet we see that this is very largely practised. There are a great many who have gotten money in a way not altogether right, and who, to quiet conscience, give some of it to religious work. This class are overlooking the weightier matters of the Law of God. They have taken from others unjustly; then they desire to give to the Lord that which belongs to another. God's Law demands justice, and it is no wonder that He is not pleased with this course of action.

Coming down to the ordinary affairs of life, we see that justice should be the very foundation of everything—between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, teachers and pupils, employers and employees, etc. The lesson of our text is a very important one to us of the Church. In Christian character justice, obedience to God's Law, comes first; mercy and benevolence come afterwards. We do not know of a principle that the Lord's people need to learn more particularly than this one of *justice*.

Injustice seems to crop out in many ways in the fallen human nature. Little injustices are daily practised in respect to trifles. These are thought not worth considering. But whoever cultivates injustice in even a small way is building up a character which will be unfit for the Kingdom. As justice is the foundation of God's Throne and of God's character, so justice must be the foundation principle governing the lives of His people.

THE OBEDIENCE OF THE CHRIST

The lesson of obedience is one which should be deeply engraved upon the hearts of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. It is necessary, too, that we have the *spirit* of obedience and

not obey merely the letter. Whoever has the true spirit of obedience will not only obey the expressed commands of the Lord, given in His Word, but will seek to know the Divine will in everything. He will seek to note the providences of his life, that he may be guided in the way the Lord would have him go. It is such faithful, obedient children of God who exclaim in the language of the Prophet: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart!" (Jeremiah 15:16.) These can say with our dear Master: "Lo I come! I delight to do Thy will, O my God!" Let all, then, who would be wholly acceptable to our Father in Heaven be very diligent to build character in harmony with His Law, having justice in thought, in word and in deed at the foundation, justice in our relationship to God, to the brethren and to all, and then building thereupon all the various qualities of love, that thus we may grow up into Christ our living Head in all things, and be able to render up our account at last with joy and not with grief.

OCTOBER 15

Have faith in God—Mark 11:22.

Our daily experiences since we became the Lord's followers have been guided and guarded apparently by the power unseen, to the intent that as pupils in the school of Christ, we may all be taught of Him and develop more and more of the graces of the Spirit, and particularly more faith. How important this item of faith is we probably cannot fully appreciate now. It seems to be the one thing that the Lord specially seeks for in those now called to be followers. ... So according to our faith will we be able to rejoice even in tribulation. We cannot enjoy the sufferings; we can enjoy the thought which faith attaches to them, namely, that these are but light afflictions working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory—Z '04, 59 (R 3324).

Faith is a mental appreciation of, and heart's reliance upon, some person or thing. Christian faith is a mental appreciation of, and heart's reliance upon, God and Christ. These exercise themselves toward God and Christ along certain lines set forth in the Scriptures, *i.e.*, their persons, characters, words and acts. In these respects they have demonstrated themselves as being absolutely reliable and, therefore, worthy of our confidence. Our experiences have demonstrated this to be true in innumerable instances. And, for this reason, Jesus can, without any impropriety in Himself or disadvantage to us, appeal to us to trust the Father and Him—P '36, 110—111.

Parallel passages: Josh. 1:9; 2 Chron. 15:7; 20:20; 32:7, 8; Neh. 4:14; Job 35:14; Psa. 4:5; 27:14; 31:19, 24; 37:3, 5, 7, 39, 40; 55:22; 115:9, 11; Prov. 3:5, 6; Matt. 17:20.

Hymns: 56, 93, 87, 176, 12, 104, 106.

Poems of Dawn, 103: *Prayer of the Consecrated*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 282 (R 5539).

Questions: Have I exercised faith this week? How? With what results?

PRAYER OF THE CONSECRATED

WE seek not, Lord, for tongues of flame,
Or healing virtue's mystic aid;
But power thy Gospel to proclaim—
The balm for wounds that sin hath made.

Breathe on us, Lord; Thy radiance pour
On all the wonders of the page
Where hidden lies the heavenly lore
That blessed our youth and guides our age.

Grant skill each sacred theme to trace,

With loving voice and glowing tongue,
As when upon Thy words of grace
The wondering crowds enraptured hung.

Grant faith, that treads the stormy deep,
If but Thy voice shall bid it come;
And zeal, that climbs the mountain steep,
To seek and bring the wanderer home.

Give strength, blest Savior, in Thy might;
Illuminate our hearts, and we,
Transformed into Thine image bright,
Shall teach, and love, and live, like Thee!

R5539: THE CHRISTIAN'S TOWER OF STRENGTH

"The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

—Hebrews 13:6.

THE Christian's position in the world is a peculiar one. None others can afford to be so courageous and independent as he. Yet the true child of God is not self-sufficient nor independent of any outside help. He is exhorted in the Word of the Lord to be not boastful, but humble-minded, realizing his powerlessness of himself and his need of God. Indeed, unless he is humble-minded he cannot be pleasing to the Lord. But at the same time he is to be full of courage and confidence. No power in the Universe is able to cope with our God; and He has declared that He is the Support and Shield of His children. He is the Strong Tower of those who put their trust in Him.

If we abide in Christ and His Word abides in us, He will be our Deliverer in six troubles, and in the seventh He will not forsake us—because we have been called of God, because we have responded to that call, because we are seeking to glorify Him in our bodies. Hence we need not fear what any man can do unto us. The Apostle Paul, who exhorts us to courage and confident trust in God, was a noble example of courageous faith. He tells us why we have such abundant reason for assurance of faith and absence of fear of man. He says, "Let your conversation [conduct, manner of life] be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

TRUE FAITH NOT PRESUMPTION

We should not say, The Lord is my Helper, and therefore He will not suffer my house to burn, nor burglars to break in and steal my belongings. I will not lock my doors at night; for the Lord is watching over me and mine. This would not be the spirit of a sound mind. It would not be true faith, but presumption. We should take all reasonable

precautions to prevent losses of such kinds. The Lord expects us to do all in our power for our own protection, and not expect Him to work unnecessary miracles to protect us from our own carelessness and inefficiency. Under such circumstances He might allow us to become involved in difficulty and loss, and thus to learn a needed lesson. We are stewards of whatever the Lord has entrusted to us, and He expects us to exercise care in regard to whatever is properly under our care but belonging to Him. We should have buckets and water at hand so as to be ready in case of fire. We should have proper fastenings upon our doors and our windows. When our own duty is done, we are to leave ourselves fully in the Lord's hands, knowing that all will be well with us.

If the Lord permits seeming calamity to come, we may rest assured that it will work out our good, if we are properly exercised by the experience. After having done our part, we should trust all consequences to Him, not doubting that He will care for us in His own best way. The Lord will give us whatever help along temporal lines He sees is for the highest interests of the New Creature, if we do not remove ourselves from His keeping and seek to manage our own interests. Even in the event of such a mistake, if we come to see where we have been wilful and have leaned to our own understanding and renew full allegiance to the Lord, the difficulties in which we have become involved may prove to be a real blessing in opening our eyes to our wrong course, in showing us our own insufficiency to guide ourselves, and in bringing us wholly back to God.

"THAT WICKED ONE TOUCHETH HIM NOT"

Our highest interests, our real interests, are matters of our Father's constant care. If we keep very near to the Lord, we are protected from the power of the fallen angels, who would, if permitted, bring about our ensnarement and overthrow. They cannot really harm us if we are watching and keeping our garments white. Only a lack of faithfulness would subject us to their power to any extent so far as our New Creature interests are concerned. They can neither harm our bodies in any way nor cause any violence to us, unless the Lord permits it for our highest good—perhaps for our deliverance and exaltation, as in the case of our Master.

Let us, then, keep ourselves, that "that Wicked One touch us not." We are subject to various attacks by the deluded servants of the powers of darkness. There may be attacks upon our good name, our reputation, our bodies, or what not, with more or less legality. We are to a considerable extent subject to man, through "the powers that be." Yet our bitterest enemies are powerless to touch us, unless permitted by the Lord. And we cannot be touched by the great Adversary, if we remain true to our Covenant—true to the Vows we have taken to the Lord. The Adversary can never touch our real selves as New Creatures save by our own unfaithfulness.

WE WILL WORSHIP OUR GOD ALONE

It may be the will of God to permit us to suffer, just as He permitted John the Baptist to be imprisoned and finally beheaded, just as He permitted Jesus to be arrested and crucified, and He has permitted many of His saints in the past to be maltreated or killed.

But we need not fear what men may do unto us, knowing that our God, whose we are and whom we serve, will be with us constantly, and will cause all things to work out His own glorious purposes *for* us and *in* us.

We would, of course, be glad to please men, if this were possible. But wherever it is a question of pleasing *God* or pleasing *man*, we will say, as did the three young Hebrews to the king of Babylon: "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us. ... But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." We will not do anything contrary to the Divine will, to the command of Jehovah. We will worship our God alone!

When the Jewish Council (Acts 4:13-20) commanded the Apostles Peter and John to speak no more in the name of Jesus, their reply was: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." When Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, said to our Lord on the night of His arrest and trial, "Knowest Thou that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?" Jesus answered: "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above." So it is with all the footstep followers of the Master. God's grace will be sufficient. Man is powerless to harm a hair of our heads, unless it is permitted of our Father in Heaven for His glory and our own highest welfare.

COURAGE BORN OF FAITH

The world has often wondered at the calmness of the Lord's humble little ones under circumstances which would cause the stoutest heart to quail. But to follow the course in life which will glorify our God and magnify His grace, to be able to meet wisely and courageously the trials and difficulties as they come to us as Christians, representatives of the King of Heaven, and to meet them in the spirit of rejoicing, counting our tribulations all joy, it is necessary that our hearts be in attune with the Lord, that we have no will but His, and that the fear of man, which bringeth a snare, shall be overcome. We cannot accomplish this in our own strength, but in the strength of God alone. We are instructed to fear Jehovah, and not to fear a weak mortal. The righteous are as bold as a lion, as gentle as a dove, as meek as a lamb. This peculiar combination of boldness, gentleness and meekness should characterize every Christian.

OCTOBER 16

He maketh the storm a calm—Psa. 107:29.

We of today represent the Lord's cause in the midst of the raging elements of human passions, oppositions, *etc.*, and our hearts would be at times dismayed except as faith is able to see the Lord with us in the ship, and able to grasp the thought of His mighty power in His own time and way to speak peace to the world. ... It must not surprise us, however, if a dark hour is before us, if the time shall come when the stormy winds will be so fierce that many will cry out in fear and trembling. Let us learn well the precious experiences of the present time, so that then our faith shall not fail us, so that in the darkest hour we shall be able to sing and to rejoice in Him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood, and to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb—Z '04, 60 (R 3324).

There have been many figurative storms in human experience. Among these are the experience of the race with evil, and the sufferings of the Ancient and Youthful Worthies, Israel, the Little Flock and the Great Company. After all these the Lord has made or will make a calm. The storm of this text applies particularly to the unparalleled sufferings of the Time of Trouble. The ships of human organizations will be completely wrecked in this storm; and many of the sailors, officers and passengers will sink beneath the waves of anarchy. Later all will rejoice in the calm after the storm in the Millennial haven—P '30, 166.

Parallel passages: Lev. 26:6; 1 Kings 19:11, 12; Job 5:19; Psa. 34:13; 107:21-28; Dan. 12:1, 2; Hos. 2:18; Nah. 1:12; Zeph. 3:8, 9; Luke 2:14; Isa. 26:3; John 14:27; 16:33; 1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 12:11; 1 Pet. 5:10.

Hymns: 270, 271, 244, 233, 43, 305, 179.

Poems of Dawn, 257: *Afterward*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 163 (R 5695).

Questions: How did God give me peace? What did I do therein? What resulted therefrom?

AFTERWARD

GOD'S ways are equal: storm or calm,
Seasons of peril and of rest,
The hurtling dart, the healing balm,
Are all apportioned as is best.
In judgments oft misunderstood,
In ways mysterious and obscure,
He brings from evil lasting good,
And makes the final gladness sure.
While Justice takes its course with strength,

Love bids our faith and hope increase:
He'll give the chastened world at length
His afterward of peace.

When the dread forces of the gale
His sterner purposes perform,
And human skill can naught avail,
Against the fury of the storm,
Let loving hearts trust in Him still,
Through all the dark and devious way;
For who would thwart His blessed will,
Which leads through night to joyous day?
Be still beneath His tender care;
For He will make the tempest cease,
And bring from out the anguish here
An afterward of peace.

Look up, O Earth; no storm can last
Beyond the limits God hath set;
When its appointed work is past,
In joy thou shalt thy grief forget.
Where sorrow's plowshare hath swept through,
Thy fairest flowers of life shall spring,
For God shall grant thee life anew,
And all thy wastes shall laugh and sing.
Hope thou in Him; His plan for thee
Shall end in triumph and release;
Fear not, for thou shalt surely see
His afterward of peace.

R5695: THE COMING STORM AND ITS GLORIOUS OUTCOME

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven. ... Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."—Psalm 107:29, 30, 43.

PSALM 107 seems to be prophetic, tracing to a considerable degree the experiences of the Church of Christ throughout this Gospel Age. It may be applied individually and also in a world-wide, international way. The cause of all the trouble in the world is sin. There might be various ways of trying to remove the difficulty, but God in His Wisdom arranged the one Plan. He will permit sin to bring storms and difficulties of life so that humanity shall be tossed about, and thus learn to appreciate our great Savior, whom God has provided to be the Great Deliverer of the Church and of the world. The whole matter has been arranged in a judicial manner, and in due time Christ will have the full right to

bid all storms to cease and to bring order out of confusion. Yet this must await the Divine appointment. During the present Age the Church class has been selected, and the storms and difficulties of life have been valuable to them in developing faith, hope, patience and in preparing them for the Kingdom honors, privileges and opportunities.

The world's storms, according to the Scriptures, have been varied and have occurred at different times, according to the conditions of mankind—sin and selfishness always stirring up a storm on every possible occasion. There have been many storms in the past—wars, invasions, tumults, etc.—all started from envious, selfish motives, or because of great injustice on the part of others. Great nations have envied one another their increase of wealth, and have preyed upon the weak. Anger, malice, hatred, strife, the works of the flesh and the Devil, have been cultivated. *Now*, having sown thus to selfishness, mankind are experiencing a mighty whirlwind on the social sea. This great storm has not yet reached its height. Our thought is that it will be much greater before the Lord will step in and say, "Peace, be still!" He has permitted this awful storm; for He knows how to make it work out for the good of humanity.

It is ours as God's people to favor peace and righteousness and to live in harmony with these conditions. But it is ours also to know what is coming on the world—more, it is ours to know the outcome, to know something of God's Truth. The Lord has already given us an inward peace which no outward storm can affect. We are trusting in the promises He has given. We realize what the present condition is, and rejoice that the Church will soon be glorified. What a lasting peace and joy will then be ours beyond the veil! This realization brings into our hearts even now great rest of soul, a great calm! We remember that God is able to make *all things* work together for good to us, and He has *promised* so to do; therefore we may have blessed experiences coming out of these stormy times and trials of life.

The Lord has a peculiar way of bringing peace to His people—not usually by interference with people of the world. The storms of life may go on just the same as ever; our way may be just as thorny as ever. But the Lord speaks *peace* to us! We hear His Voice, the Word of God! By the knowledge He gives us, by His precious promises, He assures us of His Wisdom, His Love, His Power, and of His loving purpose for His people. These things give us peace and rest of heart in the midst of outward trials and trouble. He makes known to us also His great Plan for the world in general. He informs us now of the significance of the present conditions and of the glorious outcome of the great trouble about to break upon the whole world.

THE LAST GREAT DAY

We are in the "last days" mentioned by the Apostle Paul. He says, "In the last days perilous times shall come. Men shall be...covetous, boasters, proud,...traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. ...From such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:1-5.)

Our Lord Jesus repeatedly mentioned "the last day," and declared that certain things would occur in the last day. We understand Him thus to be referring to the great Seventh Day, the thousand-year Day of His Kingdom. For instance, He said, in speaking of His disciples individually, "And I will raise him up at the last day."

The Scriptures speak of the last Day as being the end of this present Dispensation, the end of the present reign of evil. Our Lord referred to the closing days of this Age when He said, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man." All the Scriptures referring to this Day seem to point to the great commotion to come at this time. The Prophet Daniel seems to speak of the present Dispensation as a "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." This was to be, he declared, "in the time of the end." Our Lord speaks of it: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the Elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (Matthew 24:21-25.) St. Paul tells us that the fire of that Day shall try every man's work of what sort it is. The Apostle Peter describes it vividly in his second Epistle. That Day of trouble and the glory to follow are the theme of all the holy Prophets.

The troubles of this Day are not all of the same nature. Jesus tells us that some of His followers will be accounted worthy to escape the troubles coming upon the world, which St. Peter says will involve the whole earth. In the fire of that Day, some who are children of God will be found to have built their house of wood, hay and stubble, even though building upon the true Foundation, Christ. All their superstructure will be burned, and themselves "saved as by fire," as the Apostle Paul tells us. Others of the Lord's children will be found to have built upon the true Foundation "gold, silver, and precious stones"; and thus their works will stand. They will have a superstructure of truth and loyalty to the Lord built upon the Foundation, and this will not be burned. Their building will stand the "fire" of this great Day.

As the Apostle Paul in all his Epistles addresses himself to the saints in Christ Jesus, we understand these words (1 Corinthians 3:11-15) to refer only to those professing full consecration to the Lord, the Church of Christ. The true saints must all suffer; for as St. Paul forewarned, we must "through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22.) "Hereunto were we called," St. Peter assures us. (1 Peter 2:21.) But all these things only work out for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if we are properly exercised thereby.

THE NOMINAL SYSTEMS OF TODAY

But, as already intimated, we find a very large class today professing to be of the Church of Christ, and millions of money are being spent by these for the worship of God according to the ideas of the nominal church systems. Fine church edifices are built and dedicated to the Lord. Grand organs and trained choirs are furnished. Gymnasia, "smokers," culinary departments with dining-rooms, etc., are provided. These churches are supported by people a large number of whom are very noble in many respects.

From one viewpoint it would seem that people who are spending so much money every year for church purposes must be quite religious and very anxious to do God's will. We read of how many millions of dollars New York City spends annually for its ministers, churches, etc., etc. But we find, in fact, that in all these churches there is a great deal of formalism. Those who sing their hymns are hired to do so, and they say that they have no particular interest in religion, but are merely doing it for so many dollars. Not many of the ministers will acknowledge that *their* service is of much the same nature, but there are those who think that the majority of them are serving in a similar manner. Does the Lord recognize and accept such service? (See Amos 5:20-23; Isaiah 1:13-15.) It is not for us to judge the heart; but on every side we find headiness, boastfulness, pride.

We do not know how the Apostle Paul could better have described present conditions if he had been living here today. If anything is said to these zealous workers in the Churchianity of our day about the worldliness, pride and errors of the churches, there is a toss of the head, even though some of them acknowledge that there is much that they do not approve of. It is found necessary to have concerts, teas, frolics, etc., in the churches to raise money; for, it is claimed, if they did not have these things, nobody would come to church except the preachers and some who hold office, and who attend to perform the duties for which they are held responsible. One such church official said to the Editor of THE WATCH TOWER, "I am in duty bound to go to church so often, but I will get out of the office as soon as I can." Having had the duty of Elder thrust upon him, he intended to escape from it as soon as possible.

THE PRESENT IDOL OF CHRISTENDOM

Money-love, acquisitiveness, seems to be the controlling factor today. True, many who have a great deal of money are giving it out by the millions of dollars; but ours is a money-loving day. And it is not merely the rich who have this love of money. We find it everywhere. The chief desire is to get money—not to lay it up in banks, but to spend it; people like the pleasures which money will buy. It is a money-spending time as well as a money-loving time. Pleasure holds riot today, and money is honored and everywhere sought. Our former superstitious ideas of the better blood of some than of others—"blue blood"—we in America have been largely relieved of. We have therefore not that love of aristocracy and so-called "noble birth" which prevails in the old world. People formerly believed that the kings and the nobility were of a different race altogether from the common people. But now love of money and of that which money will purchase—pleasure, power, influence—have driven the world mad. Money is worshiped as an idol. If one has money, he can get nearly anything he wants. Many such people have a form of godliness, without its power. The Apostle says, "From such turn away."—2 Timothy 3:4, 5.

This condition of things has grown by degrees. How shall we turn away from those who worship these false gods? We turn away in the sense that we do not follow in the same course. We keep our hearts from the love of pleasure and worldliness and from the greed of gain. We turn away from all these things, and go in a different direction. This seems to correspond with what the Lord says in Revelation 18:2, 4. When revealing to

the Apostle John the condition of Nominal Zion, in our day, and speaking prophetically as though in our day, He says, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. ...Come out of her! The Lord's true people are to follow the Lord's direction here. They are to stand free from this bondage to error and worldliness, and set a good example to others also; and then they are to wait for the Lord's further instructions and for the accomplishment of His glorious purposes. We need not hope at all to turn the tide—one man or a thousand men or a million men would be powerless to turn the tide of Babylon today. She is fallen; therefore forsake her!—Jeremiah 51:6-9.

OUR QUIET, CONFIDENT STRENGTH

God entered into His rest when His creative works were finished in the earth, so we, the true Church, shall soon enter into our rest, the perfect rest beyond the veil. God has placed the whole matter in the hands of Christ to accomplish in the appointed time. We have confidence in the Lord and in His times and seasons; therefore we are very restful, and in coming out of Babylon we are not worried nor anxious and distressed about others. God will bring order out of all the prevailing confusion. All who will prove worthy of everlasting life will ultimately be glad to work in the way the Lord shall direct.

The world today is drunk with certain false doctrines, and do not know what they are doing. If we were with people who were hilarious, intoxicated, we would better not try to sober them up, but stop association with them. Yet there may be *some* in that company who would love to be as we—free to serve the Lord. It is our duty to help everybody who is feeling after the Lord and amenable in any degree to the Word of Truth. We are to do good to all men as we have opportunity, "especially unto them who are of the Household of Faith." (Galatians 6:10.) It is to this end that we have been circulating the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY, and holding meetings and showing THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, so that other earnest souls may, like ourselves, stand free from the general trend of our day and may live a life of sacrifice, and thus be prepared for the high exaltation coming to those who are faithful to God—a reward that we believe is now near at hand. Those who are thus prepared and panoplied with the whole armor of God will be kept in a condition of quietness and confidence known to no others in this great Day of stress, turmoil and shaking.

PRESENT "SIGNS OF THE SON OF MAN"

The way by which the Lord informs His faithful, watching ones of the import of present conditions in the world and of the nearness of Christ's glorious Reign, is through outward signs corroborating what we now see Bible chronology to indicate. A sign is an indication. The putting up of a baker's sign indicates that bread is to be bought there; a butcher's sign, that meat is for sale at that place, etc. Then we have the sign, or indication of coming storms, or of fair weather. We are not to expect to see shining letters across the sky or anything of that kind to indicate the Lord's presence; but there has been a sign in the Church for some time now—about forty years—*the reaping of the ripe wheat*. This has been a sign of the Parousia of the Son of Man. It has not been possible for the world to discern this sign. We also have the sign of the barren fig tree, the Jewish nation,

putting forth its leaves. We see the foretold worldliness of the church systems. We see the beginning of the smiting of the nations.

When the great Time of Trouble shall break, the *world* will begin to see that a new order of things is somehow coming about; that a great change is impending. Conditions have not been so previously. As men see that the Son of Man is about to take His great power and that the Messianic Kingdom is coming in, they will be apprehensive, not appreciating the fact that this Kingdom is designed for the blessing of all. For a time they will not grasp the full situation. They will see the trouble, the paralysis of business, the distress of nations, socialism, anarchism, and their hearts will fail them for fear of the things approaching.

But all these things are now *signs to us* that the Lord is making ready to establish His Kingdom and is preparing for the fall of the Gentile kingdoms. This, however, will not at first be distinguishable to the world in general under the flaming fire of trouble. They will not know what to make of these things. We think that the majority of people are somewhat perplexed today. Men who are very prominent in social matters, financial matters, religious matters, are in *great* perplexity. Many of them are beginning to discuss the idea that the Kingdom of God is really approaching.

We are told by some of our friends who attended the great Peace Meeting held here in New York City last fall that the prominent speakers participating, among them the Vice President of the United States, made numerous references to the Prince of Peace as being just at the door. The Millennium was referred to in like manner. We do not know what this means, except that they think that the Son of Man is now coming in His Kingdom. We think that their perplexity will increase as they see still greater stress—financial stress, social stress—and as we enter the great Time of Trouble, "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." A Hebrew gentleman was telling the Editor that the Jews in Jerusalem are starving to death. To the four millions of Jews living in Galicia and Austria it seems to make no difference whether one army or the other passes through the country; for the Jews always suffer. Wherever the armies have marched, the homes have been devastated and the land laid waste. Recently the Jews have held a Mass Meeting in New York to collect money for their brethren in Galicia and in Palestine.

If any of you should meet a banker, should you engage in conversation with him, you will see his face grow very sober. In some instances the tears will come into his eyes when speaking of the alarming conditions in finance today. Many wealthy people will say that when this war broke out they were worth a hundred thousand dollars, but that they do not now know what they are worth. Their stocks and bonds are not salable. So there is today a trouble that reaches increasingly throughout the earth, affecting not only all Christendom, but heathendom as well.

VIEW FROM CLEFT IN THE ROCK

As our own eyes of understanding have opened, we have sought to show to the Church, and to the world as far as possible, the great Divine Plan of the Ages—

wonderful, beautiful, far superior to anything human! Bible students the world over are reading the Bible and the signs of the times in a new light; for God's own time has come for lifting the veil of ignorance and darkness which for so long He has permitted Satan to put before our eyes. To our understanding the present war is pictured in the Bible, as due to begin in 1914. It is a great "wind."

Following the great war, the Bible teaches, a great earthquake—social revolution—will take place. In connection with that earthquake will come an exaltation of religious sects, Catholic and Protestant, on the side of the kings and princes—political, social, financial, religious. Next will come the downfall of all present religious systems. Speedily the symbolic "fire" of the Bible will consume the earth—anarchy. Following the anarchy quickly will come the long-promised Kingdom of God, for which Christians have prayed, saying, "Thy Kingdom come," most of them with but little conception of the true meaning of their words. During the Reign of that Kingdom, "a still small voice," the Message of Truth and Grace, will come to all mankind. The world's uplift will progress; and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall gradually fill the whole earth. The longed-for haven of rest will then be attained, "the desire of all nations."

"MY SHEEP HEAR"—AND FOLLOW

All the true disciples of Jesus will see and hear in this present "due time." "My sheep hear My voice," said the Master. If any, therefore, are in Babylon and do not hear the voice of the Lord now calling them out of this great apostate System, *our plain inference is that they are not His true sheep*. This does not mean that all will hear at the same moment. Some are dull of hearing; they may not be living very near to the Lord. But so surely as they are His sheep they will hear; and so surely as they are following in His steps they will hear clearly, and obey promptly. They will be eager to come out of Babylon before her plagues come like a deluge, as they will soon come. We who now have the light should hold up the Lord's Message and point other Christians to the present condition of things, and let them hear the Lord and then make their decision.

"PLAGUES" UPON BABYLON

The "seven last plagues" to be visited especially upon Christendom do not mean a particular disease, as the black plague or cholera; but the word stands for trouble. The Scriptures indicate what these are—death, famine, revolution, distress, overthrow. These distresses will be both physical and mental. It will be a great trouble and distress to Babylon when she realizes that her walls are fallen. She has realized for some time that there was danger of a collapse, and has been seeking to repel anything that might come near to injure her walls. Many good people have been fighting for these denominations, thinking that they represent the Lord's people—being themselves bound more or less by the institutions of the present time.

We do not think that the Gospel Age fully ended in September 1914, but merely the Times of the Gentiles. The Gospel Age will not fully end, we believe, until the Gospel Message ends; and that will be when the door is shut, when the last member of the Very

Elect shall have passed beyond the veil. It is our understanding that the elect Church of Christ, the Bride, will not remain in the flesh to do much of the teaching of the world, but will be glorified in the Kingdom either before or during the great Time of Trouble, and be ready to supervise the world's instruction from the spirit plane. The great conflict is before us. The Prophet Isaiah (63:1-6) depicts in very strong language the work of our Lord Jesus among the nations at this time and in the days just ahead. "He hath trodden the wine-press alone, and all His garments are stained with blood," the wrath of God. See *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, Vol. 4, pp. 18, 19, and p. 51, par. 1. We believe that this work has already begun in the present European war, which is growing in severity and awfulness day by day.

After the Church shall have been glorified beyond the veil, the Ancient Worthies are to be her representatives in the world, taking oversight of the instruction of the peoples and ruling in human affairs; after the Messiah has commanded "Peace" to the angry nations and bidden the raging billows be calm. But there may be yet for a little while—just how long we cannot surely know—some work for the Church to do for the world this side the veil, before the Time of Trouble fully sets in, or at the time of its beginning. If so, we believe that this instruction to the world is now in progress.

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord," even though for a brief space His righteous sword shall be unsheathed for the punishment of iniquity and the overthrow of Satan's great Empire.

OCTOBER 17

He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust—Psa. 91:4.

So close to His heart does Jehovah gather His loyal and faithful children that they feel the warmth of His love, and the responsive language of their hearts is, "I will abide in thy tabernacle"—under Thy protection—"forever"; "I will trust in the covert of thy wings; for thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong Tower from the enemy ... for thou, O God, hast heard my vows"—my consecration—"thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name" (Psa. 61:4, 3, 5). "I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defense and refuge in the day of my trouble" (Psa. 59:16)—Z '04, 75 (R 3331).

The Laodicean saints are here addressed. A double picture is used to show their security, that of a hen covering her chicks from danger with her feathers, and that of an eagle protecting her young with her wings. The hen's feathers represent the Lord's providences, protecting us from some, and amid other experiences. The two wings of the eagle represent the Old and the New Testaments, whose main themes respectively are restitution, the Song of Moses, and the elective salvation, the Song of the Lamb. These truths are our protection. Thus the security of the saints is assured by the Word and providences of the Lord—P '35, 131.

Parallel passages: Gen. 15:1; Psa. 112:7; 121:6; 124:2, 3, 7; 141:9; 146:5, 6; Num. 23:19; Deut. 32:10-12; Isa. 43:2; Matt. 23:37; 2 Tim. 4:18; Prov. 3:21, 23, 24.

Hymns: 120, 12, 56, 63, 93, 126, 137.
Poems of Dawn, 181: *Grace Sufficient*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 109 (R 5437).

Questions: Have God's providence and Word been my protection this week? How? With what effects?

GRACE SUFFICIENT

BEAR the burden of the present,
Let the morrow bear its own;
If the morning sky be pleasant,
Why the passing night bemoan?

If the darkened heavens lower,
Wrap thy cloak around thy form;
Though the tempest rise in power,
God is mightier than the storm.

Steadfast faith and hope unshaken

Animate the trusting breast;
Step by step the journey's taken
Nearer to the land of rest.

All unseen, the Master walketh
By the toiling servant's side;
Comfortable words He talketh,
While His hands uphold and guide.

Grief, nor pain, nor any sorrow
Rends thy heart to Him unknown;
He today and He tomorrow
Grace sufficient gives His own.

Then bear thy burden with good cheer,
Take promptly up thy daily cross;
Nor hesitate to shed a tear,
Nor reckon o'er thy present loss.

R5437: "UNDER HIS WINGS"

**"He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust."
—Psalm 91:4.**

THE 91st Psalm very clearly applies to the Church, and would seem to be especially applicable to the Church in the end of this Age. But since it is addressed in a personal way, as though to one person, it may be The Christ as a whole that is referred to, from the Head to the last member of the Body. Our Lord Jesus had trials and difficulties, and needed protection and care. He went to the Heavenly Father and sought the necessary aid. And so with all the Lord's people continually.

But the Psalmist seems especially to refer to our day: "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee." Of course, there have been times in the past when thousands have fallen through persecution, etc., but the falling away mentioned here seems to be the falling away from God's people. Many will be turned aside, injured, wounded, if not killed, in the great battle pictured.

This battle, we understand, is at the conclusion of this Gospel Age. The powers of darkness are now specially arraying themselves against the consecrated people of God, and all associated with them. There never was a time when God's people, as a whole, had so large opportunities or so great success as Christendom has had in the past century. Under the attacks of Satan that have been in progress for the last fifty, sixty or seventy years, many have fallen into unbelief, Higher Criticism, infidelity, the various features of which are represented as a great pestilence. We see that there is a pestilential infidelity

abroad in the land. Its votaries are misled by the Adversary—quite probably without any such intention on their part.

Very probably in the future, as they see the Truth, many of these will acknowledge their error; but for the time being there is a great drouth in Christendom. Church attendance is falling away. Many of the ministers are preaching what they themselves doubt. They have fallen from grace, fallen from Divine favor, fallen from an appreciation of the Word of God.

THE FEET OF THE CHRIST

This Scripture points out, too, the "feet" of this Christ class living in our day. "He shall give His angels charge over thee, lest thou dash thy *foot* against a stone." All the members have a relationship to the Head and to one another. These "angels" we understand to represent Divine promises and helpful assistances of the saints. These "angels" are represented as bearing up the *feet*, that they may not stumble over the Stone of Stumbling at this time. (Isa. 8:14.) Instead of stumbling over this Stone, they will be lifted up by it to greater appreciation and higher conditions. The *feet* shall not be moved.

In the figure of our text, these who are to be covered represent all who are of this one class. As a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, so God will be as a mother-hen to His people, and will gladly gather them close to Himself and give them the necessary protection—under His wings. They may fully trust that all things shall work together for their good, because they are His, abiding "under the shadow of the Almighty."

The Almighty here represents Himself as a mother-bird. The patience of the mother-bird with her young is remarkable, and she would sacrifice her own life for her little nestlings. So the Lord represents that He is ready to do anything for the protection of His own, who are under His care. Jesus would have received the Jews thus under *His* protecting care; but the people as a nation did not appreciate their need, and hence were overthrown in a great time of trouble. Jesus said to them, with weeping, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and *ye would not!*"

OUR FATHER'S "WINGS" AND "FEATHERS"

We might exercise a particularity of inspection of our text, and say that the word *feathers* might carry a little further thought than the word *wings*. "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust." The soft, downy feathers under the mother-hen's wings serve to keep the little chicks warm and to shield and hide them from enemies that would attack them. Not only the strong sheltering wings, but also the feathers of the hen-mother's breast are used to protect her young. We have seen alarm on the part of a mother-hen at the approach of danger, and heard her cluck to her little ones. Then they would run to her, nestle under her wings, and seem perfectly satisfied and free from fear in their place of safety. Presently you would see the little heads or eyes peeping out; but the chicks felt perfectly secure.

And so with us. Our Heavenly Father's love and care and protection are His wings and His feathers, shielding us from all harm, keeping us warm and safe. He is able to make every experience in life work out for our good. We are, however, to remember that the promise that God will make all things work together for our good is a promise to the New Creature, not to the old creature. Oftentimes the interests of the New Creature and of the old creature are diverse. God has an interest in all that concerns us, but He overrules our temporal affairs for our best spiritual interests. If we were too prosperous, it might not be of advantage to us as New Creatures.

Our temporal affairs may be permitted to go awry. We are not wise enough to know what is for our own best interests as New Creatures, and what would help us the most in our fight against the world, the flesh and the Devil. We are, therefore, to flee to the Lord and accept whatever experiences may come, as those which will be best for us; and we are to seek to get the designed lessons of faith and obedience from them.

OCTOBER 18

He that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster—Prov. 18:9.

We cannot see wastefulness in any of the Lord's consecrated people without feeling that, however great progress they have made in understanding the mind of the Lord in some respects, they are still deficient in this particular. An appreciation of the gift and respect for the Giver implies carefulness and a stewardship in respect to all that comes to us from our Heavenly Father—things temporal and things spiritual. According to our Lord's parables, He is measuring our love and zeal in a considerable degree by our use or abuse of the talents, opportunities, blessings, temporal and spiritual, now bestowed upon us—Z '04, 77 (R 3332).

The spirit of the slothful man is that of waste. He wastes his time, which is precious and irredeemable. He wastes his talents, which are improvable. He wastes his opportunities, which flee to others. He wastes his energy, which rusts from inactivity. He wastes his reputation, which may never return. He wastes his friends, who forsake him. He wastes his possessions, which are taken from him. He wastes his character, which debases him. He wastes his life, which is taken from him. He wastes eternity, which is lost to him. Let slothfulness, therefore, be far from us, as saints of the Lord—P '34, 143.

Parallel passages: Prov. 6:6-11; 10:4, 5, 26; 12:11, 24, 27; 13:4; 15:19; 19:15, 24; 20:4, 13; 21:5, 25; 22:29; 23:21; 24:30-34; 26:13-16; 27:23-27; 30:25-28; 31:13-27; Eccles. 10:18; Isa. 56:10; Matt. 25:26, 27; Rom. 12:11; Eph. 4:28; 1 Thes. 4:11, 12; 2 Thes. 3:10-12; Heb. 6:12; 1 Tim. 5:8.

Hymns: 20, 25, 32, 78, 201, 224, 225.

Poems of Dawn, 161: *"A Cup Of Cold Water."*

Tower Reading: Z '05, 43 (R 3502).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? How did I respond to its thought? What were the results?

"A CUP OF COLD WATER"

THE Lord of the Harvest walked forth one day,
Where the fields were white with the ripening wheat,
Where those He had sent in the early morn
Were reaping the grain in the noonday heat.
He had chosen a place for every one,
And bidden them work till the day was done.

Apart from the others, with troubled voice,
Spake one who had gathered no golden grain:
"The Master hath given no work to me,
and my coming hither hath been in vain;

The reapers with gladness and song will come,
But no sheaves will be mine in the harvest home."

He heard the complaint, and He called her name:
"Dear child, why standest thou idle here?
Go fill the cup from the hillside stream,
And bring it to those who are toiling near;
I will bless thy labor, and it shall be
Kept in remembrance as done for Me."

'Twas a little service, but grateful hearts
Thanked God for the water so cold and clear;
And some who were fainting with thirst and heat,
Went forth with new strength to the work so dear;
And many a weary soul looked up,
Revived and cheered by the little cup.

R3502: "EVER GIVE US THIS BREAD."

—John 6:1-14.—

Golden Text:—"I am the living bread which came down from heaven."

—John 6:51.

CONSIDERABLE periods are sometimes covered by the opening expression of this lesson, "After these things." How long after our previous lesson depends on which feast is referred to. If it was Purim, only a month had elapsed; if it was Passover, a year. As previously pointed out, John's Gospel, written after the others, was evidently designed not so much to give a history of our Lord's life as to mention incidents omitted in the other Gospels. The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, which is the basis of this lesson, stands prominently before us as the only miracle that is particularly described in all four of the Gospels. John's account of it brings to our attention some features not so clearly presented in the others.

From other accounts we learn that our Lord's crossing of the Sea of Galilee at this time was for needed rest. His preaching and teaching and traveling were practically continuous; his hearers, going and coming from morning until night left him little opportunity for privacy and rest, and he was quite willing thus to lay down his life in feeding the sheep—not only exhausting his vitality through the healing of the diseases of the people, but also through the exhortations and public speaking, which are particularly enervating in the open air and when prolonged.

Another reason for leaving Galilee was that his disciples, whom he had sent forth two by two through the various cities to teach and to heal as he was doing, had now returned to him, and doubtless he desired rest for them also, and a measure of quiet and privacy in

which he could hear from them reports and give them needed instructions respecting their work. The third reason was that at this time the news had just reached Galilee that Herod had caused the beheading of John the Baptist, and the further news that the army of Herod had been vanquished by that of Aretas. The news had unquestionably stirred the people and aroused their imaginations respecting the future, and to some extent had unfitted them for the hearing of the Lord's message. Some had even said to our Lord and the Apostles, "Depart from Herod's dominions, lest he slay thee as he has slain John the Baptizer." Still another reason probably was to give occasion for this miracle.

Perhaps all of these reasons combined to make the change a desirable one and several of the apostles being fishermen, whose boats were at their own disposal, and the Sea of Galilee small, the undertaking was not extraordinary. The sail across the sea brought Jesus and the apostles to a quiet secluded place, where they probably spent a day or two in rest and comparative privacy, communing respecting the interests of the work. To camp out of doors thus, without tents, etc., seems to have been not an unusual thing in that climate at that time; indeed even to-day one may find the Arabs in that country sleeping along the roadside at night, wrapped in their outer cloaks or garments and, like Jacob, with a stone for their pillow.

SEEKING THE MESSIAH.

Another account tells us that when the multitudes who had been listening to the teachings of Jesus, seeing his miracles, etc., learned that he had gone to the other side of the lake, some of them went afoot and some in small boats in the general direction in which he had gone, seeking him. At this particular season many had their arrangements so made that they were on a holiday journey, going up to Jerusalem to the feast. On such occasions there was an unusual concourse on all roads leading to Jerusalem, and the people—excited by the conduct of Herod and bewildered and wondering respecting the Messiah—turned aside from their journey to hear more from the lips of this great Prophet, Jesus, and to see for themselves whether or not they thought he possessed the qualifications that would fit him for the Messiahship, for the deliverance of their nation, for the establishment of the long-promised Kingdom of God. Jesus was sitting on the mountain side with his disciples when this large concourse of people seeking him came along; quite probably he and the apostles taught the multitude for some time before the miracle of feeding them was performed. We must remember that the Gospel narratives are very brief and pass over small and irrelevant details.

Our Lord, who had already planned the miracle, had led the minds of his disciples up to the point by inquiring, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" This question was addressed to Philip, one of the apostles who lived not far distant. He was the proper person on that account, but probably the Lord had another reason for questioning him. Philip seems to have been of rather a calculating and business turn of mind, and although this disposition is an excellent one to have amongst the disciples of the Lord, it, nevertheless, is inclined to think of earthly means rather than to exercise faith in the Lord. Probably the Lord wished to awaken Philip's thought and specially to bring him profitable instruction and faith through this miracle. Philip's answer that it would require

two hundred pennyworth of bread (about \$32.00) to supply the multitude even a light luncheon, shows his business trait. While all the various casts of mind are to be found amongst the Lord's people, the business head is amongst the most useful if it be kept under proper restraints of love and faith;—love, that it may not allow business instincts to take sole charge of spiritual affairs; and faith, that it may be able to realize that although business methods are excellent in all the affairs of life, they must not be permitted to ignore faith in the Lord and the power of his might, and the loving interest which he takes in all the affairs of his Church, the New Creation.

THE USE OF MEANS.

Andrew, whose mind seems to have been less practical than that of Philip, suggested that one of the company had five little barley cakes and two small fishes, yet he had hardly offered the remark when he felt ashamed of it, and added, "But what are they among so many?" Philip was too practical, too much of a business man to have even thought of or mentioned such a morsel of food in connection with the supply of so large a multitude; but our Lord had use not only for the broader mind of Philip but also for the more simple and less logical mind of Andrew, and used the latter's suggestion by calling for the little supply. There is a lesson for us here: it illustrates what many of us have seen in connection with the affairs of the Lord's people, namely, that all the good suggestions, all the helpful suggestions, all those suggestions which make for the interest of the Church, do not always come from one quarter—that often the Lord uses the stumbling lips and illogical reasonings of some of his followers as the basis of blessings to themselves and others, just as now he used Andrew's seemingly foolish remark.

Another thought in this connection is that our Lord seems always to have made use of whatever was at hand. He could have turned the stones into bread and thereby to have fed the multitude; he could have ignored the little supply on hand as insignificant; but this was not his method. All of his followers should learn from this not to despise the little things, but to use them so far as possible. There is a principle involved, too—as our Lord expresses it, He that is faithful in that which is least, will be faithful also in that which is greater. Another lesson is that miracles are only to be expected after we have done all in our power with the means at hand. The colored man had the right idea when, after expressing his faith in the Lord, some one said to him, "Now, George, if the Lord should command you to jump through that stone wall, would you do it?" His answer was that if he were certain that the Lord had commanded it, he would jump at the stone wall and leave to the Lord all that was beyond his power. If the Lord wished to make a miracle out of it he was able to do so, but the jumping part belonged to George. So it is with us in all life's affairs: we are to be sure that we are in the Lord's way, that we are following his directions, and then we are to leave all the results to him, assured of his ability to work the greatest miracles. Nevertheless, the greatest miracles which any of us have to do with are of a quiet and unostentatious kind. In nature we see these miracles in the growing grain, which, under the Lord's providences, supplies our needs in response to our labor. The increase of the five barley loaves and two little fishes, we may be sure, was not more of a miracle than that which is continually going on in nature, only that it is a different kind, to which we are not accustomed. Nevertheless, as the Lord used the barley cakes

and fishes as the nucleus for this miracle, so in nature he uses the seed wheat as the basis for the miracle of the crop gathered in harvest. In other words he always uses means to an end, and the fact that we may see and understand the means does not make the miracle either greater or less. A proper view of life connects the Lord with all the affairs of this life as well as with all that pertains to the life to come.

"WHEN THEY WERE FILLED."

The multitude sat down in groups or companies of fifties and hundreds, we are told, and the disciples distributed to them the five little cakes and two fishes in pieces, which apparently grew as they were broken, much after the manner of the widow's cruse of oil, which flowed incessantly until all the pots had been filled. So this little supply under the Lord's blessing increased, not merely to give a light luncheon to the multitude, but until all were "filled," satisfied, wanted no more. Here was a miracle which not only astounded the disciples but also the thousands; it was what John calls a sign, an evidence and proof of our Lord's supernatural power and authority—a proof that he was indeed the Sent of God, the Messiah. This was the object of the miracle—not the feeding of the multitude. At the very same time there were doubtless hungry ones in various parts of the world whom the Lord could have fed without any trouble to himself; but he came not to feed the world, he came not to stop the pain and sorrow and dying, but to redeem the world and to give evidence which would allow the apostles and all the Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile to accept him by faith as the Messiah—evidences also which, coming down to us and others of this Gospel age, have been the foundation for our faith.

Some have said, O that we could have been there and witnessed the miracle of the loaves and fishes! Our faith would have been made so strong that we could have been the disciples of Jesus under any and all circumstances and conditions. What a wonder it is that any of those five thousand should ever have doubted our Lord's Messiahship! We answer that those who are truly the Lord's people have similar miracles to-day, because he communicates to us through the Word, and because in eating of the Word we partake of the spirit of our Lord, the spirit of the Truth.

In view of this, which of the Lord's people can gainsay the fact that he is continually, in his own experiences and in the experiences of other Christians, performing a miracle greater than that recorded in our lesson? Which of the Lord's people who have tasted that he is gracious, who have hungered and thirsted after righteousness—Truth—and have had its assisting comfort time and again, could any longer feel that their preference would have been to have lived in the days of our Lord's first advent and to have seen and tasted of the miracles then performed? For our part we much prefer the higher miracles, and consider that we have a stronger basis for faith in these than the poor Jews could possibly have had in all the favors bestowed upon them, great as those favors were.

WEALTH AND ECONOMY BLENDED.

Although our Lord was rich before he came into the world, and although he realized that through the power of God in him he could still have all that was necessary for his

well being and could provide for his followers, too, as shown not only in the miracle before us, the increase of the loaves and fishes, but also shown when, on another occasion, he granted his disciples the great draught of fishes out of the very lake before them—with all this wealth at his command our Lord was a great economist; from his standpoint nothing should be wasted. It was in harmony with this that, after the multitude had been thoroughly fed, the Lord instructed the Apostles to gather up the fragments that nothing be wasted, and they took up twelve haversacks full—each of them gathered the full of his bag or satchel or haversack, in our text called a basket.

There are two lessons in this for us, one a practical lesson on economy, that none of the Lord's blessings and mercies are to be wasted. To some this lesson may come easier than to others, but it is a usual experience in life that willful waste brings woeful want. Quite probably some of the Lord's dear disciples at the present time need to learn the lesson of economy as much as did the disciples and multitude on this occasion. This does not teach the lesson of miserliness either, for the Scriptures declare, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." (Prov. 11:24.) The first lesson was generosity, the secondary lesson was economy. So it should be with us: our generosity should be equal to our disposition to economize. The Lord is not stingy, but generous; and none of his followers should be stingy. The Lord was economical, and that also his disciples should be.

It was those who scattered to others who had their haversacks filled in the end and gained the supply for themselves.

We can apply the same lesson to spiritual things: the Lord's people are to be distributors. We have received of the Lord's bounty, grace and truth freely; we are to distribute freely. Those who distribute will have the privilege of gathering up for themselves, that each may have more than he gave away. How true it is that those who are most intent upon feeding others with the bread of life are themselves most bountifully supplied. Let us see to it, then, that we have generosity in respect to the spiritual as well as the natural food. Let us give forth the word of life and the water of life. While we do so from good, honest, sincere hearts, with a desire to honor the Lord and to bless the people, and without selfishness or pride on our own part, we may be sure that he will give us more and more of a rich supply for our own spiritual growth and sustenance.

The multitude took knowledge of the miracle and acclaimed our Lord the great Prophet. By many of them, however, the miracle was only partially appreciated. Doubtless they viewed it as an indication that if Jesus were proclaimed a king, he could supply his soldiers with food without a commissary department; and if he could thus supply the food to his supporters and followers he would be able also to give them the victory under all circumstances and conditions. These things are true, but not true in the way that the natural Israelites supposed. Our Lord giveth us the victory now over sin and selfishness, and leads us on from one achievement to another as we seek to walk in his steps, and all the way he feeds us with the living bread from heaven. In due time he will become the great King over the world, and his power to control and to feed and to put down Satan and all the powers of evil will be fully manifested. Then many of the blind

eyes shall be opened—eyes which cannot see the things of faith, ears which cannot hear the message of faith. Let us give thanks to the Lord more and more that our eyes see and our ears hear the message which as yet the world sees not, appreciates not. While this Gospel age can bring special blessings only to those who have the hearing ear and understanding heart and eye of faith, thank God there is another age to come in which all the families of the earth will be abundantly blessed and guided and helped by those who now are able to walk by faith. Only a special class can now appreciate the bread which came down from heaven. By and by, under the blessed influences and arrangements of the Kingdom, all may have the privilege of eating of the bread of life and thus attaining the life everlasting. How our hearts go out to those who are now starving for this very bread, not only the heathen who have never heard of Christ but many in the lands of civilization who, although they have heard, know not, see not, neither do they understand, neither can they understand until in the Lord's due time their eyes of understanding and ears of appreciation shall be opened, as has been promised through the prophets.—Isa. 35:5; 42:7; 49:9.

"Only five barley loaves!
Only two fishes small!
And can I offer these poor gifts
To Christ, the Lord of all?
To him whose mighty word
Can still the angry sea,
Can cleanse the lepers, raise the dead?—
He hath no need of me."

"Yes, he hath need of thee!
Then bring thy loaves of bread;
Behold, with them, when Jesus speaks,
The multitude are fed."

OCTOBER 19

Freely ye have received, freely give—Matt. 10:8.

Let us be on the alert to give to all who are hungering and thirsting for the blessed food which has so greatly refreshed and strengthened us. If they do not get it they will faint by the way as they go looking for other provisions. We have the very thing which all of the household of faith need; without it they cannot maintain their standing, they cannot press on, they shall surely become discouraged. Whatever we may have of financial means for sending forth the bread of life to others, or whatever we may have of knowledge of the Truth, is neither to be selfishly hoarded nor selfishly partaken of by ourselves. It is to be consecrated to the Lord, and out of that consecration the Lord will bring blessings to others and increased blessings upon our own heads and hearts—Z '04, 78 (R 3332).

A review of God's gifts to us reveals how freely, *i.e.*, how liberally and graciously, He has given us the blessings of creation, providence, redemption, instruction, justification, sanctification and deliverance. These blessings contain everything that we need for life and godliness. Freely indeed have we received. Therefore in the same spirit let us give of our knowledge, affections, time, strength, means, health, life, service, ease, influence, reputation, safety, yes, our little human all, to and for our dear Heavenly Father, the Giver of every good gift and every perfect gift! Nor would these gifts be sufficiently large and good to be worthy the One who has given us our *all*—P '33, 148.

Parallel passages: Acts 8:18-20; Psa. 34:10; 68:18, 35; 84:11; Eccles. 2:26; Isa. 42:5; Ezek. 11:19; Dan. 2:21-23; Matt. 11:28; 25:14-30; John 6:27; 16:23, 24; 17:22; Rom. 5:16-19; 8:32; 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 13:1-3; 1 Pet. 4:10.

Hymns: 70, 326, 11, 1, 68, 286, 28.

Poems of Dawn, 292: *A Dead Sea or a Galilee?*

Tower Reading: Z '16, 217 (R 5926).

Questions: What return have I made for God's gifts? How? Why? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

A DEAD SEA OR A GALILEE?

LIFE adorns the Sea of Galilee:
Its bosom teems with fish; its shores are green;
But to the south there lies the Salty Sea,
So desolate: no fish, no life is seen.

And yet from Jordan's waters both receive.
Then why doth one have life; the other death?
'Tis Nature's law, to take and then to give;
For every breath we take we give a breath.

The Dead Sea drinks far more than Galilee,
But has no outlet in its selfishness;
While Galilee bestows its bounties free—
It issues forth its life mankind to bless.

Am I a Dead Sea, or a Galilee?
More blessed 'tis to give than to receive;
If I confine my thoughts to *my* and *me*
I'll not bless others, but myself deceive.

R5926: THE GRACE OF GIVING

—2 Corinthians 9.—

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

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

CHRISTIAN benevolence—almsgiving—is the lesson inculcated in today's Study. The general disposition of the fallen nature is to give adherence or support to the strong and to expect weaker ones to rally around and uphold us. This is self-pleasing—the way of the fallen nature. But the method of the New Creature in Christ is to be the reverse of this. He is to be on the lookout for the welfare, the interests and the comforts of others, especially of those in his own family and of the weaker members of the Household of Faith. The stronger of the brethren in Christ should take pleasure in helping the weaker and the less able, and so far as possible in bringing all up to the stature of manhood in Christ.

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

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

BLINDED BY RELIGIOUS PRIDE

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

This was the secret of Israel's blindness to the Gospel. The religious leaders and theologians were so self-conscious, and relied so implicitly upon their interpretations of the Divine promises as centering in themselves, that they could not regard the humble Nazarene and His unlearned followers except as impostors. Later, when the Gospel began to be preached to the Gentiles, the opposition of the Jewish theologians was increased; for it was utterly contrary to every thought of their religious pride that God would accept either the humble Jews or the Gentiles to His favor, and reject themselves, the leading representatives of His Cause and work.—John 7:43-53.

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

THE BENEFITS OF SYSTEMATIC CHARITY

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

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

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

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

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

LIBERALITY AN INDEX OF LOVE

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

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

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

OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF OUR GIFTS

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

How many have such carefulness for themselves, either in using every penny as fast as it comes or in being so interested in laying by for the outworking of future plans, that they feel that they can spare nothing for charity! How many such can afterward see that

they made a great mistake in so doing! When their accumulations suddenly vanish, either through sickness or through accident or bank failure or otherwise, then they have good reason to regret that they sowed no "seed" after the manner described by the Apostle in Verse 6 of today's Study.

Our Lord showed us how He measures our gifts—that He esteems them not according to the amount given, but chiefly according to the spirit which prompts the gift—when He drew attention to the poor widow who cast two mites into the Temple treasury. (Luke 21:1-4.) From the standpoint of His estimation, that poor widow had cast in a larger sum than had any of the wealthy who had given merely out of their abundance, and not to such an extent that they felt it. How many of the Lord's people would be more "fat" spiritually today, if they would give attention to the exercise of this talent, this opportunity for service, we cannot say. The Lord alone knows. But today's Study makes it incumbent upon us to point out a privilege in this direction which is within the reach of the very poorest of the Lord's people.

A THANK-OFFERING TO THE LORD

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

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

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

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

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

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

OCTOBER 20

Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves—Matt. 10:16.

Oh, that all the Lord's dear people could learn the value of wisdom in connection with their endeavors to serve the Truth! Our Lord not only taught us to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, but He exemplified this lesson in His own course, saying on another occasion to the Apostles, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now." We, too, should learn that there are opportune and inopportune times for mentioning certain truths, and that there are wise and unwise methods of presenting them. It is not enough that we do not speak untruths; it is not enough that we speak the truth; additionally we should see to it that we speak the truth in love, and love that is trained uses wisdom that it may accomplish more good—Z '04, 91 (R 3339).

To have the serpent's wisdom and the dove's harmlessness means to possess a combination of tact and guilelessness. This combination is necessary in a herald of the Kingdom coming with a beneficent message, and mingling with people who generally misunderstand, sometimes pervert and not infrequently persecute. These qualities should be balanced and blended. Our tact should not be hypocritical, nor should our guilelessness be tactless. The higher primary graces most of all contribute to this happy balance. Its effect is, gathering and edifying the Church, testifying to the world and co-operating in overthrowing Satan's empire with a minimum of opposition—P '32, 150.

Parallel passages: Luke 10:3; Rom. 16:19; Eph. 5:15; 1 Cor. 14:20; Phil. 2:15; 1 Cor. 9:19-23; 2 Cor. 12:6; Judg. 8:1-3; 1 Kings 3:24-28; Acts 23:6-10.

Hymns: 44, 95, 125, 136, 145, 164, 198.
Poems of Dawn, 201: *Only a Little While*.
Tower Reading: Z '12, 393 (R 5151).

Questions: Have I this week blended tact and guilelessness? How? Why? With what results?

ONLY A LITTLE WHILE

ONLY a little while to walk with weary feet,
Only a little while the storms of life to meet,
Only a little while to tread the thorny way,
Only a little while, then comes the perfect day.

Only a little while to spread the *truth* abroad,
Only a little while to testify for God,
Only a little while, the time is fleeting fast,
Only a little while, earth's sorrows all are past.

Only a little while, then let us do our best,
Only a little while, then comes the promised rest.
Only a little while, oh, what a word is this!
Only a little while, then comes the perfect bliss.

Only a little while, then death shall be withdrawn,
Only a little while, then pain and tears are gone;
Only a little while, then by the Crystal Sea,
Only a little while, then we shall dwell with Thee.

Only a little while, Lord, let Thy Kingdom come!
Only a little while, Thy people sigh for home;
Only a little while, the City bring to sight,
Only a little while, come end earth's dreary night!

R5151: "WISE AS SERPENTS—HARMLESS AS DOVES"

Matthew 10:16.

PRESUMABLY all of the Lord's people remember the Master's words quoted in the title. Yet apparently very few have appreciated them; for otherwise they would surely be putting this advice into practice—seeking to do the Lord's will. When we think of blundering mistakes which others make and which we ourselves have made in presenting Divine truths to others, we are silent. The consolation we seem to find is in the further word of Jesus, that God is sometimes praised by the prattling of the mouths of babes. As children of God we have a period of infancy, of childhood.

St. Paul refers to this, saying, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." (I Cor. 13:11.) So we all need to exercise ourselves to some extent in order to counteract the results of the childishness and the mistakes of our earlier experiences in the family of the Lord. Let us not be content to remain children long. Let us rapidly grow in grace and knowledge and love. Let us take such earnest heed to the Master's words, that we may speedily become acceptable and profitable ambassadors for the King Eternal.

How often we have advised the dear readers of this journal not to choke Christian brethren who, so far as knowledge of God and His Word are concerned, are merest babes, no matter if their consecration dates twenty or thirty years back! When such come into our midst, their presence implies that they are hungering for spiritual food. Shall we stuff them to nausea? Shall we feed them strong meat of Divine Truth which they cannot appreciate and which will choke them? Or shall we act more wisely and give them meat in due season—spiritual food adapted to their condition?

Some dear friends, full of zeal and greatly appreciated both by the Lord and by ourself, are so unwise that they would probably do the Cause more good if they never

attempted to expound the Heavenly things to others—if they would content themselves with merely saying, "I will give you something to read which will make that subject very clear to you." On the contrary, there is danger that, when good meetings have been held for the public, and earnest souls are seeking the Lord, hungering and thirsting for the Truth, they may be injured by those whose hearts are the very best, but whose judgments are poor.

THE POINT ILLUSTRATED

An illustration of this is before us in a letter. A friend writes, "I took friends to our regular meetings several times—people who have read some and manifested some interest. With one accord all of our Class began, after the meeting, to acquaint them with all kinds of information, chiefly about the materialization of evil spirits and about Christ's presence, etc., with the result that they were so confused that they did not care to go again. Sometimes the leader of the Class, discerning the visitor, will leave the regular lesson and go into dissertations which seem unwise for the newcomers and unprofitable to the Class.

"The newcomers would have understood and appreciated our Berean Lesson, if the item specially intended for them had been omitted. I was discouraged about taking outsiders with us any more. When no strangers are with us, our Berean Lessons are good and instructive, because we stick closely to them. The tiresome rambling occurs *when visitors come*. So I am just keeping still and not inviting my friends, believing that it will do them more good to read thoroughly before attending our Class under existing conditions."

This is an exact illustration of a point which we are making and which we have tried to make several times. We do not wish to discourage the dear friends from preaching the Truth. We are merely urging the words of the Master, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Obedience to the Master should control whatever wayward and excitable tendencies may be ours naturally.

OCTOBER 21

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name—Luke 11:2.

This expresses adoration, appreciation of Divine goodness and greatness, and a corresponding reverence. In addressing our petition to the Lord our first thought is to be, not a selfish one respecting ourselves, nor a thought respecting the interests of others precious to us, but God is to be first in all our thoughts and aims and calculations. We are to pray for nothing that would not be in accord with the honor of our Heavenly Father's name; we are to wish for nothing for ourselves, or for our dear ones, that He would not fully approve and commission us to pray for. Perhaps no quality of heart is in greater danger of being blotted out among professing Christians than this thought of reverence for God—Z '04, 118 (R 3351).

God does for His children all and more than a good earthly father does for his children. Accordingly He begets, loves, fellowships, provides for, trains, prepares and gives an inheritance to His children. As our Heavenly Father, He does all of these things in the superlative degree. Most appropriately, therefore, should we hallow His name. This we do when we give Him the supreme reverence and devotion of our hearts, minds, souls and strength. This implies in ultimate analysis such conduct on our part as crystallizes Christlikeness in us, and fits us for the Kingdom. Nor do we desire to give Him a less honor—P '26, 156.

Parallel passages: Isa. 63:17; Matt. 5:44, 45; 6:4; 8:13; Rom. 8:15; 1 Cor. 8:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; 6:18; Gal. 4:4-7; Eph. 1:3, 17; 3:14; 5:20; Col. 1:3, 12; Jas. 1:17; 1 John 3:1; Rev. 3:5; 14:1.

Hymns: 11, 45, 46, 83, 89, 193, 176.

Poems of Dawn, 255: *The Divine Weaving*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 8 (R 5378).

Questions: Did I this week glorify God's Name? How? Under what circumstances? With what results?

THE DIVINE WEAVING

SEE the mystic Weaver sitting
High in Heaven—His loom below;
Up and down the treadles go.
Takes, for web, the world's dark ages,
Takes, for woof, the kings and sages,
Takes the nobles and their pages,
Takes all nations and all stages.
Thrones are bobbins in His shuttle,
Armies make them scud and scuttle—
Web into the woof must flow;

Up and down the nations go!
At the Weaver's *will* they go!

Calmly see the mystic Weaver
Throw His shuttle to and fro;
'Mid the noise and wild confusion,
Well the Weaver seems to know
What each motion, and commotion,
What each fusion, and confusion,
In the grand result will show!

Glorious wonder! What a weaving!
To the *dull*, beyond believing!
Such no fables ages know,
Only faith can see the Mystery,
How along the aisles of history,
Where the feet of sages go,
Loveliest to the fairest eyes,
Grand the mystic tapet lies!

Soft and smooth, and ever-spreading,
As if made for angel's treading—
Tufted circles touching ever:
Every figure has its plaidings,
Brighter forms and softer shadings,
Each illumined—what a riddle—
From a cross that gems the middle.

'Tis a saying—some reject it—
That its light is all reflected;
That the tapet's lines are given
By a Sun that shines in Heaven!
'Tis believed—by all believing—
That great God, Himself, is weaving,
Bringing out the world's dark Mystery,
In the light of faith and history;
And, as a web and woof diminish,
Comes the grand and glorious finish,
When begin the Golden Ages,
Long foretold by seers and sages.

R5378: WHO MAY PRAY AND FOR WHAT?

—Luke 11:1-13.—

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."—Luke 11:9.

APPARENTLY Jesus usually prayed alone. We read that on some occasions He spent the entire night in prayer to God. How inconsistent that would have been if He Himself were the Father, who for a time was with men and outwardly appeared as the "Man Christ Jesus"! But how consistent is the thought of Jesus' prayer to the Father when taken in connection with His own declaration: "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28); "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John 6:38); "Of Mine own self I can do nothing; as I hear [of My Father], I judge."—John 5:30.

Instead of being the Father masquerading as a man, Jesus was the Logos, the Word, or Message of God, whom the Father had sanctified and sent into the world to be the world's Redeemer, and who by and by is to be its King, to deliver it from the power of Satan and sin, and to restore the willing and obedient to the Divine likeness, the Father's favor and everlasting life.—Isaiah 25:6-8; Romans 8:21.

Realizing the importance of His mission, Jesus kept properly in touch with the great Author of the Plan of Salvation, His Heavenly Father. His prayers were not mockeries; they were sincere. He worshiped the Father in spirit and in truth, as He declared all must do who would be acceptable to the Father.

No doubt the disciples noted the Master's frequency in prayer, and the blessing which He seemed to receive therefrom. Instead of urging them to pray, Jesus by His example taught them to desire the privilege and blessing of prayer. In due time they requested instruction, saying, "Lord, teach us to pray!" It is well that we inquire who may pray, and for what things we may petition the great Creator, else we might be praying without authority, or praying amiss, as St. James declares some do.

There is a difference between worship—adoration, homage—and prayer. Any one may offer homage to the Lord, bow the knee or express thanks and appreciation. But as for making requests of God, prayers, this privilege is distinctly limited. The Jews were privileged to offer prayer, because they as a nation were in typical relationship with God under the Law Covenant, as a "House of Servants." But the Gentiles had no privilege of approaching God in prayer until after the Jewish favor had ended—three and a half years after the crucifixion of Jesus.

The first Gentile whose prayers were received, according to the Bible, was Cornelius. And even his prayers were not acceptable until he had been instructed respecting Christ and His redemption work and had become a follower of Jesus. Then his prayers and his consecration were acceptable to the Father, and he was received into the family of God as a son. Then as a son he had the right or privilege of prayer.—Acts 10:25-48.

So today while any one may offer worship and reverence to God, none is privileged to pray unless he has become a consecrated disciple of Jesus, except it be the immature children of such consecrated persons. All over the world today's lesson will be

misinterpreted. Jesus' words, "Our Father," will be misinterpreted to signify the "Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." The context will be ignored. The fact that these were consecrated disciples, and not mankind in general, who were instructed to pray "our Father," will be ignored.

There is a general tendency to ignore personal faith in the redeeming blood—to ignore the fact that no man cometh unto the Father but by the Son. (John 14:6.) Adam indeed was created a son of God; but his disobedience and death sentence cancelled the relationship, which cannot be restored except in God's appointed way—through Christ. Prayer is a wonderful privilege. It is not for sinners, but for those who have been justified by the great Advocate whom the Father has appointed—Jesus.

"AFTER THIS MANNER PRAY"

The model prayer which Jesus gave His followers is grandly simple. It is devoid of selfishness. Instead of "I" and "me," the prayer is comprehensive of all who are truly the Lord's people, in any class—we, us, our. It is unselfish, too, in that it is not a prayer for earthly blessings. Only one petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," can be construed to apply to even the simplest of earthly blessings. And this may also be understood to signify more particularly spiritual nourishment.

The prayer opens with a reverent acknowledgment of the greatness and sacredness of the Heavenly Father's name, or character. Next comes an acknowledgment of the present condition of sin in the world and an acknowledgment of faith in the promise that God has given, that eventually His Kingdom shall be established in the earth, and shall overthrow the reign of Sin and Death which has prevailed for six thousand years, and will bind Satan, "the Prince of this world." (Rev. 20:1-3.) The petition, "Thy Kingdom come," not only manifests faith in God and in His promise to abolish sin and establish righteousness in the earth, but it means more; namely, that the suppliant is in his heart in sympathy with God and His righteousness and out of sympathy with the reign of Sin and Death.

The next petition is, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven." This signifies full confidence in the promise of God that His Kingdom when it shall be established will not be a failure—that Satan will be bound; that the reign of Sin and Death will end; that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth and triumph, destroying all wilful opposers, until finally every knee shall be bowing and every tongue confessing, to the glory of God.

It is an expression of confidence that the Kingdom will effect the full restoration of the earth to its Edenic condition and of man to his primeval perfection in the image of his Creator; for not until such conditions prevail will it be possible for God's will to be as perfectly done on earth as it is now done in Heaven. An included thought is that when sin and death shall thus have been effaced, the world of mankind will be as happy in God's favor as are the angels now. This Jesus clearly expressed later, assuring us that eventually there will be no more sighing, crying or dying, because all the former things of sin and death will have passed away.—Rev. 21:5.

The request for daily bread implies our realization that our sustenance, both temporal and spiritual, must come from God. And the failure to specify any particular kind of food implies not only a hunger and desire on our part, but a full resignation to the provision of Divine Wisdom.

When the justified pray, "Forgive us our trespasses," they do not refer to Original Sin; for they were freed from that condemnation in their justification. By trespasses are signified those unintentional imperfections which appertain to all, and which all the followers of Jesus are striving to overcome. The request that we shall have forgiveness of our blemishes as we are generous and forgiving toward those who trespass against us is a reminder of the general terms of our relationship to God. We cannot grow in grace and abide in the sunshine of God's favor except as we cultivate the spirit of love, which is the spirit of God—a forgiving spirit, a generous spirit, in our dealings with others. God thus purposes to favor more especially those who particularly strive to exemplify His gracious mercy.

"Abandon us not in temptation" indicates that we are aware that we are surrounded by the powers of evil, and that as New Creatures we would be unable to withstand these successfully except as we should have Divine aid. "Deliver us from the Evil One" is a recognition that Satan is our great Adversary; and that we are on the alert to resist him, and yet realize our own insufficiency, our need of Divine aid. "We are not ignorant of his [Satan's] devices." (2 Corinthians 2:11.) "We wrestle not against flesh and blood [merely], but against wicked spirits in high positions."—Ephesians 6:12.

"SEEK, KNOCK, ASK—AND RECEIVE"

In the concluding verses of the Study, Jesus admonished that the prayer should be with fervency or earnestness, and not merely lifeless, formal words. He gave the illustration of the man who at first refused to be disturbed, even by his friend, but was finally moved by the earnestness of his friend's petition. So when we pray for God's Kingdom to come and His will to be done, as it delays long, we are not to think that our prayers are unheeded. We are praying in harmony with the Divine promise, and although we are not hastening the Kingdom by our prayers we are entering into a blessing of rest through faith, by continually bringing before our minds these promises of God, and thus waiting upon the Lord for the fulfilment of His promise.

What God really wishes to give to His people is His Holy Spirit. Because of the imperfections of the flesh none of us can be filled with the Spirit at first, as was our perfect Master. But as we come to God desiring to be filled with His spirit, desiring to be in harmony with Him, desiring to be in His character-likeness, by the seeking we find, and to our knocking the door is opened.

Nor should we be afraid that our Heavenly Father would give any bad answer to our requests. Would an earthly parent give to a hungry child a stone when it asked for bread; a serpent when it asked for fish; a scorpion when it asked for an egg? Surely not! We are

to know that our Heavenly Father is much better than we, much kinder, much more just and loving, and that He delights to give His good gifts, His Holy Spirit, to those consecrated disciples of Jesus who earnestly seek it.

"A little talk with Jesus—
How it smooths the rugged road!
How it seems to help me onward,
When I faint beneath my load!
When my heart is crushed with sorrow,
And my eyes with tears are dim,
There is naught can yield me comfort
Like a little talk with Him.

"The way is sometimes weary
To yonder nearing clime,
But a little talk with Jesus
Has helped me many a time.
The more I come to know Him,
And all His grace explore,
It sets me ever longing
To know Him more and more."

OCTOBER 22

Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?—Matt. 20:22.

The courage of the Lord in the narrow way fills us with admiration. What a strong character was His! He had no thought of turning back; He was intent upon accomplishing His Father's will—upon sacrificing Himself in the interest of others. A noble pattern the Apostles saw before them—greatness in humility, victory through service. It is well that we should have clearly before our minds that unless we partake of His cup, we can have no share in His Kingdom of glory. Let us then count all things else as loss and dross to obtain this necessary experience. As it comes to us let us not be fearful, nor think strange of the fiery trials that shall try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us. On the contrary, even hereunto were we called, that we might now suffer with the Lord and by and by be with Him in the Kingdom—Z '04, 138, 139 (R 3362).

A cup symbolizes experiences of bliss and woe. Though, generally speaking, our Lord's cup consisted of His experiences from Jordan to Calvary, yet in its extreme sense the cup represents the shame and disgrace heaped upon Him as one excommunicated and outlawed, dying under the sentence of blasphemy and rebellion. If we are His, we are privileged to undergo like experiences. Of ourselves we are not able to do this, but a faithful use of the Spirit, Word and providences of God will give us the necessary faith, hope, love and obedience that will make us willing and thus able to drink the Lord's cup with Him—P '36, 111.

Parallel passages: John 4:6; 11:33, 34; 12:27; Acts 3:18; 17:3; 2 Cor. 1:5; Phil. 2:7, 8; Heb. 4:15; 5:7; 12:2, 3; Rom. 6:1-11; 8:10, 17; 1 Cor. 15:29-34; 2 Cor. 4:8-10; Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:24; 2 Tim. 2:10-12; Heb. 13:10-13; 1 Pet. 2:21-23; 4:12-14.

Hymns: 322, 5, 350, 134, 279, 299, 326.

Poems of Dawn, 282: *"And There Was a Great Calm."*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 382 (R 5599).

Questions: Have I drunk of His cup this week? How? Why? What helped or hindered? With what results?

"AND THERE WAS A GREAT CALM"

AS the green waves bear on their crest
The foam, and ever shoreward come,
So, moving surely to our rest,
Slowly we all like bits of foam
Come drifting home.

He whom we loved has reached the shore
In peace; and all the billows vast—

The stormy waves of life that bore
Him on—have ceased their strife at last.
The storm is past!

We thought, because the waves of life
Were high and rough, the end would be
'Mid scenes of tumult and of strife,
As mighty billows of the sea
Break loud and free.

But there was calm instead! The waves
Of life were stilled, and up the strand
Slipped noiselessly, as ocean laves
In quietness the silver sand,
An ending grand!

How sweet to know his weary life
At last to rest and quiet wore!
Oh, may we all, through peace or strife,
Be gathered on that silver shore
For evermore!

R5599: "DRINK YE ALL OF IT"

"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"—Matthew 20:22.

THE incident which is narrated in our context occurred just previous to our Lord's death. He had gone up to Jerusalem. He had made the triumphal entry into the city. Now He was waiting for the grand climax of His experiences. He had forewarned His disciples and had explained to them that the chief priests would deliver Him up to be crucified.

But the Apostles in general did not understand the Lord's words. On many occasions His words had been figurative. So now they wondered what He meant. They did not know what kind of figure of speech this could be. They thought that He was near to sitting on His Throne, and that they would be with Him. So thoroughly were they convinced that the establishment of the Kingdom was at hand that St. James and St. John—their mother acting as spokesman, advocate—had asked that when He came into His Kingdom they two might sit near Him, the one on His right hand, and the other on His left. They were expecting that in a day or two important events would take place which would bring them into the Kingdom.

Our Lord's answer to this request was intended not only for the disciples there before Him, but undoubtedly for all His disciples throughout the Gospel Age, to set before them the conditions on which the Kingdom was to be attained. Our Lord stated the matter very plainly, asking James and John, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and

to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They did not understand these words in full, but perceived that it meant some kind of death. "Are you able?"—Are you willing? They replied that they were.

The word *able*, while it contains the thought of force, strength, nevertheless expresses willingness; for it refers to the *will*. The thought is not, Are ye physically able?—but, Are ye mentally able? This thought would properly be represented by the word willing. Are your wills strong enough? The two disciples determined that they were. "Yes, Lord, we have a will to do the whole thing, whatever it may be." They were fully given up to the Lord, to do His will. They would be willing for anything. They had such appreciation of the Kingdom, and such confidence in the Lord that whatever *He* was about to do *they* were willing to do.

OUR LORD'S REAL BAPTISM

And so it is with us. Our wills are made up. "Are ye able?" Surely! There is not a doubt—nothing to interfere. That which the disciples could not understand, and which we could not have understood had we been in their places, we fully understand now, because we have the assistance of the Holy Spirit to guide and help us in the understanding of the deep things of God. We see that the Lord meant that He was immersed into death. At the beginning of His ministry, He gave up all of His earthly interests in every sense of the word. This was His sacrifice. It was *symbolized* by baptism into *water*, but it was *really* a baptism into *death*. He had been fulfilling that baptism for three and a half years; and the next day He would die, as He well knew. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!"—Luke 12:50.

The thought is, "I am feeling greatly straitened until that baptism be accomplished. It will be accomplished tomorrow. I find that connected with that death there are difficulties that I had not expected. I am anxiously waiting for tomorrow, for the completion of My sacrificial death."

Our Lord had not supposed that His consecration to death would mean a death of such serious indignity, humiliation and misrepresentation of His character—an ignominious death. He had known that He was to be crucified, had told His disciples so and was entirely willing thus to die. But as He got down to the core of the matter, He saw that the arrangements were that He was to die the death of a *criminal*. It was an entirely different matter to be crucified as a criminal. Because He was a good man, it was most trying to Him to be arrested as a *blasphemer*—one guilty of the worst crime known to the Jews. To be condemned on the charge of blasphemy and to be led by His own countrymen to be put to death, when He was really giving up all that He had for the service of God, was a terrible ordeal for Him—much more of a test for Him than it would have been for one who had been tainted with sin, and who was less sensitive because of his wrong life. Jesus seems frequently to have referred to this cup, as if He instinctively shrank from the experience.

THE CHURCH'S CUP OF EXPERIENCE

In a broad sense, the figurative expression, *cup of experience*, might be used in referring to every affair of our lives. But this is apparently not the way in which Jesus was using this word at this time. He used it in respect to something in the future. "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I *shall* drink of?"—in the future—that cup which I shall drink within the next few hours. That cup was a terrible draft to Him—not the *dying*, not the *cross*. He had not asked that He might be spared the dying, that He might avoid death. But He had asked that this bitter cup of ignominy, that He should be put to death as a *blasphemer*, might be set aside; and yet He said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" After He had cried out with strong cryings to God and had received the assurances of God's favor, He was then ready to drink of this cup.

So it is with the Lord's followers. It is hard that our good should be evil spoken of, that we should be declared to be poisonous to every religious sentiment. This is a part of our experience. To have people separate us from their company would be a trifling thing. To die in some respectable way would be a small matter. But to be put into a false light, to have our good made out to be evil, these are trying experiences. Our attitude is to be the same as that of our Master, "The cup that our Lord shall pour, shall we not drink it?" We have the word of the Apostle that all things shall work for good to those who love God, to the called according to His purpose. With these thoughts before our minds, we are to be of good courage and to accept the cup of experience which the Lord has for us. We know not how near that cup may be. Perhaps with the Church it is the same as with Himself. Perhaps there will be a measure of acknowledgment that we are right about the Divine Plan. Then through the machinations of the church systems we may be delivered up—possibly to death.

THE TEST NOW UPON THE CHURCH

The disciples at the First Advent did not realize how near they were to the experiences of Gethsemane and Calvary. It may be so with us now, for aught we know. Therefore we realize the importance of our lives being such as the Lord has marked out for us. Watch ye, lest ye fall in the hour of temptation! The hour of temptation was upon them; therefore it was important that they keep themselves in the right attitude. And so should we do now, when we believe the Age is closing. There may be peculiar tests, which the Lord may not wish us to know—they would not be such tests if we knew of them in advance. Therefore we should be on guard that we may be found loyal and faithful, and that we may demonstrate our faithfulness unto death in the way that the Lord has prepared for us.

It would appear as though the present time may be one in which the Lord is giving His people a test of a new kind. Even though we see the Gentile nations in process of disintegration, there is an opportunity for some to doubt the whole matter and to say, "There have been wars before, and I suppose there will be wars yet! This is not the end of the Gentile Times, as I thought it would be." Such people, if they had been engaged in the Lord's service, might leave it and go into worldly society, or become engrossed in business, or what not. This is most particularly the very time in which such testings might

come. Therefore we should be on our guard lest any spirit of doubt come upon us.
"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

OCTOBER 23

Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant—Matt. 20:27.

Among the Gentiles the rulers are lords, who do no serving but are served; but among the followers of Jesus the rule is to be reversed: he who would serve most was to be esteemed most highly. What a beauty there is in the Divine order of things! How thoroughly all who are right-minded can sympathize with the principles here laid down! How reasonable they are and how contrary to the spirit of the world. Truly, the Lord's followers will in this sense of the word be a peculiar people in their zeal for good works—for serving one another and for doing good unto all men as they have opportunity—Z '04, 140 (R 3362).

The world's ideal of greatness is unusual talent, wealth, power, authority, knowledge, reputation or achievement. The Lord's ideal of greatness is the service of disinterested love. Therefore in His eyes we are great in proportion as we render service from a disinterested love, in harmony with wisdom, power and justice, laying down our lives in the interests of His Plan, especially in gathering and edifying the elect. To such a greatness as this we may aspire; yet not with the idea of surpassing others, whom we are to prefer in honor. We are to be useful to others in every good way in our power. Because He was such, Jesus is the greatest of *all*—P '30, 166.

Parallel passages: Prov. 15:33; Matt. 18:1-6; 20:20-26, 28; 23:11; Mark 10:42-45; Acts 20:35; Rom. 12:10, 16; 15:1-3; 1 Pet. 5:3, 5; Isa. 14:12-15; Gal. 6:2, 10; Phil. 2:5-9; Luke 22:27; John 13:14.

Hymns: 95, 299, 114, 198, 47, 229, 146.

Poems of Dawn, 169: *The Time is Short*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 312 (R 5785).

Questions: Have I this week sought to serve? Did I seek to do something to be seen or to be useful? What helped or hindered therein? What was the effect so far?

THE TIME IS SHORT

UP, up, my soul, the long-spent time redeeming;
Sow thou the seeds of better deed and thought;
Light other lamps, while yet the light is beaming;
The time, the time is short.

Think of the eyes that often weep in sadness,
Seeing not the truth that God to thee hath taught;
O bear to them this light and joy and gladness;
The time, the time is short.

Think of the feet that stray from misdirection,

And into snares of error's doctrine brought:
Bear then to them these tidings of salvation;
The time, the time is short.

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

R5785: TO SERVE, NOT TO BE SERVED

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."—Matthew 20:28.

THE Master was impressing upon His hearers the difference between Himself and other great kings. He had come to be King of Israel, in fulfilment of Scripture prophecy. Unlike earthly rulers He was not seeking to learn how much He could get out of the people, but how much He could do for the people. He was not selfish. He was not trying to see how little He could serve and how much others could serve Him; but on the contrary, how little others might do for Him and how much He could do for others. And this is His expectation in respect to His followers. He and His disciples, called with a Heavenly Calling, called to a Heavenly Kingdom, are not called to be selfish or to appropriate honors to themselves for their own gratification; but they are called to service—especially to the service of the people of God. This is the true meaning of the word *minister*; namely, one who serves.

It is especially appropriate that all who are followers of the Lord Jesus should remember that we have each been called to service; and that those who are ministering in spiritual things, those who are especially known by the name of "minister," should bear in mind that theirs is an office which calls for service, not to themselves, but to others; and that they have consecrated their lives thus to serve. Our Lord entered upon His ministry at His consecration. Of His life previous to His baptism at Jordan, the Scriptures say very little, so that the more attention may be attracted to His three and a half years of ministry in the Truth, when He was laying down His life for others—for His friends and also for His foes.

The same is true of all His followers. Our ministry begins at the time of our consecration. We are not authorized to minister, or serve, in holy things until we have entered upon the way which the Lord has pointed out to us. We are not today, however, obliged to wait until we have reached the age of thirty before we begin our ministry; but at as early an age as we can comprehend what we are engaging to perform, we may give our lives to the Lord and to the service of the Truth and of the brethren. This is because we are not under the Law covenant.—Romans 3:19.

ONLY A SON OF MAN COULD SERVE AS RANSOMER OF MAN

Our Lord speaks of Himself as the Son of Man, who came to "minister, and to give His life a Ransom for many." He was indeed the Son of God, even while He was the Son of Man. The perfect man Adam, before his fall into sin, was a son of God. Our Lord in calling Himself the Son of Man was emphasizing the fact that He was no longer on the spirit plane, but on the human plane. He came to earth for a specific purpose—as He explained, to minister, to serve. He could not have done the necessary service for man as a spirit being. The requirement was that He should become a man in order to ransom mankind. He could ransom *man* only by becoming *man*. He could purchase life for the *perfect Adam* and the race who lost life in him only by becoming a *perfect man*.

"An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a man's life for a man's life," was the demand of the Divine Law. Adam had sinned, and must be redeemed before he could be restored, either physically, mentally, or morally, or could be returned to God's favor. Jesus had come to make possible this full restoration. His life was devoted to the service of others, and He completed this great service in His death on the cross. Throughout His earthly sojourn He gave us a noble example of the proper life of those who would be followers in His footsteps.

OUR SERVICE PARTICULARLY FOR THE NEW CREATION

Many misunderstand the Bible and think that now is the time to save the world. Hence they are spending all their time and energies to comfort and uplift humanity. They are indeed engaged in laudable efforts; for every good work or effort is to be commended. But to those who are rightly informed respecting the Divine Plan there is another, a far higher work, to be done now. The work of God in the present Age has not been the reformation of the world, but the development of the New Creation. This work is not yet fully completed. If we would work the work of God, our works must relate to the New Creation preeminently. We may do good unto all men as we have opportunity, as the Apostle says, but especially are we to serve the Household of Faith.

Jesus was in line for this work of ministry. Although there were no New Creatures as yet, while He was here in the flesh, His work was to prepare for these New Creatures. His work was the gathering out of some who would be faithful footstep followers of Himself, and the laying down of His life on their behalf and on behalf of the whole world.

In the context we note the fact that two of Jesus' disciples were especially desirous at this time of sitting upon the Throne with the Master in His Kingdom, one upon His right and the other upon His left. Jesus did not condemn them for this desire, but pointed out to them how difficult were the conditions, and asked them whether they were able to comply with these conditions. They replied, "We are able." They were willing, at least. That their answer was pleasing to Jesus was manifested by His words, "Ye shall indeed drink of My cup, and be baptized with My baptism." They asked for places in the Kingdom very near to Him. Jesus informed them that He was not Himself able to give them such places—that the places would not be given according to favor, but according to justice; and that the Father would dispense these.

ARE WE MEETING THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS?

The place that we occupy in the Kingdom will depend much upon the extent to which we become ministers, or servants. And if we simply try to get as much as possible out of others and to give as little as possible, we shall not be such characters as the Lord is seeking for rulership in the Kingdom; in fact, we would not gain the Kingdom at all. He is seeking a very choice class. This class will all be servants, willing and glad to serve, esteeming it a great privilege to lay down their lives in the service of the brethren, to the extent of their ability and opportunity; for the service of the brethren is the service of God, to whom they have rendered themselves in consecration, to whom they have professed to devote their lives.

OCTOBER 24

And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon ... and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus—Luke 23:26.

We have often wondered, Where were Peter and John and James that they did not see the Master's burden and run to proffer assistance? If disposed to envy Simon his privilege of assisting the Master in the bearing of the cross, let us reflect that many of the Lord's brethren are daily bearing symbolic crosses, and that it is our privilege to assist them, and that the Lord agrees to reckon any service done to His faithful followers as though it were rendered to His own person. ... As the wooden cross was not our Lord's heaviest burden, so, too, His followers have crosses which the world sees not, but which the "brethren" should understand. "Bear ye one another's burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ"—Z '04, 155 (R 3369).

Because of His weakened condition, the cross taxed Jesus' strength beyond endurance; and God then provided the needed help, even though Simon was an unwilling helper. The text implies that Jesus bore the cross where the beams met; thus He bore its heavier part. Surely Jesus bore a heavier cross than ours. As we bear ours, we find that Jesus bears its heavier part. He considers our frame; He knows our weakness; therefore He goes before us, carrying the heavier part of our burden; and thus by His grace He enables us to persevere unto the end in spite of all obstacles—P '35, 131-132.

Parallel passages: Gen. 49:24, 25; 50:20; 1 Sam. 2:6-9; Ezra 6:22; Neh. 6:16; Esth. 7:10; Psa. 17:13; 76:10; Prov. 16:7; 21:1.

Hymns: 121, 63, 99, 124, 129, 149, 252.
Poems of Dawn, 215: *The Hidden Cross*.
Tower Reading: Z '13, 120 (R 5221).

Questions: Has this week brought me ameliorating providences? What were they? What were the results?

THE HIDDEN CROSS

THE multitude saw but the cross of olive-wood
The Man of Sorrows bore, nor knew how
underneath,
Close-pressed upon His heart, a hidden cross He wore,—
A dark and bleeding weight of sin and human woe,
Made heavier with the sentence of God's broken law,
And crowned with thorns of scornful and malicious
hate,—
A cross the world's Redeemer found on Jordan's
brink,
Nor laid it down until He came to Calvary.

Oftimes it seemed He almost craved some human aid,
Some sympathizing heart to share that cruel cross.
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, hadst thou but known
What time that cross bore heaviest on the yearning
heart
Of Him, thy King!—And yet, O, slow of faith and hard—
Of heart, "Ye would not,"—and the King passed on—
His way;
And of the people, there was none with Him, He
trod
Alone the winepress of this dark world's shame and
woe!

O, chosen three, had ye but watched with Him "one
hour,"
That awful night in dark Gethsemane, ye might
Have lightened some the cruel weight of that dread cross,
Have known and shared with Him that agonizing
woe,—
Alas! Alas! Your eyes were heavy, and ye slept.
So now, "sleep on and take your rest," ye weary one,
A holy angel's wing hath eased the hidden cross,—
Your Master, strengthened, waits that other cross to
bear!

Which cross bore heavier on the way to Calvary,—
The cross the cruel Roman soldiers laid upon
That Blessed One? Ah! no, it was the *unseen cross*
That crushed Him to the earth, that wrung from those
pale lips
The agonizing cry, "My God, My God, oh, why
Hast Thou forsaken Me?" The temple's veil was
rent;
The sun grew dark. *'Tis finished*, and the price is
paid,—
The hidden cross had pierced that loving, tender
heart!

"Take up thy cross and follow Me," the Master
said.
Ah, yes, His faithful Bride must also bear a cross,—
The hidden cross, made not of life's vicissitudes
Alone, its ills and pain, its loss and poverty,—
The outward signs the multitude behold;
Ah! no, we follow in His steps, who went before

Us in the narrow way. We, too, must bear the woe,
Be touched with feeling of the world's infirmity,—
Its weary weight of sin and curse of broken law.
Let us, therefore, go forth to Him, "without the
gate,"
Lay down our lives in sacrifice, spend and be spent,
And, while we clasp this cross more closely to our breast,
Press on toward Calvary, for there our Bridegroom
waits
To take the cross of woe, and give the Crown of Joy!

R5221: CROSS-BEARING A PRIVILEGE

"And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, ... and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus."—Luke 23:26.

THIS TEXT brings before our minds the whole scene of our Master's shame, ignominy—His condemnation by the Roman Governor at the solicitation of the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees—men of His own nation. Those who led Him away were the centurion and soldiers appointed by Pilate—not willingly, but by reason of the stress laid on him by the Jewish nation. The chief priests had threatened to report him as unfaithful to the interests of the Roman Empire, if he did not condemn Jesus. And then how would the Emperor treat him who allowed this humble Nazarene to make the claim of being king in territory under Roman jurisdiction?

We remember that the Jewish Sanhedrin tried the Lord under a different charge altogether. Their charge against Him was *blasphemy*, the penalty of which, under the Law, would have been stoning to death. Possibly they were not allowed to do stoning at that time; or possibly they feared the people.

It was not Divinely intended that our Lord should be stoned, but that He should be treated as a cursed one—hanged upon a tree. (Deuteronomy 21:22, 23.) "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." (John 3:14, 15.) So through fear of the multitude or from lack of authority from the Roman Governor, the Jews failed to stone Jesus.

Since they could not bring the charge of blasphemy before a Roman Court, they were obliged to bring a different charge—that, while *they* were *loyal* to the Roman Emperor, *Jesus* was *disloyal* to the Roman interests. Pilate washed his hands of the affair. He wished to be free from any guilt. But under stress of the Jews, and willing to keep peace, he caused the charge to be made that our Lord was crucified because of claiming to be King of the Jews.

The narrative seems to imply that Jesus bore His own cross on the way to Calvary, and that He fell beneath its weight. There might have been various reasons for this. He was

weak from undergoing very rigorous physical and mental strain. He had suffered from the bloody sweat in the Garden of Gethsemane, and had endured different trials—before the Sanhedrin, before Pilate, and before Herod. After this He was flogged! We can imagine that a person who had undergone so much would be scarcely able to walk, let alone carry a burden.

THE PROBABLE WEIGHT OF THE CROSS

When we think of our Lord as a perfect man, we would not think of Him as being the strongest of men. The imperfections of our race have manifested themselves in various ways. We have no reason to suppose that the first specimen of our race, Adam, was of surpassing strength, which might denote coarseness. We see this principle illustrated in fruits and vegetables. When we find an overgrown apple, we learn that it is not so tender as one of average size. So with a man of great physical stature—a giant. He might be coarse. We are to think of our Lord, not as extremely rugged, nor as weak, but as of great delicacy, and of reasonable strength and fiber.

When we think of the cross, too, we believe that it was of no light weight. We know of no light woods in the vicinity of Jerusalem. The most common tree there is the olive, which is an extremely heavy wood and of remarkable density. If we should suppose the cross to have been three feet in the ground and of reasonable height, it must have been at least twelve to fourteen feet long, and the cross-beam must have been at least five feet. Allowing a reasonable thickness for strength and for keeping it from bending under its load, we would think that the cross must have weighed from one hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds. This gives us the thought that it was no light weight.

LESSONS FROM THE INCIDENT

We have every reason to sympathize greatly with the tradition that the Lord *fell* under the weight of the cross. It was at this juncture that Simon, evidently a strong and rugged countryman who was passing by, was stopped by the centurion and his band, and compelled to assist Jesus in carrying the cross. Apparently, even then, its weight was on Jesus.

There are lessons for us in this incident. One is that the disciples of Jesus, the faithful eleven, missed an opportunity of cross-bearing. At first we might be inclined to censure them severely. We must reflect, however, that they feared for their lives. We may sympathize with them, and at the same time learn a lesson of greater courage in everything connected with the Master.

It is true that the multitude might have been as anxious to cry for the death of the disciples as for the Lord's. But one of them had said that he was ready to die for the Lord, and so said they all. How strange that in the moment of testing they did not display the courage! It is much easier to *attest* great loyalty, great faithfulness, than it is to manifest these traits when the test comes. With the opportune moment, come the difficulties, and the fearful sights and sounds, carrying terror with them.

We, of course, have no opportunity of doing anything of this kind for the Master Himself. But we realize that He is still with us in the brethren. What a precious privilege this affords us of still helping to bear the Master's cross! How advantageous to know that He still recognizes that whatsoever is done unto the least of these His brethren is done unto Him!

CROSS-BEARING PRECEDES CROWNING

Another thought that we have in this connection is that Simon, under the necessity of cross-bearing, would receive the burden either willingly or unwillingly. We have no record of what his experiences were. There is a tradition which declares that he afterwards became one of the Master's disciples. So in the Lord's providence, sometimes there is responsibility laid upon us. And if the Lord lays a cross upon us, will it be borne with *gladness* or with *murmuring*? If the former, we shall have a blessing, even though we had not sought the cross, even if it had been forced upon us.

When trials and difficulties come, and crosses are forced upon us, happy are we if we appreciate the opportunity of cross-bearing, recognizing that this is closely connected with the crowning. Simon represented in this case all of the Lord's faithful ones who help to bear the cross, following His example, walking in His steps. The cross will not be too heavy for us. The Lord will bear the heavy end of it; and our experiences will be only such as will be for our good and will work out for our blessing.

"I know not the way that's before me,
The joys or the griefs it may bring;
What clouds are o'erhanging the future,
What flowers by the wayside may spring.
But there's One who will journey beside me,
Nor in weal nor in woe will forsake;
And this is my solace and comfort,
'He knoweth the way that I take.'"

OCTOBER 25

Deal courageously, and the LORD shall be with the good—2 Chron. 19:11.

Whoever has a duty to perform, let him not fear, and while seeking to do unpleasant tasks in a kindly manner, both justly and lovingly, let us fear not man, but rather fear the Lord and be intent on pleasing Him. Let the world fight its fight; the Lord will supervise and the results will be glorious eventually. Let us who belong to the new nation, to the new Kingdom that is not of this world, who use no carnal weapons, but the sword of the Spirit—let us fight the good fight of faith, lay hold upon the glorious things set before us, and not only stand ourselves but also help all those with the same Spirit and members of the same spiritual army corps to stand, complete in Him who is the Head, the Captain of our Salvation—Z '04, 207, 205 (R 3393).

To deal courageously does not imply that we underrate our difficulties, tasks or enemies, nor that we overrate our abilities and attainments. It implies that we soberly estimate everything connected with our Christian warfare; and therefore realize that greater are they that are for us, than they that are against us. This will enable us with hearts full of hope for victory bravely to face all dangers. If to our courage we add goodness of heart, He who works all things for good to them that love God will give us mercy for our human lacks, faults and weakness and our immaturities of the new heart, mind and will, and grace to help in every time of need—P '34, 143.

Parallel passages: Josh. 1:1-9; 2 Chron. 15:7, 8; Prov. 28:1; Ezek. 2:6; 3:9; 1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 1:27, 28; 2 Tim. 1:7; Gen. 22:1-14; Judg. 6:25-31; Ezra 8:22, 23; 5:11; Dan. 3:16-18; 6:10; Acts 4:19; 5:29; Rev. 2:10.

Hymns: 13, 20, 136, 183, 261, 266, 272.

Poems of Dawn, 44: *Gideon's Band*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 71 (R 5413).

Questions: What has this text done for me this week? How? What were the results?

GIDEON'S BAND

"COUNT me the swords that have come."

"Lord, thousands on thousands are ready."

"Lo! These are too many, and with them are some

Whose hearts and whose hands are not steady.

He whose soul does not burn,

Let him take up his tent and return."

"Count me the swords that remain."

"Lord, hundreds on hundreds are daring."

"These yet are too many for Me to attain

To the victory I am preparing.
Lead them down to the brink
Of the waters of Marah to drink."

"Lord, those who remain are but few,
And the hosts of the foe are appalling,
And what can a handful such as we do?"
"When ye hear from beyond My voice calling,
Sound the trump! Hold the light!
Great Midian will melt in your sight!"

R5413: COURAGEOUS DEALING—PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

"Deal courageously, and the Lord will be with the good."—2 Chron. 19:11.

THERE is a Divine oversight of the affairs of those who serve God recognized here, and a Divine blessing may be expected eventually upon all who deal justly. All heathen religions, as well as the Christian religion—the religion of the Bible—incline to lead the devotee to expect Divine blessing. But no other religion sets forth, as does the Bible, a *just God*. No other religions are founded on the principle of Justice. This is one reason why the Bible has had potent influence for liberty. Wherever it has gone, it has been "Liberty enlightening the world."

There is no partiality with the Creator—no class distinction with Him—neither high nor low, rich nor poor, noble nor peasant. It is for this reason that when the teachings of the Lord were before the Israelites they were a liberty-loving people. In proportion as they fell into idolatry, they lost this spirit.

BIBLE BRINGS SPIRIT OF LIBERTY

With the spirit of liberty, of course, will go the spirit of heroism. Therefore the Bible is the source of the valiant qualities of the early Church in their withstanding persecution. Later on, when human traditions and heathen philosophies were heeded instead of the writings of Jesus and the Apostles and Prophets, the spirit of subjection, the spirit of slavery, the spirit of fear, the spirit of ignorance, proportionately prevailed, and brought on the Dark Ages. With the blessed influence which comes from the Word of God, we see, since the time of the Reformation, the spirit of liberty more manifest. Wherever the Bible has gone, the spirit of liberty has gone. Wherever the Bible has not gone, the spirit of liberty has not prevailed.

Witness, too, the so-called Christian countries where the Bible has been ignored—Russia, Spain, Portugal and large districts of France, Poland, etc. Wherever the Bible is, liberty is more and more manifest. Even where the people do not recognize the Bible, the spirit of its teachings has had its effect. There is something of a realization that all are of one flesh and blood, one common brotherhood. God created of one blood all people that

dwell upon the face of the whole earth. (Acts 17:26.) There are, of course, advantages in the way of birth, education, etc. Various circumstances affect conditions. But all mankind are responsible to the Creator, who is the great Judge over all. He is to be looked to as the One who will give rewards and punishments.

SPECIAL DEALINGS UNDER LAW COVENANT

Our text gives the words of the great king of Judah who became a reformer. He found that various degrees of injustice had crept into the customs of the people under the previous kings. In appointing officers and judges, King Jehoshaphat exhorted them to give their opinion according to the principles of justice. He said, "Deal courageously, and the Lord will be with the good." The Lord would bless those who would be faithful. The Lord would be with the good work that they would do, if they would do it faithfully.

We are to remember that there was a special arrangement existing between God and the people of Israel. Under that arrangement the Lord was to bless them in proportion as they were loyal to Him and to the principles of His Government. We are not, therefore, to apply these words indiscriminately to other nations, if some in other nations had attempted some kind of reform. God was not undertaking to deal with other nations at that time. He was letting them get a general lesson under their own supervision.

TEXT NOT APPLICABLE TO NATIONS TODAY

God intervened only where it would be injurious to allow certain peoples to carry their evil course any further; as, for instance, in the case of the Ninevites, the Sodomites, and the Amalekites. We could not say that we could apply this text today; and that if some good people were in public office and should deal courageously and put down all the wrong and uplift the right, God would give them success in the work. God is not dealing with the nations at all.

His whole dealing at this time is with the Church. The world today is still doing as it has always done, seeing what it can do for itself. In all probability these reformers today who would deal courageously would bring upon themselves great persecution if they should attempt to interfere with many of the entrenched vices. We have an example of this in New York City at the present time. Entrenched vice is hard to handle. Occasionally the world produces men who handle such things in a noble way. There are noble men inside and outside the Church. But we cannot say that the Lord would be with all of them.

It is a mistake to say that the present governments are under the grace of God. The Bible says that the governments of this time are under the influence of the Prince of this world, and that he has the upper hand at the present time. But when Messiah takes His great power and reigns, then Satan will be bound. Then all the evil influences will be brought under the control of the Messianic Kingdom. From that time onward, the saints will deal courageously in Messiah's Millennial Kingdom, and shall reign for the purpose

of putting down sin, until eventually Christ shall have accomplished the work of causing God's will to be done on earth, even as it is done in Heaven.

CHURCH TO JUDGE COURAGEOUSLY IN NEXT AGE

The point we notice, then, is that our text was applicable to the Jews, because they were a *typical* people of God. The king of Israel made use of these words to certain ones whom he appointed judges in his day. The Church is now being prepared for the work of judging in the Kingdom. The Lord distinctly tells us that we are not to judge before the time. In the Kingdom we shall judge. Then it will be our business to judge. Then we shall be required to render righteous and courageous judgment, in full accord with the Lord's instructions.

As the Apostle Paul says, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2.) We *do* know it. Our experiences now are fitting us to judge the world later, that we may do it successfully, courageously, lifting up all mankind who *will* to the glorious standard of perfection. All the evil doers shall be cut off. Then every knee will bow and every tongue will confess, to the glory of the Father and of the Son.

CHURCH NOW JUDGES ALONG CERTAIN LINES

The Scriptures instruct us that now the Church should judge its members along certain lines. We are not to judge one another's *hearts*. On the contrary, we are to take one another's word for their heart condition. But we are to judge one another's *conduct*. If one should live immorally, it would be the duty of the Church to deal with him according to the immorality of his conduct. The Apostle asks, Why should you go to law with the brethren before unbelievers? If you are unprepared to judge yourselves in small matters, how would you ever be prepared to judge in great matters?

In our judging, we are to remember the lines along which the Lord would have us judge. The Lord will be with the good, we may be sure of that fact. But we are to deal kindly, affectionately. "Be kindly affectioned one toward another, with brotherly love." In dealing with one another, in proportion as we lay down hard, inflexible lines of judgment, in that proportion we would be fixing the gauge of the Lord's judgment with us. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." With what allowance we mete out to others, the Lord will judge us. We are to be sympathetic with others, and to remember that all need mercy and forgiveness, even as we hope for these for ourselves.

Whoever has a duty to perform, let him not fear but be courageous; and if doing unpleasant tasks which are necessary, let us perform them in a kindly manner, both justly and lovingly. Let us not fear man, but rather fear the Lord, and be intent on pleasing Him.

OCTOBER 26

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you—1 Pet. 5:7.

This is a very consoling and encouraging suggestion from the Word. However, the Lord's people are to learn more and more distinctly, as their years of membership in God's family and tutelage in the school of Christ go on, that they are not to ask the Lord to guide their efforts according to their wisdom; that they are not to request that their wills shall be done either on earth or in heaven, but rather, telling the Lord their burdens, great and small, they are to realize and appropriate to themselves His sympathy and love, and to apply to their own hearts as a balm the consoling assurances of His Word, that He is both able and willing to make all their experiences profitable to them, if they abide in Him with confidence and trust—Z '04, 237 (R 3409).

Our cares are the things that try us, such as losses, disappointments, delays, restraints, shelvings, responsibilities, faults, lacks and weaknesses of ourselves and others, failures, differences, hardships, divisions, siftings, necessities, oppositions, sickness, weariness, pain, sorrow, treasons, oppressions, persecutions, *etc.* Their natural tendency is to absorb the attention of our hearts, and minds, causing worry. While we are to be commendably diligent in our affairs, acting as though everything depended on us, let us heartily believe that all depends on God! Ours it is to exercise diligence; His to exercise care. He is faithful in performing His engagements, and as our Helper and Caretaker He arranges all things in our interests. Therefore we may well entrust our interests to Him—P '33, 148.

Parallel passages: Psa. 37:5; 127:2; Matt. 6:25-34; 11:28-30; 13:22; Luke 21:34; Rom. 8:28; Phil. 4:6, 7, 19; Prov. 16:3; Jer. 17:7, 8; Heb. 13:5.

Hymns: 328, 67, 228, 293, 305, 330, 294.

Poems of Dawn, 74: *Oh, Who Shall Roll the Stone Away?*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 230 (R 5508).

Questions: What have I done with care this week? How? Why? With what results?

OH, WHO SHALL ROLL THE STONE AWAY?

A NAMELESS chill pervaded all the air,
On that gray morn, long centuries ago,
As through the city's narrow streets there crept
Two women on their way to Calvary.
The fragrant odors of sweet spices told
Of their sad errand to the tomb of Him
They loved. And as they neared the garden where
Their blessed Lord was laid, a sudden fear
Took hold upon their eager, loving hearts—

(The sepulchre was hewn from solid rock,
A great stone had been rolled before the door,
And sealed with Pilate's royal signature)—
They felt their weakness, and in anguish cried,
"Oh, who shall roll for us the stone away?"
But faith grew bold, they urged their faltering steps—
When lo! they found an Angel from the Lord
Had rolled away the stone, and sat thereon!

Thus often, when with loving zeal we seek
To serve the Lord, a great fear chills our hearts,
The *door* of opportunity *seems closed*,
And in our weakness and distress we cry,
"Oh, who shall roll for us the stone away?"
but when with faith and courage we press on,
We find *the Angel of the Lord hath gone*
Before, and lo! the stone is rolled away!

R5508: OUR GREAT BURDEN-BEARER

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

THESE COMFORTING words of the Apostle Peter are addressed to the Church of Christ; and all who are of the Lord's people surely realize that there are cares and difficulties of life which are our portion and which are perplexing. These cares of life come also to those who are of the world—to some more and to some less. But they *surely* come to all who are the Lord's children.

The word *care* is used in two different ways. Thinking of the word in the sense of exercising proper thought and giving proper attention to that which is entrusted to us, or concerning which we are responsible, we might be in danger of misunderstanding our text. The word *care*, however, very often has in it the thought of *worry, trouble of mind*; and this is its use by the Apostle in this place. The Apostle Paul also says, "Be careful for nothing"—be worried about nothing, have anxiety about nothing. So we might render the words of St. Peter, "Casting all your *anxiety* upon Him; for He is taking thought for you."

IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS

The Apostle's advice is not that we shall throw off all sense of responsibility, and cease to exercise care in what we do and in respect to our duties and obligations. Surely we all agree that the man or the woman without care for anything, in this proper sense, would be totally unfit for any position in life. We often notice evidences of some one's not having been sufficiently careful. Perhaps the wall paper has been carelessly marred or the furniture scratched; doors are slammed or left swinging when they should be closed for warmth, etc. Some might say, Oh, these are very small matters! But one who is

careless, thoughtless, and inattentive to these matters is very likely to be untrustworthy in larger matters.

Personally, it is painful to us to see these things; and undoubtedly it is so to all who exercise proper care. The children of God, His representatives before men, should not go blundering along through the world or needlessly annoying others, whether it be the brethren or people of the world. Our influence for good may be greatly marred by inattention to what might be called little things, but what in reality are not so. There is a trite saying which is full of meaning: "Trifles make perfection; and perfection is no trifle." The Lord's people should be the most careful people in the world.

Our Lord said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much"; and the reverse of the statement would be equally true—that he that is *unfaithful* in that which is least is *unfaithful* also in much. (Luke 16:10.) These little things of every-day life may prove to be more crucial tests of real character than will seemingly larger matters. Little courtesies, little acts of thoughtful consideration for others, how much they mean! How greatly they often affect the happiness of those around us and our own influence as ambassadors of Christ! So we need to exercise much care and thoughtfulness in regard to our words, our actions and everything with which we have to do. This is not the care that we are to cast upon the Lord for Him to bear. This we are properly to bear ourselves.

OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED BY THE LORD

God is the most *careful* Being in the Universe, we may be sure. He is not *careful*, in the sense in which the word is used in our text—in the sense of worry and unrest of mind—but He is care-full in the right and proper sense. There are cares that come to the Lord's people because they are harassed by the Adversary. These experiences the Lord permits for the very purpose of leading His people to cast their care upon Him, of bringing them closer to Himself, of teaching them patient endurance, of showing them more fully their need of Him, their utter helplessness and wretchedness without Him.

But worries and frettings—anxieties that would hinder us in the Lord's service, that would rob us of our peace in the Lord—should be dropped, not carelessly, however, but intelligently, with the thought that Jesus, our great Burden-bearer, has invited us, yea, urged us, to cast all our care—all that would disturb our peace—upon Him. He will make our burden light and ease our tribulations. This is a rest of faith, and cannot be attained otherwise than through faith in His love, faith in His promises.

OUR FATHER'S CARE FOR HIS CHILDREN

Each day that a Christian lives he should be more reliant upon the Lord. He should realize more fully than before that our Heavenly Father, who has provided for the grass of the field and for the birds of the air, cares far more for His children than for the flowers or for many sparrows, and that He has a Plan also for the world—an arrangement for their blessing, in due time. But *we* have already entered into the blessing of the Lord; we have

already become His children, and are His especial care. And "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him"—those that reverence Him.

We cannot be faithful children of God if we are full of worry. Worry is one thing, but proper carefulness is another. We should be more careful every day, and thus be able to fulfil our obligations to the world in general, to our families, to ourselves, to the brethren, and to the Lord—to render our God more effective service.

We are not to be troubled and anxious as to where we are to get our next suit of clothes. We have a suit of clothing for the present, such as the Lord has seen fit to give; and we are to do our best to provide the things needful. If the Lord should never give us apparel as good as many others have, or as rich or dainty food, we should not worry, but be content with whatever His providence arranges for us, and accept it thankfully. He will give what is best—what is for our good as New Creatures. We should not doubt, nor fear that He will not provide for our needs. He knows all about our affairs, and is not unmindful of our welfare. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."

How needful this humility before God, and how consoling and precious this loving assurance! As we go on in this blessed way marked out by our Lord, let us learn more and more fully that we are not to ask anything according to *our* wills, but only that His will may be done in us and for us. His Wisdom is unerring. Let us tell the Lord all about our burdens, great and small, and let us appropriate to ourselves His love and sympathy, applying to our hearts the balm of His Word, of the precious promises which are the heritage of His own, trusting Him that He is both able and willing to supply our every need—yea, that He delights thus to bless us, if we abide in His Love.

"How strong and sweet my Father's care!
The words like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—
'He cares for thee!'

"Then naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me or mine,
Since Thou with tenderness Divine
Dost care for me!"

OCTOBER 27

My times are in thy hand—Psa. 31:15.

All of the Lord's consecrated servants devoted their lives to sacrifice when they became followers of the Lamb; and if they could but realize their consecration continually, they would be ready for the consummation at any moment at the Lord's pleasure and by whatever means or channel His providences may permit. The Lord's consecrated ones ... are to remember that not a hair of their heads could fall without their Father's knowledge and permission, and the attitude of their hearts should be that expressed by our dear Redeemer. ... The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" The language of their hearts should be that expressed by the poet:

*Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me.
—Z '04, 237 (R 3407).*

This statement is true of the whole Church and of its individual members. God has a due time for all things connected with His Plan. Accordingly we see marvelous time features marking the experiences of the Church. The parallel dispensations especially prove this in many details, the exact time being observed to a day. Thus God allows no slips in the time features pertaining to the Church. This same care He exercises toward its individual members. He arranges each experience, attainment, work and privilege at the time that will most glorify Him and profit them—P '32, 150.

Parallel passages: Gal. 4:4; Rom. 5:6; Dan. 9:24-27; 12:11-13; Luke 23:46; John 13:1; 17:1; Acts 1:6; 1 Tim. 2:6; 6:15; 1 Pet. 2:23; Rev. 6:11; 11:2, 3; 14:15.

Hymns: 186, 99, 333, 110, 293, 328, 63.
Poems of Dawn, 105: *My Times Are in Thy Hand*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 230 (R 5508).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences as to the text? How were they met? What was their effect?

MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND

PSALM 31:15.

FATHER, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me;
And the changes that are sure to come
I do not fear to see:
But I ask Thee for a present mind
Intent on pleasing Thee.

I ask Thee for a thankful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
To wipe the weeping eyes,
And a heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathize.

I would not have the restless will
That hurries to and fro,
Seeking for some great thing to do,
Or secret thing to know;
I would be dealt with as a child,
And guided where to go.

I ask Thee for the daily strength,
To none that ask denied;
And a mind to blend with outward life,
While keeping at Thy side,
Content to fill a little space,
If Thou be glorified.

R5508: OUR GREAT BURDEN-BEARER

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

THESE COMFORTING words of the Apostle Peter are addressed to the Church of Christ; and all who are of the Lord's people surely realize that there are cares and difficulties of life which are our portion and which are perplexing. These cares of life come also to those who are of the world—to some more and to some less. But they *surely* come to all who are the Lord's children.

The word *care* is used in two different ways. Thinking of the word in the sense of exercising proper thought and giving proper attention to that which is entrusted to us, or concerning which we are responsible, we might be in danger of misunderstanding our text. The word *care*, however, very often has in it the thought of *worry, trouble of mind*; and this is its use by the Apostle in this place. The Apostle Paul also says, "Be careful for nothing"—be worried about nothing, have anxiety about nothing. So we might render the words of St. Peter, "Casting all your *anxiety* upon Him; for He is taking thought for you."

IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS

The Apostle's advice is not that we shall throw off all sense of responsibility, and cease to exercise care in what we do and in respect to our duties and obligations. Surely we all agree that the man or the woman without care for anything, in this proper sense, would be totally unfit for any position in life. We often notice evidences of some one's

not having been sufficiently careful. Perhaps the wall paper has been carelessly marred or the furniture scratched; doors are slammed or left swinging when they should be closed for warmth, etc. Some might say, Oh, these are very small matters! But one who is careless, thoughtless, and inattentive to these matters is very likely to be untrustworthy in larger matters.

Personally, it is painful to us to see these things; and undoubtedly it is so to all who exercise proper care. The children of God, His representatives before men, should not go blundering along through the world or needlessly annoying others, whether it be the brethren or people of the world. Our influence for good may be greatly marred by inattention to what might be called little things, but what in reality are not so. There is a trite saying which is full of meaning: "Trifles make perfection; and perfection is no trifle." The Lord's people should be the most careful people in the world.

Our Lord said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much"; and the reverse of the statement would be equally true—that he that is *unfaithful* in that which is least is *unfaithful* also in much. (Luke 16:10.) These little things of every-day life may prove to be more crucial tests of real character than will seemingly larger matters. Little courtesies, little acts of thoughtful consideration for others, how much they mean! How greatly they often affect the happiness of those around us and our own influence as ambassadors of Christ! So we need to exercise much care and thoughtfulness in regard to our words, our actions and everything with which we have to do. This is not the care that we are to cast upon the Lord for Him to bear. This we are properly to bear ourselves.

OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED BY THE LORD

God is the most *careful* Being in the Universe, we may be sure. He is not *careful*, in the sense in which the word is used in our text—in the sense of worry and unrest of mind—but He is care-full in the right and proper sense. There are cares that come to the Lord's people because they are harassed by the Adversary. These experiences the Lord permits for the very purpose of leading His people to cast their care upon Him, of bringing them closer to Himself, of teaching them patient endurance, of showing them more fully their need of Him, their utter helplessness and wretchedness without Him.

But worries and frettings—anxieties that would hinder us in the Lord's service, that would rob us of our peace in the Lord—should be dropped, not carelessly, however, but intelligently, with the thought that Jesus, our great Burden-bearer, has invited us, yea, urged us, to cast all our care—all that would disturb our peace—upon Him. He will make our burden light and ease our tribulations. This is a rest of faith, and cannot be attained otherwise than through faith in His love, faith in His promises.

OUR FATHER'S CARE FOR HIS CHILDREN

Each day that a Christian lives he should be more reliant upon the Lord. He should realize more fully than before that our Heavenly Father, who has provided for the grass of the field and for the birds of the air, cares far more for His children than for the flowers or

for many sparrows, and that He has a Plan also for the world—an arrangement for their blessing, in due time. But *we* have already entered into the blessing of the Lord; we have already become His children, and are His especial care. And "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him"—those that reverence Him.

We cannot be faithful children of God if we are full of worry. Worry is one thing, but proper carefulness is another. We should be more careful every day, and thus be able to fulfil our obligations to the world in general, to our families, to ourselves, to the brethren, and to the Lord—to render our God more effective service.

We are not to be troubled and anxious as to where we are to get our next suit of clothes. We have a suit of clothing for the present, such as the Lord has seen fit to give; and we are to do our best to provide the things needful. If the Lord should never give us apparel as good as many others have, or as rich or dainty food, we should not worry, but be content with whatever His providence arranges for us, and accept it thankfully. He will give what is best—what is for our good as New Creatures. We should not doubt, nor fear that He will not provide for our needs. He knows all about our affairs, and is not unmindful of our welfare. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."

How needful this humility before God, and how consoling and precious this loving assurance! As we go on in this blessed way marked out by our Lord, let us learn more and more fully that we are not to ask anything according to *our* wills, but only that His will may be done in us and for us. His Wisdom is unerring. Let us tell the Lord all about our burdens, great and small, and let us appropriate to ourselves His love and sympathy, applying to our hearts the balm of His Word, of the precious promises which are the heritage of His own, trusting Him that He is both able and willing to supply our every need—yea, that He delights thus to bless us, if we abide in His Love.

"How strong and sweet my Father's care!
The words like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—
'He cares for thee!'

"Then naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me or mine,
Since Thou with tenderness Divine
Dost care for me!"

OCTOBER 28

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me ... to comfort all that mourn ... to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning—Isa. 61:1-3.

Our commission is to seek out the meek and the mourning ones, who have appreciated their own shortcomings and weaknesses, and who are looking for refuge and deliverance. It is part of our commission to point them to the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, to point them to the beauty of the resurrection for the ashes of death, and the glories which the Lord has promised by and by to take the place of the spirit of heaviness and disappointment and sorrow and trouble of this present time. It is our commission to tell such that "Joy cometh in the morning," and to assist them to arise and at once put on the garments of praise, and to begin to walk in newness of life, with a "new song in their mouths—even the loving-kindness of our God"—Z '04, 295 (R 3434).

God's holy heart and mind is upon His consecrated people. It is their qualification for service. By this spirit are their minds given the capacities to perceive, remember, reason on and express spiritual things, as by it their hearts are given the capacities necessary for the faith, hope, love and obedience to perform acceptably the sacrifices connected with their service. Truly this spirit enables them to comfort Zion's dear mourners and bring them out of the ashes of sorrow into the beauty of holiness and joy in the Lord—P '26, 156.

Parallel passages: Matt. 3:16, 17; Acts 10:38; 4:1-4; 2 Cor. 1:21, 22; 1 John 2:20, 27; Psa. 119:50, 52, 54, 92, 143; 147:3; Isa. 40:1, 2; 51:3, 12; John 16:33; 2 Cor. 1:2-7; Ezek. 9:3, 4; 1 Thes. 4:18.

Hymns: 25, 38, 57, 93, 108, 228, 278.

Poems of Dawn, 198: *Consolation*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 277 (R 5536).

Questions: Have I this week comforted and gladdened others? How? Why? Under what circumstances?

CONSOLATION

WHEN thy pathway straitened lies, beloved,
 Call on Me;
 Ever fix on Me thine eyes, beloved,
 Follow me;
I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,
 Lean on Me!

When with trials sore beset, beloved,

Come to Me;
Calvary's hour do not forget, beloved,
Think on Me;
I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,
Trust in Me!

When the dark night darker grows, beloved,
Cry to Me;
When the cold stream colder flows, beloved,
Cling to Me;
I will never leave thee, but will take thee
Home with Me!

R5536: THE ANOINTED ONLY ARE COMMISSIONED TO PREACH

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek: He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the Day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."—Isaiah 61:1-3.

WHEN the Prophet Isaiah uttered these words he spoke by the power of the Holy Spirit. As the Apostle Peter tells us, "Holy men of old spake as they were moved of the Holy Spirit." Further, he says, "Of which salvation the Prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace which should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; unto whom it was revealed, That not unto *themselves*, but unto *us* they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel, with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven."—2 Peter 1:21; 1 Peter 1:10-12.

In our text the word anointed is used in the sense of ordination. The high priests of Israel were successively anointed, or ordained, of God, the anointing oil representing the Holy Spirit. Their kings were anointed to reign over the typical kingdom of God, the oil here also representing the Holy Spirit. And so Christ, the great High Priest and King, was ordained of God by the anointing of the Spirit. It was not an anointing of men or by men.

In our Lord's case we know exactly when this prophecy was fulfilled. It was when He came to John at Jordan to be baptized, and there presented Himself in sacrifice to God. The Divine acceptance of this sacrifice was manifested by the impartation of the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist saw the Spirit as a dove descending upon the Lord, the sign given to John, but seen by no one else. Jesus recognized that He had received a special

anointing and unction from the Father—and others from that time perceived it. We are not to suppose that Jesus performed miracles before He was anointed, but this does not signify that He did not speak kind words and do kind acts before that time; for as a perfect man He possessed the Spirit of God in the full measure that a man in the image of God would possess it.

The fact that our Lord Jesus waited until He was thirty years of age before making His special consecration and receiving His ordination and commission to preach does not mean that His followers should wait until they are thirty before they begin to preach. It was necessary that Jesus should conform Himself to the requirements of the Law of Moses, given by God to the Jews; for Jesus as a man was a Jew, born under the Law and subject, therefore, to its every feature. Full manhood under the Law was not attained until the age of thirty. Our Lord came to give His life as a substitute for the forfeited life of Adam. Adam was a complete, perfect man, and our Lord must attain maturity as a perfect man before He could be a perfect substitute, a corresponding price.

THE "BODY" OF CHRIST NO PART OF THE RANSOM

With the disciples of the Lord Jesus during this Gospel Age, the matter is quite different. Consecration is appropriate to whoever has the maturity of mind to realize clearly what he is doing—to realize the merit of Jesus' death and the significance of becoming a joint-sacrificer with Him. The giving of the Ransom is *not* shared by the followers of Christ. *That was His work alone.* But His disciples are permitted of God, in the opulence of His favor, to be counted in with Jesus as a part of the Sin-Offering for the world, *after* His merit has been imputed to them and they have become members of His Body, which gives to their offering a virtue which it could not otherwise possess. His merit is all-sufficient, and it is *His* merit that purchases the world, through His Body, the Church.

The anointing that was upon Christ Jesus continued with Him throughout His earthly ministry—the fulness, or completeness, of God's favor rested upon His every word and act. God was manifest in His flesh; for He was the perfect human representation of all the qualities of Jehovah's glorious character. This was demonstrated in His resurrection from the dead after His sacrifice had been finished. Otherwise His work of sacrifice would have been a failure and He would have remained in the congregation of the dead, and there would have been no benefit accruing to mankind from His death. Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit and anointed at His baptism, and was born a completed Spirit Being of the very highest rank at His resurrection. No other being had ever been created on this plane of life. Hitherto Jehovah alone had possessed Divine, incorruptible life.

OUR TEXT APPLIES TO THE ENTIRE CHRIST

We might have inferred without any direct statement that the words of the Prophet in our text apply to our Lord Jesus, but no doubt is left in our minds when we find that He Himself quoted these words in His sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth, where He was brought up. He there stood up and read a part of this prophecy aloud. Then closing the

Book He said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:16-21.) He pointed out that He was the one referred to by the Prophet. And we see the appropriateness of this application in every way.

But while the prophecy was primarily fulfilled in Jesus, and applied especially to Him, we understand that it applies also to the members of Christ. These by becoming His Body, thus became a part of Himself. It is not because of any merit of their own.

This anointing that is on the Church comes to us through Christ, flowing down from the Head over all the Body members, as shown in the type of the high priest of Israel, and as declared by the Psalmist. (Psalm 133:2.) The Lord Jesus is our great Advocate with the Father, and in Him alone have we any standing before God. We are thus received of the Father as spirit-begotten sons, even as was our Head. We are begotten of the Spirit, as was He.

Our vital union with our Lord as members of His Body is also further shown by the Prophet Isaiah. Read carefully the 49th chapter, vs. 7-9, and their interpretation by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:1, 2. This same Apostle further declares, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." Again, "The cup for which we bless God, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the participation of the Body of Christ? For we, the many, are one loaf and one Body." "Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular."—1 Corinthians 12:12; 10:16, 17; 12:27.

Again, the Apostle Paul declares of the Church, "Whereunto He [God] called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." How the deep sayings of the Savior become luminous in the light shed upon them by the Apostles after their anointing of the Spirit! How the Master fulfilled to them His promise made just before His crucifixion! He said, as we remember, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, it shall guide you into all Truth, for it shall not speak of itself; but whatsoever it shall hear, that shall it speak, and it will show you things to come." (John 16:12, 13.) These were the deep things of God, which only the spirit-begotten, spirit-taught children of God can understand.

We are, if faithful, to be made *like Him* and share His exceeding glory. No wonder the Apostle exultingly declared, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him; but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Corinthians 2:10.

APPLICATION OF OUR TEXT NOW

The Apostle John says that "the anointing which we have received of Him abideth in us." Again, "Hereby we know that we dwell in Him [God] and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." The Apostle Peter declares that Jesus "having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit [for the Church], hath shed forth this." (1 John 2:27;

4:13; Acts 2:33.) It is *from* the Father and *by* the Son. This corroborates St. Paul's statement that all things are *of* the Father, and all things are *by* the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6.) The Scriptures tell us that we were begotten and anointed of God.

The anointing of the Church is for a work yet future. The work of Christ and the Church will not be accomplished in this present Age. But God gives to those whom He has accepted opportunity to use in His service in the present life talents which He has entrusted to them. They are, as far as they are able, to bind up broken hearts and give "the oil of joy for mourning," and thus to help to allay the sufferings of others, especially of the Lord's Household, though they are to assist any as they have suitable opportunity. But their special work in blessing and comforting the world will be in the kingdom. All mankind will be brought back from the tomb and will have all the blessed assistances of Messiah's Reign. Everything evil will be uprooted, and everything good will be fostered and blessed.

While the anointed of God are on this side of the veil they are, as His ambassadors, to show forth His praises by telling others of the coming Kingdom and the blessings then to be showered upon all, when the favors of the Lord shall be poured out upon *all men*. They are to tell that these blessings are both for those now living and for those who have gone down into the grave. God's great Plan for the world is much broader and grander than once we thought. It is worthy of such a God as ours! Then let us tell to all who have an ear to hear, that the Lord is now pouring out His Spirit upon His servants and handmaidens, and soon will pour it upon all flesh—all mankind.

We are instructed that this anointed class are to preach to "the meek." They are not to preach to the rebellious or the indifferent; these are to be dealt with by and by. The judgments of the Lord will forcibly break their hearts, and will effectively deal with all. The ambassadors of the Lord are to seek especially all those everywhere who manifest that they are feeling after the Lord, who are not satisfied with the things of the world, but who are longing for better, nobler things, who have and manifest a teachable disposition.

WHO MAY SPEAK IN THE LORD'S NAME

The text intimates that nobody is to speak in God's name except those who have been Divinely commissioned to do so. Others may tell the story so far as they have learned it, but they are not authorized to speak in the name of the Lord. We are inclined to think that such do more harm than good, mixing error with Truth; for those who do not understand the Message have not been commissioned of the Lord to be His ambassadors. With God, human ordination counts for nothing. In human ordination, each denomination qualifies its own ministers. But the ordained ministers of God are servants of God and not of error. They are servants of His Truth, not of the traditions of men.

What we have said as to speaking in the Lord's name does not mean that we are to carry the matter so far as to say that no one but those who see the real Plan of God should even sing a hymn. In fact, the children of God are not to endeavor to hinder any from declaring the Truth. Jesus gave a good illustration of this principle when His disciples

told Him that they had found some who were doing a work in His name and that they had forbidden them, because they did not follow Him. The Lord replied, "Forbid them not." And so with us. We are not to interfere with any who are preaching the Gospel, even through strife, for they may do some good. Neither are we to endeavor to stop any who preach what they believe to be the Gospel. This is not our present commission, or any part of it. We are not as yet judges of the world; but we are to recognize the difference between such and those who are the true ambassadors, or ministers, of God.

God says of some who profess to be His mouthpieces, but whom He calls "wicked," "What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My words behind thee?" (Psalm 50:16, 17.) Why should any undertake to give out the Message of God when He has not recognized them by granting them the anointing of His Holy Spirit, when they have not been taught of Him, and are not doing His will? Let all others do whatever they like in *co-operation* with the Truth, but only those who have been ordained of God in this one way should preach the Gospel. All who have received the Divine commission should rejoice in their wonderful privilege of proclaiming the Good Tidings.

One of the features of our commission as ambassadors of the Lord is "to comfort all that mourn." The children of God, who have learned the true Source of comfort, are the only ones properly qualified to be real comforters, in the Scriptural sense. These have had their own hearts bound up and healed by the great Physician, and hence they know where to direct longing hearts who need the balm which only God can give. As the Apostle says: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.) So then, whether while still in the flesh or after we have come into our inheritance beyond the veil, we are to be comforters, to lift up those who are oppressed with sorrow and care, to bring to them "the oil of joy," the Message of grace.

We are to be comforters at this particular time of "them that mourn in Zion." This is a work that the saints of today, who have been enlightened and blessed by the Message of Present Truth, are eminently qualified to do. Many of us were mourners in Zion before this refreshing Message came to us, mourning because of the confusion and worldliness and dearth that prevailed in the nominal systems wherein we were bound. But now we are free, and no more are "our harps hung upon the willows of Babylon." They are attuned to the harmonies of Heaven, and we can now sing with the spirit and with the understanding the glorious "Song of Moses and the Lamb." So let us be zealous in carrying this glad news to all the mourners in Zion not yet delivered, that they may join with us in this glad song.

The entire Message as given in our text is now due to be proclaimed. We remember that on the occasion when our Lord read from the prophecy in the synagogue, He omitted the words, "and the Day of Vengeance of our God." That part of the prophecy was not due to be proclaimed; and Jesus could not have said of these words, "This day is this

Scripture fulfilled in your ears," for He was not to proclaim as then at hand the Day of Vengeance. So He read only the parts of the prophecy whose fulfilment was then due to begin.

But today the passage is due to be given as a whole. We are on the very eve of this great Day of Vengeance. We are now proclaiming in the words of the Prophet Zephaniah, "The great Day of the Lord is near; it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the Day of the Lord; the mighty men shall cry there bitterly. That Day is a Day of Wrath, a Day of trouble and distress, a Day of wasting and desolation, a Day of clouds and thick darkness, a Day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities and against the high towers [strong and well intrenched governments]. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord. And their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the Day of the Lord's Wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured with the fire of His jealousy."—Zephaniah 1:14-18.

In that Day of terror and darkness men shall come to learn their need of a strong arm to deliver them. Their pride and self-sufficiency will be humbled into the dust. But out of that awful trouble mankind will come forth chastened and broken, and will be ready to be led out of the ruin and defeat of their own schemes and hopes, out of the darkness and chaos which in their ignorance and selfishness they precipitated upon themselves, out of the power of evil angels, into the light and blessing and deliverance then brought to them by the establishment of the Kingdom of God's dear Son, long promised for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

It will be a lesson never to be forgotten. The sons of God, then exalted to the rulership of the Kingdom, will begin their work of healing and blessing, of binding up the crushed and broken hearts of men. Their own experience in the present life will have taught them how to sympathize with the poor, sin-sick world; and they will be able to pour into humanity's wounds the blessed balm of Gilead, "to give beauty for ashes," to wipe away all tears, and to lead all who will step by step up the grand Highway of Holiness then cast up for the people. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isaiah 35:10.) Only the incorrigible shall again have pronounced upon them the penalty of death—the Second Death, utter destruction. "These shall go away into everlasting cutting off, but the righteous into life eternal."—Matthew 25:46.

OCTOBER 29

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed: we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus—2 Cor. 4:8-10.

Those who joyfully endure for the Lord's sake, the Truth's sake, the greatest shame, the greatest ignominy, the greatest trials, the greatest persecutions in this present life, and thus have experiences most like those of the Master and Pattern, we may be sure will in proportion to their faithfulness manifested in such sacrifices, have a future great reward—as the Apostle has declared, "Star differeth from star in glory"—Z '01, 55 (R 2760).

The Lord is not well pleased to permit our lives to be wholly calm in external matters. Such a course would unfit us for the present and future ministry of the saints. On the contrary, the Lord is pleased to permit all sorts of untoward experiences to be ours; and amid some of them our strength almost snaps. Fitting the burdens to our backs and our backs to the burdens, He gives us grace sufficient for every time of need, and thus, gradually, as in our Lord's case, He brings us to perfection of character as His disciples who daily lay down our human lives with our dear Lord in loving sacrifice—P '36, 111.

Parallel passages: Acts 9:16; Rom. 8:17, 18, 23; 1 Cor. 4:12, 13; 2 Cor. 1:5-7; 4:11-18; 6:4, 5; 11:23-28; Phil. 1:29; 2:27-29; 2 Thes. 1:4, 5; Jas. 5:10; 1 Pet. 5:10.

Hymns: 3, 47, 150, 160, 244, 277, 307.

Poems of Dawn, 98: *A Little Talk With Jesus*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 120 (R 5670).

Questions: What have I suffered this week? How? Why? With what effects?

A LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS

A LITTLE talk with Jesus,—
How it smoothes the rugged road!
How it seems to help me onward,
When I faint beneath my load!
When my heart is crushed with sorrow,
And mine eyes with tears are dim,
There is naught can yield me comfort
Like a little talk with Him.

I tell Him I am weary,
And I fain would be at rest;
But I still will wait His bidding,
For His way is always best.
Then His promise ever cheers me

'Mid all the cares of life:—
"I am come, and soon in glory
Will end thy toil and strife."

Ah, that is what I'm wanting,
His lovely face to see—
And I'm not afraid to say it,
I know He's wanting me.
He gave His life a ransom
To make me all His own,
And He'll ne'er forget His promise
To me, His purchased one.

The way is sometimes weary
To yonder nearing clime,
But a little talk with Jesus
Hath helped me many a time.
The more I come to know Him,
And all His grace explore,
It sets me ever longing
To know Him more and more.

R5670: "LIGHT AFFLICTIONS" HERE—"GLORY TO FOLLOW"

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body."—2 Corinthians 4:8-10.

THE Apostle Paul is here addressing the Church at Corinth, and in the larger sense addressing the entire Church of the Gospel Age. He is apparently describing to some extent the experiences of himself and those who were with him in his missionary labors. He traveled from place to place, but not as our pilgrim brethren now do; for sometimes he spent an entire year, sometimes more than a year, in one city. Nevertheless, he was a traveler, going about where other missionaries of the Lord had not gone, addressing the Jews and whoever else might give evidence of having a hearing ear. On these tours he took with him assistants. We are therefore to consider that his words here referred not only to the Apostles (for he was the only Apostle of the company), but also to the others with him; and that this Epistle, as are all the inspired writings, was designed by the Lord for the instruction and benefit of all the saints throughout the Christian Dispensation.

The Apostle's assistants were general ministers of the Lord, as are all God's children in proportion as they do a work of ministry. His words would seemingly be addressed, then, to all who are engaged in the Lord's service. In this Epistle he points out that there are differences in the services rendered—"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also

sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully"—and also differences in the experiences of the various members of the Body of Christ. He says that some of them had been the objects of persecution and that others had shared in those persecutions by suffering with those so persecuted, indicating that the Lord recognizes and appreciates this association with those in distress, if there be such association.

This thought is brought out also in St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews. (Chapter 10:32-34.) If those not so actively engaged in the service are faithfully doing all that their hands find to do, the Lord is as appreciative of it as He is of those who because of greater ability or physical strength or opportunities are able to accomplish more—each doing to the extent of his opportunity the work of the Lord.

The Apostle said of himself and his companions, and of all those laboring faithfully in the service of the Master, "We are troubled on every side." There are many troubles that are common to the whole human family—lack of employment, sickness, death, poverty, etc. There are multitudinous troubles which come to the world; and of course the Apostle and his companions were subject to these difficulties like other men. To many these trials of life bring distress. But while St. Paul and those with him had their ailments and difficulties, their persecutions and trials, they also had the knowledge of the Truth and the Lord's sustaining grace; and they were enlisted in the army of the King of kings. They were not distressed by their troubles, but were trusting in the Lord's precious promises that these should all work out for their good.

"AS HE WAS, SO ARE WE, IN THIS WORLD"

And so we are not to allow the troubles of life to distress us as they distress other people. We have something that others do not have—the Lord's assurance that everything in our lives shall be a bearer of blessing to us if we are faithful. This enables us to rejoice in tribulation, if we really believe this promise of our Father's Word. There are other troubles that come to the Lord's people, but do not come to the world. The world is more or less in opposition to those who are engaged in publicly preaching the Truth and to those who are associated with them. There is a battle on between right and wrong, light and darkness. The world, being attached to their darkness, feel an enmity toward the light, a hatred of it; and they are often disposed to give special trouble to those who are the Lord's representatives in a particular capacity.

Occasionally we find worldly persons who are of good heart and kind intention and who are desirous of helping on a good work; but these are exceptions. Our strongest opposition, however, comes generally, as did that of the Master, from those who are our brethren, though many of them are only nominally so. Then we have the Adversary particularly against us. It is true that the whole world have the oppositions of the Adversary, but he is especially active against those engaged in the public service of the Lord. Satan seems to bring before these special temptations, and it is not surprising that they should be the particular objects of his rage and of his wiles. But those who are thus engaged in God's service have special blessings at His hands, and extra fortifications. So

while we may be sure that those in the public ministry have more troubles from the Adversary, they are also given more grace to cope with them.

OUR DEATH THE GATEWAY TO LIFE

"We are perplexed, but not in despair," says St. Paul. The Apostle and his company were not the only ones who have been at a loss to know just what to do. The whole world have been perplexed, and are particularly so today. The general anxious uncertainty of our day results in a large measure, it would seem, from the nerve-racking experiences of the present time. If people knew the right thing to do in respect to their business, their homes and their affairs in general, they would not be so full of doubt and bewilderment. But no one is wise enough to get along without some perplexity; and present conditions in the world are causing much distress and also anxious foreboding for the near future. Those who are engaged in the work of the Lord have some perplexity. But the anxiety or uncertainty of the Lord's people should never go to the length of despair. Those who are of the world, getting out of work and being in various difficulties, become very despondent. Frequently we hear of suicides. Things look very dark to people who take their own life.

It may yet be true of the Lord's people that things will look very dark; but they are not in despair, and will not be in despair whatever may come; for the Lord has said that He will never leave us nor forsake us. This gracious promise should give us a hope sure and steadfast. Our anchor of hope should hold. Our position, therefore, is very different from that of the world, who have no particular hope. The world have no solid anchor, no precious promises to hold them fast. We know that if the worst comes to the worst, if we should even die of starvation, our hope lies beyond the Veil, beyond death. Therefore God's saints of today look upon death as the gateway by which to enter into fulness of life, into a realization of all our hopes and joys. If, therefore, there is despair, it would prove that our anchorage has been cut loose. Whoever would find that he is in despair would find that he is letting go his faith, and should immediately seek counsel from the Word of God and from others strong in faith, and should go to the Lord in frequent and earnest prayer, assured that if faith is restored despair will go.

"I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE"

"We are persecuted, but not forsaken." There are persecutions of certain kinds that come to those in the world. Sometimes their neighbors have a grudge against them, and they thus are more or less persecuted. But they have no effective means of dealing with such a matter and nothing to comfort them. Sometimes they give as good as they get. But in the case of one of the Lord's children it is very different. When we feel that justice calls for retaliation, then we should remember that it is not ours to retaliate, to return evil for evil. The Lord has told us that we should leave all matters relating to justice in His hands. "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." He does say that we are to run away from persecutions; therefore we are not to condemn those who run away as following a wrong course. We are told by the Master, "If they persecute you in one city,

flee to another." So if a child of God is persecuted in one neighborhood and he can get away to another neighborhood, it would be better to go.

But though persecuted for righteousness' sake, the Lord's people are not forsaken. The world and those possessing the world's spirit may harass and buffet them, but the Lord does not forsake them. When persecutions come to us, however, we are to inquire, "Are these oppositions and persecutions coming to me on account of my loyalty to the Lord, or is it that there is something in my disposition which causes them?" If the latter is the case, we should diligently endeavor to rectify our fault. If, on the other hand, we find by careful scrutiny of ourselves and our conduct that we have been doing our best, our very best, and that the persecutions are coming to us on this account, then we are to rejoice in the persecution.

We are "cast down, but not destroyed." This expression shows that while the Apostle and his companions did not suffer despair, did not feel forsaken, they sometimes felt a heaviness of spirit. This heaviness of spirit, or feeling of loneliness and depression, is natural at times to all mankind under the adverse conditions prevailing in the world. The weight of this casting down may be accentuated to some extent by the condition of the physical health. Those who are weak or in pain physically are apt to feel any mental pressure or trouble. This is all to be fought against in the Christian; for we know that our afflictions and disabilities are something outside and not of the Lord, except in the sense that He permits them for our development, for our future work in the Kingdom. We are therefore to be of good courage. If the Lord permits us to have trouble, we are to exercise fortitude, to patiently endure, and not to allow it to destroy our faith or our happiness or our loyalty of spirit to Him to whom we have vowed allegiance.

We are to put up with whatever our Father permits, in sweetness of temper, and to say to ourselves, "This may be a good lesson to me. Perhaps these cast-down feelings, this feeling of desolation, may help me to sympathize more with others." The poet has truly said:

"Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary."

So let us see to it that we do not allow this feeling of depression to conquer us and to destroy our faith and energy; but rather, looking to the Lord for assisting grace, and claiming His precious promises, we are to rise above the difficulty and press bravely onward.

OUR "COVENANT BY SACRIFICE"

We are "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." The Apostle thus declares that the Lord's people, in proportion as they are faithful in His service, have a likeness to the Lord in their service, in their death. Our Lord's experience in the narrow way was three and a half years of dying. He was daily laying down His life—surrendering His life. He was an Example to us of how we should surrender our lives. He

laid down His life, not in the service of the world, but of the Lord's professed people. While the merit of His sacrificed life was to be used of the Lord for the life of the world, yet He laid it down in the direct service of His Jewish brethren.

The Hebrew people were the people of God. Our Lord spent His life especially with those who were truly desirous of pleasing God and knowing His will, whether found amongst the rich and influential or amongst the poor and lowly. Jesus welcomed publicans and sinners, and gave His life for them. He knew that among this humble class He would find the greater proportion of true wheat. He was laying down His life during all the three and a half years of His earthly ministry, and merely completed this work at Calvary.

And so it is with all of the Lord's true people. They have made "a covenant by sacrifice." They have consecrated, dedicated their lives to the Lord and His service; and as Jesus their Master laid down His life in doing good, in proclaiming the Truth then due, so they are to lay down their lives in the same manner, whether the time of their ministry be three and a half years or twenty years or whatever it may be—until the Father's good time shall come for their deliverance. They will be in full harmony with the Lord and will gladly have fellowship in the sufferings of their great Head—and properly so; for they are prospective members of His Body. Thus all of these members are continually bearing about in the body the dying of their Lord. They are dying daily as He died, "laying down their lives."

"THEREFORE GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY"

This is all the work of the New Creature. The old creature is merely compelled to follow in the way of the New Creature, and this setting aside of the will of the flesh is the basic feature of our dying. When our dying has been completed, our lives faithfully laid down, it will bring us to that condition where we shall hear the Master's "Well done!"

St. Paul also says that "the life of Jesus" is to be "made manifest in our body." We understand him here to be referring to the human body. The New Creature owns this body. With the people of the world there are not two personalities, but merely the one creature. This duality of personality is applicable only to those who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit. The old body is suffering; but the New Creature rejoices, glad to be in the service—gives thanks to God day by day respecting its tribulations, knowing that these are working out "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Thus the life of Jesus is manifested through us to the world, and to the brethren. The world cannot understand. They say, "If I were in your place, in such a trial, I would be miserable. But you are rejoicing!" So they cannot understand. But we have a newness of life that the world cannot appreciate. All who can appreciate this should daily grow in grace and knowledge. We should show forth more and more of the Lord's life in our characters and in our bodies. Thus we shall be manifesting more and still more of the Lord's Spirit, doing more of the Lord's work, becoming more like Jesus—all of which

will prepare us for the glory beyond, when the New Creature shall be completed, when all the perfections and glories of the new nature will be ours.

OCTOBER 30

No man can serve two masters—Matt. 6:24.

"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Experience and observation corroborate this; and hence as a rule we find that people are either cold or hot in spiritual things. ... We are to "seek first [chiefly] the Kingdom of God." It is to be our chief concern and to receive from us all the time, attention, thought, energy, influence and means we have—the things *needful* for the present life being understood to be excepted; and our love and zeal will be manifested by the proportion of even these we are willing to sacrifice in the interest of heavenly things—Z '01, 61 (R 2764).

Our Lord here means by two masters, not two whose interests and aims are one, but whose interests and aims conflict. Otherwise we could not serve God and Christ, as our Masters. We can serve these because their interests and aims are identical. But the interests and aims of God and Satan conflicting, we cannot serve both of them. For the same reason we cannot serve Christ and Antichrist, the flesh and the Spirit, this world and the next, and error and the Truth. The sooner we realize and act upon this principle the better for us as Christians—P '30, 183.

Parallel passages: Gen. 39:9; Hos. 10:2; Dan. 1:8-16; 3:12-25; Luke 16:13; 1 Kings 18:21; Josh. 24:14-25; Matt. 4:8-10; 12:25; Mark 10:21-23; John 10:41, 42; 1 Cor. 10:21; Heb. 11:24-26; Jas. 1:8.

Hymns: 8, 160, 191, 208, 224, 16, 109.
Poems of Dawn, 42: *Full Consecration*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 109 (R 5666).

Questions: Have I been single in my devotion this week? Whom did I serve? What helped or hindered singleness of devotion? What results did I achieve?

FULL CONSECRATION

O SACRED union with the Perfect Mind!
Transcendent bliss, which Thou alone canst
give,
How blest are they this Pearl of price who find,
And, dead to earth, have learned in Thee to live!

And thus, while dead to human hopes I lie,
Lost, and forever lost, to all but Thee,
My happy soul, since it has learned to die,
Has found new life in Thine infinity.

With joy we learn this lesson of the cross,
And tread the toilsome way which Jesus trod;

And counting present life and all things loss,
We find in death to self the life of God.

R5666: "CHOOSE YE THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE"

**"No man can serve two masters ... Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."
—Matthew 6:24.**

THE THOUGHT which our Lord apparently wished to impress upon His disciples was that there is a principle involved in service—that no one can possibly render full service to two opposing interests, two opposing masters; for the one would surely be neglected in the interest of the other. There would be more or less of a preference shown. After making a general observation regarding the impossibility of serving two masters, the Lord applied this principle, saying, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon"—God and selfishness, righteousness and unrighteousness. Man was originally God's servant. It was natural for him to appreciate the Divine character and arrangements and to render willing service. But mankind were deceived as they got under the control of the great Adversary, being influenced by the powers of evil, the chief effects of which have been ignorance, superstition and selfishness.

One of the deplorable conditions of the present time is that from birth selfishness is almost *forced* upon one. Man learns to give his time, his influence, for selfish purposes and projects. He fails to see that God is the One who should be served at any cost. But men were born and shapen in iniquity. They are servants of Sin, slaves of Sin. But our Lord Jesus pointed out that through the knowledge of Himself and compliance with His terms of discipleship, there came a release from this slavery, an opportunity to pass over to the side of righteousness.

However, an opportunity to take a stand for right came before our Lord's day. As a knowledge of God was granted to any people, they had an opportunity to assert themselves on the side of right. At the time when the Law Covenant was given, God set forth the principles of righteousness in that Law. The whole nation of Israel accepted God as their Savior, and entered into a Covenant with Him that they would be His loyal people. Yet after they had done this, the influences of evil in their flesh became manifest. They sought to be the servants of God and at the same time of self, dividing their interests between God's affairs and the affairs of self.

A WORTHY EXAMPLE SET

Jesus pointed out this particular fact, and told the people of His day that it was impossible to perform this half-hearted service—they could not serve two masters, for nobody would be pleased. If they were to serve Mammon, serve the Present Order of things, then they could not be pleasing to God. If they wished to serve God, serve righteousness, to whatever extent they did this they would be displeasing to the world;

they must be servants of either the one or the other; the two services combined would be impossible.

The example of our Lord Jesus when He came to earth, was in harmony with this position; for He fully renounced the world and made absolute consecration of His life to God and His service. Thus He set us an example. All who have the same spirit should walk in His steps. This was in accordance with the Jewish Law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength." Any one who kept this Law would not be serving self; for his service would be *all for God*.

Those who are following in the Master's footsteps are all for God, or, as we sometimes sing, "All for Jesus." As we follow the example of Jesus, and walk as He walked, we are rendering whole-hearted service to *God*. The result of serving this Master will be a great reward. "Him hath God highly exalted, and given Him a name above every name." And the Church has been invited to follow Him. So we should serve God in everything, with all our heart, mind, soul, strength. This is our commission. This we are to do to the point of sacrificing all earthly interests and of laying down our lives for the brethren. This course, followed faithfully to the end, will bring us to the same reward that Jesus received—glory, honor, immortality.

RENDERING UNTO CAESAR HIS OWN

It may be asked how this text comports with the Apostle's suggestion that one who was bound when he received the Truth should not seek to be free. (1 Corinthians 7:20-22.) These words of St. Paul express the thought that when the Truth finds us it does not necessarily change our earthly relationships; that if a man were a slave, for instance, and the Truth of God reached him, he should not rebel against his earthly master. He is not to think of this new relationship to God as changing the color of his skin or his earthly relationship. The Apostle is speaking of the body and not the heart when he says, "Seek not to be loosed." Our bodies may be enslaved for one reason or another. It might be a bondage like that of olden times—captured service. Or it might be that we had become the servants of those who were willing to pay for our services. While we are not to do anything contrary to the Divine Law or to our consciences, yet we are to serve our earthly masters faithfully. They have purchased our time, or a large measure of it; and we must render to them conscientiously all that is theirs by contract. If one is a servant in a military way, or in any other way, he should be *faithful*.

This will not interfere with one's service to God; for our Lord has instructed us to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." Whoever is faithful in this is doing the will of his Heavenly Master. There would be no conflict, but full harmony. The only conflict would be if the master on earth should wish us to do something contrary to the commands of our Master in Heaven. We are to suffer anything rather than do what our Heavenly Lord would not approve, and thus defile our consciences.

Looking into the future, we see that the present master, ruler, of this Old Order is soon to be bound, that he may deceive the nations no more for a thousand years, and that the new Ruler, the new Master of the world, is to be The Christ—Jesus and His Church. We ask ourselves how this principle will apply then. The answer is that there will be only the one Master to obey. There will be no rendering unto Caesar then. All will be made fully aware that this Master is the only one who has the power, the right to command. The knowledge of God's glory shall fill the whole earth—the knowledge of God's Righteousness, the knowledge of God's Power, the knowledge of God's Wisdom, the knowledge of God's Love. Whatever He commands is the right thing, as every one will then learn and fully understand.

THE SCRIPTURALLY "WICKED"

In the Scriptures Satan is represented as the deceiver of mankind. He puts light for darkness and darkness for light. God's proposition through Christ is that during the thousand years of the Millennial Reign, the whole world will be brought to the true knowledge of God, an *accurate* knowledge. Deception will be no longer permitted. The world will see what righteousness really is, what its rewards really are, and how desirable it is. As a consequence, the majority will then, we think, be glad to give heed to the one Master. The exceptions are represented as having the same disposition as Satan; and whoever will have that disposition will be destroyed. When a person comes to know the right and when the right is made reasonable, and possible for him, and he then prefers to do wrong rather than right, let him die the death. This will be the sentence. Such will be counted "the wicked," the incorrigible.

The word "wicked" from the Scriptural standpoint, means those who do wrong *intentionally*. So all the wicked, knowing the wrong to be wrong, and doing it wilfully and purposely, shall die the Second Death. In due time none shall be left alive except those who serve the one true Master. The difficulty with mankind at present is ignorance, which God has not yet lifted from the world. He has permitted the ignorance and darkness of the present time that the world may learn its lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and be the better prepared for the lessons that are to follow. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them." But these blinded minds shall soon have the obstructions removed that they may see.

Those who have become children of the light, who have accepted the Lord Jesus and become His disciples, and who now see clearly the Divine will and Plan, have much more responsibility than those who have never seen. We also have greater prospects of blessing—not only the present joy, comfort, peace and knowledge, but additionally the hope of making our "calling and election sure," of attaining to joint-heirship with the Master. God will leave the scattering of the darkness for Christ to do. God has let the world go on its way, meantime providing the Savior, the Deliverer—The Christ—who will soon take control of the whole world. He will cause the light, the Truth, to shine out, to flood the earth with knowledge and blessing. Then with the true light shining

everywhere, there will be no excuse for anybody who will not walk in it; each one must then choose finally whether or not he will serve the true Master.

OCTOBER 31

Because thy lovingkindness [favor] is better than life, my lips shall praise thee—
Psa. 63:3.

Those who have tasted of the Lord's grace, those who have come to realize his favor as *better than life*, and who have joyfully laid upon His altar every earthly good thing, and hope and ambition, rejoice to tell the good tidings to others; they rejoice to tell forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. The message is too good to keep; they not only do not require to be hired to tell it, but they are willing that the telling of it, and the enjoying of God's favor in connection with the telling, shall cost them something—cost them trouble, cost them money, cost them the loss of earthly friendships, cost the straining, if not the breaking, of some home ties, cost them the frown of the world and of churchianity—Z '01, 246 (R 2850).

God's loving kindness to us consists of His favors to us in Creation, Providence, Redemption, Instruction, Justification, Sanctification and Deliverance. But the particular lovingkindness here meant is the calling to the heavenly nature with Christ, extended and realized. This is much better than human life, and its privileges are higher, as the heavens are higher than the earth. Such a calling gives lips, truthful teachings, that manifest Jehovah's praises, His glorious wisdom, power, justice and love. Therefore, let us declare His marvelous Plan, which makes His praises known—P '35, 132.

Parallel passages: Ex. 15:1, 2; Job 36:24; Psa. 7:17; 9:11; 22:22-25; 28:6, 7; 30:4; 33:1-3; 35:18; 43:3, 4; Isa. 38:17; Luke 1:46, 47; John 14:23.

Hymns: 238, 235, 236, 237, 273, 19, 37.

Poems of Dawn, 283: *Will His Work Endure?*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 118 (R 5440).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? What were the results?

WILL HIS WORK ENDURE?

WILL "that Servant's" work endure?
Ah, yes! Of this we may be sure:
For he was faithful, wise and true
And brought forth truths, both old and new.

Though Satan's error now enshrouds
And hides the light with darkest clouds,
Our God will *shake* and then *remove*
All things that He cannot approve.

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again"
And in its purity remain,
Unconquered by the Devil's arts
In even its minutest parts.

Will "that Servant's" work endure?
Ah, yes, with all that's good and pure!
For sin and error flee away
Before the light of coming Day!

R5440: "HIS LOVING-KINDNESS, O HOW GREAT!"

"Because Thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee."
—Psalm 63:3.

GOD has a kindness of nature and disposition, a *loving-kindness*, that is general, that goes out, in one sense of the word, to all of His creatures—not only the intelligent, but the unintelligent creatures of His hand. He bestows His kindness, His favors, upon the just and the unjust. He sends His sunshine and His rain upon the good and the evil. But there is a special loving-kindness, a special love which He reserves for those who have lovable qualities of heart—those who have such traits of character as permit Him thus to love them—just as every good person loves every other person who is good and noble-hearted.

God has such a love for the holy angels. He had such a love for Adam before he sinned. And since the sin, He has a sentiment of loving-kindness toward those of Adam's race who, realizing their sin, desire to turn back to Him and to do His will. His loving-kindness has led Him to make a wonderful provision for these. He has provided that some shall be of the earthly nature, to receive the blessing of life everlasting here upon earth, after it has been brought to Edenic perfection. He has provided for others to be of the spiritual nature. Truly,

"There's a wideness in God's mercy
Like the wideness of the sea!"

But God does not love the wilful sinner. This is in harmony with righteousness. We may love the ignorant, who violate the Law of God because of a lack of knowledge, of proper information; but we could not rightly love one who is wicked, whose intention of heart, of will, is to do wrong. God has no love for the incorrigibly wicked. "All the wicked will He destroy." He has arranged that only those who shall come into accord with His righteousness may enjoy the blessing of eternal life. These shall have an eternity of happiness; they shall be the recipients of His loving favor everlastingly.

The Psalmist had a taste of the loving-kindness of God in his own experiences. When he was anointed to be king of Israel, he knew that he had found favor in God's sight. And

later, when he did things that were wrong, God chastised him, punished him in love, because David was a man after the Lord's own heart—had a desire to do right—to do God's will. As the needle of a compass may under certain circumstances be detracted from its normal condition of pointing toward the pole, just so some attraction at times influenced David and led him into a wrong course. But as soon as the besetment was past, or he was led of the Lord to see his sin, his heart returned fully to Jehovah, as the needle of the compass returns and again points to the pole. Therefore King David declared that life without God's loving-kindness would be worth nothing to him; he would not appreciate his life if cut off from the favor of the Lord. This being the case, his lips would always confess the Lord—tell forth His loving-kindness, show forth His praises.

OUR ANOINTING FAR SUPERIOR

And this is still more true of us who are now the Lord's truly consecrated children, who are daily striving to serve Him and to follow the Master. We who by the grace of God have come into covenant relationship with Him since the Atonement for sin has been made have become sons of God, and have been begotten of the Holy Spirit. We have come thus into the anointed Body of Christ. We have not been anointed to an earthly throne, as was David, but our anointing does more: it anoints us to a Heavenly Throne, to share in the rulership of the entire earth.

No king or emperor on any earthly throne can hope to reign for more than a few brief years. But those who shall be accounted worthy to reign with Messiah, to share His Throne, shall reign for a thousand years. And this is only the beginning of their glory. Our Father in Heaven, who is now training and preparing us for this glorious exaltation through His Only Begotten Son, with whom we are to reign, gives us the assurance that He will be with us to guide our way; that all things shall work together for good to us, because we love Him and are called according to His purpose.

So we, above all other people in the world's history, have the loving-kindness of God manifested toward us. We have His exceeding great and precious promises. We are the recipients of His special love. And the more we appreciate this love and these glorious promises and the bountiful provisions of His grace, the more our hearts respond in gratitude, the more His loving-kindness becomes a reality to us, and the more are we ready to lay down our lives in His service.

It was thus with Jesus. He preferred the Father's favor above all else. And He, through the Father's arrangement, opened up this new and living way for *us*, that we, by becoming His disciples, may share with Him God's special loving-kindness and matchless promises, granted only to those "who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." Surely our lips shall praise our God! And not only so, but our pocketbooks, our bank accounts, and our influence shall praise Him! All that we have shall praise the Lord; and all that we ever hope to have!

"I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY!"

We who have come to realize our Father's unspeakable favor to us as better than this present life with all it could have to give, we who have joyfully laid upon His altar every earthly good thing, every hope and ambition, every power of our being, rejoice to tell the Good Tidings of Salvation to others. We rejoice to sound forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. The Message is too good to keep! If we could not proclaim it, it would be as a burning fire shut up in our bones; so we *must* tell it. And we are willing that the telling of it shall cost us trouble, cost us money, cost us the misunderstanding and persecution of former friends, and possibly the breaking of home ties. We are willing that it shall cost us the frown of the world and of organized churchianity.

TEXT APPLICABLE ONLY TO SAINTS

The Prophet David in our text spoke prophetically of the Church of Christ. These words could apply to none other than saints of God. None but those who walk and talk with God would esteem His favor more precious and desirable than their earthly life. If we ask the average nominal Christian to weigh this matter, and tell us if he would exchange this life for the favor of the Lord—putting in one side of the balance all the good things, hopes, ambitions, family ties, social position, churchianity, esteem of men, and putting in the other side of the scale God's favor—he will hesitate, and will eventually decide in favor of the things of this life.

The reason for this is that such do not highly appreciate Divine favor. They have heard and believed certain things about the Almighty, some of them true and some false; but the misrepresentation of God's character and Plan, together with the worldly influences surrounding them, have largely neutralized and offset and made noneffective the truths which they have learned, and they lack confidence in the things unseen. Hence worldly interests outweigh their appreciation of Divine favor—ten to one.

Those who have, through the Plan of the Ages, come to see the loving-kindness and mercy of the Lord are, if they are children of God at all, being put to the test. If they are merely glad to find out that there is no place of eternal torture, and that God's loving Plan includes the whole human race, their hearts are not touched to responsiveness by this manifestation of His great love. They will go on their way, rejoicing that they have been delivered from the bondage of error, but will be like the nine lepers who were healed by the Master, yet did not return to give Him the glory, nor to offer themselves in service to Him. And these, alas, are the majority! We are now in the great day of proving. Who will be able to stand the test in this evil time?

GOD THE SUN OF OUR SOUL

This loving favor of God, which is so appreciated by the true saints, is not a favor respecting future prospects and hopes merely, but it is the blessed possession also of the present life. Gradually these come to prize the communion and fellowship of the Lord to such a degree that any interruption of this communion produces misery of soul. It brings

an aching void that nothing else can fill. This sentiment is beautifully expressed in the hymn we often sing:

"Sun of my soul, my Father dear,
I know no night when Thou art near;
O, may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes!"

The true child of God will walk so closely with Him that nothing, however sweet or precious to the natural man, will be permitted to shut from him his Father's face. This would be esteemed a calamity with which nothing else could compare. He would rather cut off anything as dear as a right hand, or pluck out of his life anything as precious as an eye, than that it should come between himself and his Heavenly Friend, whom He has come to love above all else beside. God is truly to these the Sun of their soul, without whom life would become the blackness of night.

"THE DARKNESS HATETH THE LIGHT"

Some professed disciples of Christ may say that a Christian life will not cost earthly friendships; that such an idea is an exaggeration; that it is an extreme view of what is required of a Christian; that a course which produces such a result is an unreasonable one. But no! Our Master's words are as true today as when they were spoken: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:19.) The declaration of the Apostle still holds good: "Yea, and all who live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

Why did the Master suffer the loss of social position and of favor with the churchianity of His day? Why did the Doctors of Divinity and the notables among the religionists hide their faces from Him? Why did they finally become so embittered against Him that they crucified Him? Was it because of evil-doing on His part? Nay; for He went about doing good. It was because He told the truth. He declared truths which they themselves recognized as such, but with which they had so mixed the "traditions of the elders" that they were too stupefied, drunken and blinded to take anything but a perverted view of our Lord's work and teachings. Their hearts were not in the right attitude before God. "The darkness hateth the light."

The Master's persecutions came not from the outside world, but from the professed holy people of His time. So has it ever been since, and so is it today. Those who now oppose the Truth are not worldly people outside of the churches, with but few exceptions; but they are zealous sectarians, whom Satan has blinded with his false doctrines and misrepresentations. We are not to be surprised, therefore, that wherever the Truth goes it will be a Sword to separate, as our Lord declared. These conditions prove a test to the followers of Jesus. Are we willing to bear the hatred, the scorn, the contumely, which loyalty to the Truth brings? Is our Father's loving favor more, far more, to us than the favor and smiles of the whole world—even more, far more to us than life itself?

THE GLORIOUS HARP OF THE AGES

If so, we can go forth in His name, rejoicing as we go, praising Him with our lips, singing the New Song which he hath put into our mouths, "even the loving kindness of our God." It costs something to sing this song. Only those who have learned to play upon the Harp of God, who have all its strings attuned to perfect harmony, can properly render this "Song of Moses and the Lamb." Never until today has it been possible to produce such melody from this wonderful Harp; for never before have all its chords been properly placed and attuned. Now its music is entrancing! Then let us take this wonderful Harp of the Ages, and as we sweep its chords, let us sing with the spirit and with the understanding this wondrous, glad New Song!

NOVEMBER 1

Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips—Psa. 141:3.

The number of watchmen or pickets doing duty and standing guard over our actions and words will be fewer in proportion as the picket line guarding our minds, our thoughts, is a strong one. It is here that we need to be especially on the alert. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." This general truth is particularly exemplified in the regenerate, who are more open in their conduct and language, proportionately, than others. Having the right sentiments at heart they are less on their guard in respect to their manner of expression perhaps than previously; but all the more, they need to remember the words of the Apostle, "If any man sin not with his lips, the same is a perfect man" (Jas. 3:2)—Z '04, 23 (R 3304).

Because of his liability to err in word and of the liability of the majority to misunderstand, and of a minority to misrepresent, the Christian must guard well his speech. The failure so to do has wrought much evil, while success in so doing has not only prevented evil but also has accomplished much good. The surest way of guarding our lips is in having the Truth fill our minds and impress its spirit upon our hearts. As we cannot do this of ourselves, how fitting that we pray the Lord to set a watch before our mouth and to keep the door of our lips. Then we will not offend in word—P '34, 159.

Parallel passages: Ex. 22:28; Psa. 10:7, 8; 12:3, 4; 34:13; 41:5-9; 52:2-4; 59:12; 64:2-5; 106:33; 119:23; 120; Prov. 4:24; 6:16-19; 8:13; 10:11, 19, 31, 32; 11:11; 12:5, 6, 13, 17-19; 13:3; 14:25; 15:1, 4, 28; 18:21; Matt. 12:34-37; Rom. 3:13, 14; Eph. 4:25, 29, 31; Col. 4:6; Titus 1:10, 11; 3:2; Jas. 1:19, 26; 3:5-10; 4:11; 1 Pet. 3:9, 10.

Hymns: 145, 1, 44, 78, 154, 183, 208.

Poems of Dawn, 143: *In the Presence of the King.*

Tower Reading: Z '06, 76 (R 3737).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? What helped or hindered therein? In what did they result?

IN THE PRESENCE OF THE KING

IF we could always feel each little thing
We do, each hour we spend
Within the presence of the King,
What dignity—'twould lend!

If we could realize our every thought
Is known to Him, our King,
With how great carefulness would it be fraught,
And what a blessing bring!

If, when some sharp word leaves a cruel sting,
Our faith could know and feel
'Twas heard within the presence of the King,
How soon the wound would heal!

Oh, when the song of life seems hard to sing,
And darker grows the way,—
Draw nearer to the presence of the King,
And night shall turn to day!

R3737: LESSONS ON SELF-CONTROL.

—Matthew 5:33-48.—

Golden Text:—"Keep the door of my lips."—Psa. 141:3.

AGAIN we gather at the feet of the great Teacher of the school of Christ to hearken for his further instructions. In connection with his discourse on the beatitudes, which constituted our last lesson, the Master proceeded in the words of today's lesson.

Our Lord refers to the traditions of the ancients, which evidently had a great control over the people of that time. No fault is to be found with having respect for the opinions and teachings of those who have gone before us in life's pathway, but one of the important lessons for every Christian to learn is that the fact that a matter is ancient, that it has been long believed, is no positive proof of its correctness. The thoughts of ancient times are to be weighed and tested, as well as those of modern times by the one standard, the divine revelation—"If they speak not according to this word it is because they have no light in them."—Isa. 8:20.

The traditional teaching to which our Lord referred was not wholly erroneous, just as the traditions of the "dark ages" contain some elements of truth. Error alone is weak in comparison to error mixed with a little truth; hence our great Adversary usually endeavors to interweave some measure of truth with all the injurious falsehoods which have burdened the world for centuries, and still burden us in proportion as we are deceived by them. This was true in respect to the matter our Lord was discussing: the Law had something to say respecting the taking of God's name in vain, and tradition had modified the Law and limited it to false swearing. Our Lord called attention to the error, pointing out that the third commandment had a broader and deeper meaning than the tradition implied—that it meant that God's name should never be used in any irreverent manner, and not merely forbidding its use in connection with the violation of an oath in the Lord's name. Our Lord extended the thought, teaching his followers that they should not continue the custom of their day, of proving their assertions by appeals to God, to heaven, etc. The same lesson is for the followers of Jesus today: others may feel it necessary to emphasize their statements by oaths or expletives, but the followers of Jesus

are to so live, so act, so speak, that their words pass for par anywhere and with anybody. To this end they must be absolutely truthful, so that whoever may hear them may know that their yea is yea and their nay is nay.

"SWEAR NOT AT ALL"

Oaths and solemn asseverations in the ordinary conversation of life imply that the truth of the speaker is questionable—that his yea is not always yea, and that his nay is not always nay. The tendency is to make him less careful in the ordinary statements of his conversation which are not thus solemnized; the effect is also to make him less reverent toward the Lord or the other holy things which he may call upon as witnesses, as evidences of his truthfulness. As the word of such people becomes common and liable to be broken, so their oaths would soon also become common and liable to be broken—such matters go on from bad to worse usually. On the contrary, where the word is held sacred the avenues of sin and error and falsehood are measurably stopped.

Nothing in this injunction can properly be understood to apply to the taking of an oath in a court of law. Such oaths, commanded by the law of the State, are necessary, because all have not the high standard of truth desired. But even in the courts of law in many States it is permitted that an affirmation may be made instead of an oath if any so prefer. To one of the Lord's people an affirmation must mean exactly the same as an oath; he would not affirm what he would not be willing to swear to. He recognizes that, as a follower of the Lord and one of his representatives, his yea or his nay must be as truthfully kept as his oath would be.

Whatsoever is more than yea or nay cometh from evil—the revised version says "of the Evil One." Indirectly all of our evil tendencies come from the Evil One, for was it not by his lie in Eden that the fall from perfection and the divine image brought us all into our present evil, imperfect condition, exposing us to error through our own weaknesses and imperfections and the weakness of our neighbors? While our Lord's injunction is good for all who have ears to hear it, it is especially appropriate to the little flock who have applied themselves to hearken to all of his commands, and to be taught of him, and, to whatever extent is necessary, to suffer with him in following the course of righteousness. Truly all such should be models of truthfulness and uprightness, and thus be burning and shining lights, glorifying our Father in heaven in their homes and in the communities where they live.

AN EYE FOR AN EYE

Another of the teachings of the ancients was that absolute justice should be rendered, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Some features of the Law did indeed imply this. If one caused an injury to another intentionally he should be maimed himself correspondingly. This strict requiting of justice prevailed, not only amongst the Jews, but also amongst the Romans and the Greeks. It may be said to have been a juster law in some respects than those which now prevail, which indirectly favor the rich: for instance, the penalty today for injury to another might either be a fine of so much money or an

imprisonment of so long a time. In either case the rich would have the advantage in that they could spare the money, and the loss of time would not be so disastrous to them as to the poor. However, there were disadvantages in a juster system of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth: it cultivated a feudal spirit, and led to anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, murder, works of the flesh and of the devil. Seeing what the strictest interpretation of justice would imply, let us see what the great Teacher would present as the preferable course of action.

Hear his words, "I say unto you, resist not evil [do not retaliate, rendering evil for evil], but whosoever shall smite you on the right cheek turn to him the other also." This is an astounding proposition—who can obey it? Even if we modify it all that language will permit, it is still apparently beyond reach of any fallen human being—it teaches the ideal requirements of the divine law of perfect love. When seeking for an interpretation of the expression, Resist not the evil doer, but turn the other cheek, we must look to our Lord and the apostles as examples. We find, for instance, that our Redeemer was smitten upon the cheek, and that while he did not literally turn the other he did not attempt to smite back, to retaliate even in word. In this indirect sense he did turn the other cheek. And this should mark our course. Our Redeemer did expostulate with his smiters in kindly terms, however, and we may properly follow his example, and consider it in full agreement with his instruction in this lesson.

We may remember him again when evilly entreated and taken to the brow of the hill to be cast headlong: he did not use his superior power to do injury to his opponents, but passed through their midst, evidently either directly or indirectly exercising over them a restraining influence, because his time for death had not yet come. So, too, we may use any moral influence we may possess to escape from the power of our enemies, and be assured that we will have the divine care and protection until our lessons and experiences are completed—until our time shall come to pass beyond the vail. Similarly the Apostle, learning of the threats of the Jews against his life, did not make threats against them nor pray evil upon their heads; but he did use such steps as were at his command to thwart their evil designs, sending word to the governor and invoking the power of the civil authority; and on another occasion he defended himself by appealing to the people.—John 18:22, 23; Acts 23:1-5, 17.

The lesson for us is that we may use all lawful and legal means in our self-defense, and may even wisely run away from dangers and persecutors, as the Lord directed and the apostles exemplified. (2 Cor. 11:33; Matt. 10:23.) But we are not authorized to retaliate. Difficult as this proper course may appear, it undoubtedly will be found to be the best one. Remember our Lord's words, "They that take to the sword shall perish with the sword," and again the Apostle's words to the Church is, "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Matt. 26:52; Gal. 5:15.) The lesson evidently is,—

"FOLLOW PEACE WITH ALL MEN"

"If any man sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." The revisers translated this to mean that if any one is disposed to go to law with you and take away your coat you should settle with him, even though it deprive you of both coat and cloak. This lesson of submission, of non-resistance, is surely a very difficult one to thoroughly learn. We cannot doubt that many would take advantage of such a disposition, and that as a result he would have the bad end of many a bargain. However, this would not prove the Lord's counsel unwise even as respects the present life. The lesson upon ourselves would certainly be valuable as respects the development of the Master's graces, and how can we tell that the example would not be very potent upon those who might fraudulently, violently take advantage of our obedience to the great Teacher.

We know, too, that the Lord would be quite able to compensate us for anything we might suffer in way of loss in obedience to his directions, to whatever extent he might see would be to our advantage. We should never forget the two occasions on which the Lord told the disciples to cast in their nets after they had toiled all night and had caught nothing, and how on both occasions miraculous draughts of fishes were caught. He who is for us is more powerful than all they that be against us, and undoubtedly loyalty to him and obedience to his Word will prove eventually the better part. Let us remember also the proverb which says, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." (Prov. 11:24.) It is not always those who fight most strenuously for their rights that fare the best even amongst the children of the world.

"GO WITH HIM TWAIN"

The next injunction is not generally understood: it does not mean that we should be turned aside from the duties and affairs of life at anybody's bidding. In olden times certain magistrates, governors, etc., had the authority of law to press the service of the people for governmental work. For instance, note how Simon the Cyrenian was compelled to bear the cross for Jesus a certain distance. The word compel in our lesson is from the same Greek word, and refers to a similar legal compulsion; "commandeered" would be the modern way of referring to such a matter. Our Lord's injunction is that his followers should be so broad-minded, so liberal, so generous, that they would not only obey the legal commands but be ready to go farther—to do more than had been required.

In thus doing heartily, joyfully and agreeably all and more than would be commanded they would be exemplifying the generous spirit which represents our Lord and his teachings. By such breadth of sentiment they would be known as Jesus' disciples, who had learned of him. Indeed we may say that the whole trend of the teachings of the Lord and the apostles is in line with this, and opposed to stinginess and narrowness and selfishness—in accord with generosity, full measure, pressed down, heaped up and running over. The Christian measure would be nothing short, though it might be a little more. A Christian measure of anything must be full, never skimp. This is an element of the higher law, the law of love, and its spirit of generosity in our hearts.

In similar strain the great Teacher enjoins that we shall give and lend to those requesting. We cannot suppose that he meant that a parent should give a razor to the child which cries for it; we cannot suppose that the Lord meant that our loans or gifts would be such as would be injurious to the recipients. Love must be the basis of our conduct, as it is the very essence of the Master's law. We cannot think either that he meant that we should neglect the interests of our own homes and families in giving to others or loaning to them. We are bound to suppose that our Lord in this, as in all things, wished his followers to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. What he wished to enjoin evidently was that spirit or disposition which would have pleasure in loaning or giving to the needy, and which is so circumstanced as to be able to comply with such requests and would be glad to do so, using the proper discretion and judgment, as to time, place and persons. In other words, the spirit of Christ is a benevolent spirit and not a mean or stingy one, and all the Lord's people, more or less selfish, need to learn this. There are few perhaps who would be in any danger of injuring themselves or others immediately dependent upon them by any acts of benevolence.

"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR"

Love for the neighbor was a feature of the Law, and in enjoining this the traditions of the elders were quite right; but they added to it that an enemy should be hated, whereas the Law said nothing of the kind, but on the contrary enjoined that if an enemy's ox or ass or property of any kind were seen going astray or about to be injured they should be protected and assisted and held for the owner, even though he were an enemy, and even though at a considerable cost of time and trouble. Our Lord thus pointed out the real meaning of the Law, making it the more honorable, saying, "I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven." (The rendering of v. 44 here given occurs in the revised version, and is in harmony with the oldest Greek MS., which omits a part of this verse.)

If we are sons of God we must have his Spirit, his disposition. To whatever extent we lack this disposition to love and desire good to our enemies as well as to our neighbors we lack evidence of relationship to our Father in heaven and to our elder brother, our Redeemer and Teacher. Here again the lesson of benevolence comes in—we must be large-hearted, generous. How can we cultivate this necessary quality, especially if our natural dispositions are mean and selfish, very much fallen from the divine likeness in this respect? We reply that the entire course of instruction in the school of Christ is in this direction. To make us compassionate and sympathetic with others, we are shown our own littleness and weakness in the Lord's sight; to teach us how to be generous and forgiving to others, we have the illustration of God's mercy and grace and forgiveness toward us; to impress the matter upon us we are assured that our forgiveness and standing with the Lord can only be maintained by our cultivating this spirit and manifesting it toward our debtors and enemies.

We are to be generous with those who transgress against our rights and interests, our enemies. This does not mean that the Lord recognizes or treats his enemies with the same degree of blessing that he grants to his friends and his children, nor does it mean that we

are to love our enemies in exactly the same sense that we love our bosom friends and companions. The Lord gives special blessing to those who are especially his, and we also may properly give more of our love and favor to those who are in accord with us. The lesson here again is large heartedness and generosity.

"LOVE THEM THAT LOVE YOU"

Our Lord points out that in merely reciprocating the love of others we would come far short of the standard he sets us, and of the lesson we must learn if we would be his joint-heirs and companions in the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom. Publicans and sinners even love those who love them—he must be a very mean man who will return evil for good and hate those who love him. Even though such a standard were recognized in the world, of loving those who love us, it would not be appropriate to the Lord's followers; they must rise to a higher plane if they would be his disciples.

Similarly our greeting, our salutations, the civilities of life are to be extended not merely to our brethren either after the flesh or after the Spirit. We are to have kind intentions toward all, and to enjoy the privilege of extending these, expressing them, and thus comforting and refreshing all with whom we come in contact. Generosity again is the thought—breadth of character and nobility of conduct.

PERFECT AS FATHER IN HEAVEN

The last verse of our lesson caps the climax of all instruction, telling us that the copy which we are to consider and follow is that of our heavenly Father—we are to be perfect as he is perfect. Ah, yes! It would have been impossible for the great Teacher to have set us any other pattern or example or standard than the perfect one. And yet he knew that none of his disciples would ever be able in the present life and under present conditions of sin and death working in our mortal bodies to come up to this standard—to follow this copy. What then did he mean? We answer that he there set before us the perfect copy, with instruction that, in proportion as we love him and desire to have his approval, we should endeavor to pattern after the heavenly Father's character.

The fact that this endeavor would not bring perfect results could only redound in blessings upon us, by bringing us to a realization of our own imperfections and of our need of the covering of our dear Redeemer's robe of righteousness, until the time shall come when in the first resurrection change we shall be made like him, see him as he is, share his glory, and be able to perfectly reflect, as he does, the heavenly Father's perfection. Meantime all of our shortcomings that are unintentional are graciously covered from the Father's sight with the merit of our Redeemer, who stands as our pledge or guaranty that our endeavors to follow the copy are sincere, of the heart. The Lord will judge us worthy or unworthy of the resurrection—not according to the flesh, but—according to the endeavors of our hearts as New Creatures.

THE OLD COPY-BOOK

Years ago it was the custom in the public schools to furnish the children with ruled copy-books, with copper-plate engraved lessons at the top of each page. The lesson to the pupil was the copying of those perfect characters. Every modest child must certainly have felt abashed, timid, when receiving one of those lessons, from the realization that it could not produce characters that could at all compare with the copy. It was, however, explained that it was not expected that the child could duplicate the perfect copy, but that following the lines of the copy it would become more and more expert. How well this illustrates the Master's words, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect," and the way in which he intends that we should profit by the instruction.

Another lesson: It was the duty of the teacher to examine the work of the pupil, and surely in a majority of cases it was found that the best copy of the original was found on the first line, and that the work became poorer and poorer toward the end of the page. So it is with many in the school of Christ—the great Teacher perceives that their first endeavors to copy God-likeness at the beginning of their Christian experience was more successful than their subsequent attempts. Why? The answer is the same in both cases. The child neglected to look at the copy and merely looked at its own imperfect efforts, and hence the poor results. So with the pupils in the school of Christ—their poor results come from comparing themselves with themselves, and neglecting to keep constantly before their minds the perfect copy—"Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

As the earthly teacher reproved and corrected the pupil, so with much long-suffering and patience the Lord reproves and corrects the pupils in the school of Christ. Will not this explain many chastisements which are necessary for every son whom the Father would ultimately receive to home and glory, every one of whom must be conformed to the image of his Son, who is the express image of the Father's person? Let us, then, begin afresh, on a new page as it were, to copy the character-likeness of our perfect Father in heaven. Let us no longer look at ourselves and our past attainments, but, as the Apostle says, "Forgetting the things that are behind and pressing on toward the things that are before," let us labor with patience to learn the all-important lessons connected with our discipleship and the gracious hopes set before us in the promises of our Father's Word.

"KEEP THE DOOR OF MY LIPS"

Our Golden text presents an important thought. The Lord's people find the tongue the most difficult member to bring into subjection, and therefore may well pray, "Keep thou the door of my lips." And if the prayer be sincere, from the heart, it will imply that the petitioner is doing all in his power in this direction himself while seeking the divine aid. And the divine aid comes in line with this lesson, and assures us that the lips are not at fault, that it is the heart that needs a completion of the regenerative work of the holy Spirit, for "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The lesson here is that whatever difficulty we have through our lips needs correction at the heart. We need to get our hearts more in accord with the heart of the Almighty—more in tune with the gracious elements of the divine character, represented not only in justice toward others, but additionally in mercy, love, kindness and benevolence towards all.

NOVEMBER 2

It is the LORD; let him do what seemeth him good—1 Sam. 3:18.

We know not what is for our highest welfare. Sometimes those things which we crave and desire to grasp, considering them to be good, might really be to our disadvantage. Blessed are they who are able by faith to pierce the gloom of every trial and difficulty and perplexity, and to realize that "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and that He is causing all things to work together for their good. We are to wait patiently for the Lord and to take patiently such experiences as His providences may mark out for us, questioning not the wisdom, the love and the power of Him with whom we have to do—Z '01, 147, 317 (R 2806, 2887).

The Christian should recognize the Lord's providence in all his affairs, whether it brings toward or untoward events, rewards or punishment. In every case the Lord's will should be heartily accepted. This will be difficult in untoward experiences, especially if these are chastisements; but all the more necessary will it then be to be submissive; for insubmissiveness then is liable to lead to total willfulness, which must result in complete disaster. It is, however, better for us to be like Samuel, a type of the Little Flock, whom a look was sufficient to guide, than like Eli, a type of the Great Company, who needed punishment for a large measure of willfulness—P '33, 162.

Parallel passages: Matt. 26:39, 42; John 5:30; 6:38; Phil. 2:8; Acts 21:10-14; 1 Pet. 2:23; 4:19; Psa. 31:5; 39:9; Luke 23:46; Job 1:21; Isa. 39:8.

Hymns: 67, 38, 43, 57, 228, 222, 305.

Poems of Dawn, 184: *His Will, Not Mine, Be Done*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 251 (R 5296).

Questions: What have been the week's experiences in line with the text? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? What resulted therefrom?

HIS WILL, NOT MINE, BE DONE

O THOU of little faith! why dost thou fear?
Didst thou forget that Jesus is so near?
And hast thou thought that thou must walk alone?
Behold now at thy side the loved One!

Aye, more than this, thou'rt held within His hand,
And 'twas Himself that hath thy trial planned!
There was a *need be* seen by Eye Divine,
Although, perchance, not visible to thine.

And, wherefore wouldst thou see? Thou canst not tell
If what thy heart contends for would be well;

Perhaps thy hope's fruition would be vain,
Or prove a life-long discipline of pain!

Hast thou not seen, in retrospective life,
That will of God which caused thee bitterest strife
Hath turned to sweetness—while the thing He gave
To suit *thy* will grew darker than the grave?

There's rest supreme for souls that choose His will;
A blest security from every ill.
The things God chooses for us never fail!
They have their anchorage within the veil.

R5296: PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF ELI

"It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good."—1 Samuel 3:18.

THROUGH Samuel the Lord had sent Eli a message indicating that disaster would come to his house. The words of our text were spoken when he heard that the calamity was intended of the Lord, and indicate therefore submission *before* the disaster rather than *afterward*. So these words represent humility on the part of Eli.

Eli had been a judge in Israel for many years; and so far as the record goes, he was thoroughly exemplary himself—just, in all his dealings. But his sons were styled "sons of Belial"—they were wicked in various ways. While, therefore, Eli's own influence was for the benefit of the nation of Israel, here was a contrary influence which grew up under his protection, under his sanction. Had these evil-doers been others than those of his own family, doubtless Eli would have dealt with them according to his authority as a judge. We have here an illustration of a man who, though godly himself, was weak as the head of his family. As the head of his household he should have trained up his children in the way they should go. He should have trained them up in righteousness; otherwise they should have ceased to be members of his household, and should have come under certain restraint, which he, as a law-giver, should have enforced.

THE FLAW IN ELI'S CHARACTER

From this story we may draw a lesson as to what God expects of us and our families. If a child were meddlesome, thieving, immoral or otherwise an injurious person, the Christian parent should not allow such things to go on. He is obligated to bring the matter to some kind of termination. If, however, a child has a thought different from our own as to what constitutes reverence to God, we are not to assume that he should be brought under restraint.

We are to recall that this message came to Eli through the boy Samuel. Samuel had, after the manner of a Prophet in those days, heard the voice of the Lord calling him and

speaking to him. Thinking it was Eli's voice, he had gone to him and asked, What will you have? And Eli replied that he had not called him, and directed him to lie down again. This was repeated three times, and Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child. He therefore instructed Samuel again to lie down, but that if the call was repeated he should answer, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth," indicating his readiness to do Him service. Samuel did as he was directed, and the Lord told him that because of Eli's carelessness in respect to the doings of his family, they should be cut off from the priesthood.

ELI'S BEAUTIFUL SUBMISSION

It was quite a remarkable thing that Eli should manifest no resentment against the channel the Lord had used! Eli had received Samuel into his family when the child had been consecrated by his parents. Now, finding that apparently God was passing him by and communicating with him through the child, the circumstance would have furnished sufficient cause for a proud spirit to rise up in resentment. But Eli's course proved that his own heart was tender. He answered, when Samuel explained what the Lord had told him, "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good." It is the Lord's judgment. It is surely right! surely good! Let the Lord do what seemeth to Him good, even though it means disaster to my own family, even though it means the cutting off of my own family from the priesthood.

This cutting off from the priesthood would mean that the sons of Eli would die, for they were the priests in the regular lineal order of the Aaronic priesthood. This is a very beautiful example of absolute submission. If Eli was weak in some respects, he was strong in others, as is shown in his humility and submission. Those who are meek and teachable themselves, often find great difficulty in being sufficiently positive in their dealing with others who are properly under their control. The quality of character which would tend to make them meek and submissive toward the Lord, would tend to make them kind and lenient toward others. But it is good to be able to carry out with firmness the will of the Lord in respect to others, and at the same time be meek and submissive in respect to the Lord, His providence and arrangements.

LESSONS FOR THE CHRISTIAN

As Christians we may learn valuable lessons from this incident. We should make sure as to our willingness to receive the Truth in whatever way the Lord is pleased to send it to us, whether from the mouth of a little child, or whether unlearned men, like St. Peter and St. John, may bring it.

It may have been difficult for the priests of the Apostles' day to hear those unlearned men speaking with power the Message from God; and they would say, Surely God would not speak through such stammering lips! God would surely not pass *us* by—we who have spent years in study, and who are recognized as priests of the Divine order! Being in this wrong attitude of heart and mind, they rejected not only those humble men with their Message, but also the Lord Himself.

This is also the spirit of the world. Whoever is faithful in speaking the Word of God from the Bible will have less and less attention from the worldly-wise. An ever-increasing number of people are thinking of the works of creation as having come about by processes of Evolution. More and more they are thinking that the Bible is not the Word of God; but that the Apostles were merely deluded men, deceived men; that Jesus Himself did not know what He was doing. They think that He was a good man, that doubtless God Himself was with Him, because of the good that flowed from His teaching. And yet they think that *they* could give forth better wisdom—these great teachers who would like to make a new Bible after their own heart!

In our own day, the worldly-wise are looking from the wrong standpoint. They are looking in the wrong direction, they are not looking to see the New Dispensation now coming in. They will not recognize what is now taking place until the sunlight of Truth begins to flood the world. Then, turning about, they will perceive the real Sun of Righteousness, and begin to grasp the whole situation. We are glad that they will turn about and take a view of matters from a different standpoint. But all who are God's true children are ready to receive God's Message from whatever source it may come to them.

A specially important thought in our text is that Eli was submissive to the calamity. This was a good condition of heart for him. Thus, not striving against the Divine will, but meekly bowing to it, he showed that his trouble was merely that of weakness of the flesh. We find that there is now a similar condition existing. It is the duty of the Lord's people today to recognize that the present order of nominal church systems is passing away, and will presently be overthrown in the great time of trouble. This message naturally enough causes resentment in the hearts of a great many. They have been boasting of their great financial power, their strength, etc. And the mention of the *fall* of this would naturally awaken their opposition. We must not be surprised, therefore, that their anger is aroused against us, as we tell them of the time of trouble that is before us.

HEART LOYAL, BUT WEAK

To Eli, this message that his family would be cut off from the priesthood was a severe blow. And so our Message about the Royal Priesthood is not a palatable message to nominal Christendom. But some of the Lord's people among them today are not in sympathy with the trend of affairs. These are the ones who will say, "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good!"

This will be the attitude of the Great Company. They are weak in standing forth for the Lord, and yet submissive in the time of trouble, and loyal to the Lord's cause and the interests affiliated therewith.

Samuel would seem to represent more clearly the Little Flock class, and Eli the Great Company class—the latter being weak in some respects, but loyal at heart to the Lord. But it is the Samuel type that we should seek to copy—so fully out of sympathy are we with unrighteousness and sin, and so fully in accord with righteousness. We are ready to

speaking God's Message, which must necessarily be a very unpleasant one. As it is unpleasant for us now to tell forth the approaching disaster that will involve both Church and State, so to Samuel it must have been a very unpleasant duty to go to his best friend, his benefactor, bearing from the Lord a message of disaster to himself and his family.

We would do well to speak sympathetically of these things, rather than coldly, rather than exultingly. We do sympathize with them, both in the condition of things at the present time and also regarding the things we recognize to be coming upon them. More and more do we receive word of ministers, telling us that they perceive that the power of God is departing from their congregations, and that evidences are on every hand that they have been wrong doctrinally, and that the general trend of the present time is toward social unrest and upheaval.

"O! teach me, Lord, the art
With Wisdom to remove
The errors that deceive the heart,
And Truth to clearly prove.

"O! arm me with the mind,
Meek Lamb, that was in Thee;
And let my fervent zeal be joined
With grace and charity."

NOVEMBER 3

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak—Matt. 26:41.

Some make the mistake of praying without watching; others make the mistake of watching without praying; but the safe and only proper method is that which our Lord directed, to combine the two. We are to watch for all the encouragements of the Lord's Word, the evidence of their fulfillment and the signs that betoken His presence and the great changes of dispensation just at hand. We are to watch for everything that will strengthen us in faith and hope and loyalty and love; and while watching we are to pray without ceasing. We are to pray together as the Lord's people; we are to pray in our homes, as families; we are to pray in secret, in private—Z '01, 80 (R 2773).

Watchfulness surveys our dispositions, thoughts, motives, words, acts, surroundings and the influences operating upon us. Prayer is the uttered or unuttered heart's sincere desire going out to God for good things. The former furnishes us with all the knowledge and energy to arouse us to activity, the latter with all the light and energy from the Word and all the circumstances and other helps from the providences to assist our activity in realizing the blessings that the Lord offers us. Such watching and prayer will deliver us amid and from temptation and will enable the willing spirit to conquer the weak flesh to God's glory—P '32, 166.

Parallel passages: Matt. 26:38-40, 42-46; Mark 13:33; 1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:18; 1 Pet. 5:8, 9; Heb. 3:12, 13; Isa. 26:8, 9; Rom. 7:18-25; 8:3; 1 Cor. 9:27; Gal. 5:16, 17, 24; Phil. 2:12, 13; 3:12-14.

Hymns: 183, 184, 20, 145, 78, 13, 130.

Poems of Dawn, 111: *Watch and Pray*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 279 (R 5312).

Questions: Have I this week watched and prayed? How? Why? With what results?

WATCH AND PRAY

CHRISTIAN, seek not yet repose,
Hear thy gracious Savior say,
"Thou art in the midst of foes:
Watch and pray."

Principalities and powers
Mustering their unseen array,
Watch for thine unguarded hours:
"Watch and pray."

Gird thy heavenly armor on,
Wear it ever, night and day;
Ambush'd lies the Evil One:
"Watch and pray."

Hear, above all, hear thy Lord,
Him thou lovest to obey;
Hide within thy heart His words:
"Watch and pray."

Watch, as if on that alone
Hung the issue of the day;
Pray that help may be sent down:
"Watch and pray."

R5312: THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN FLESH AND SPIRIT

**"Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing,
but the flesh is weak."—Matt. 26:41.**

THESE WORDS were uttered by our Lord to His disciples at the close of His earthly ministry, when the hour was fast approaching in which He would be betrayed and crucified. He knew of this trial that was so close at hand; He had repeatedly mentioned the matter to His disciples; but outward appearances were so contrary to this that they could not appreciate His words. He had often spoken in parables and dark sayings (which they did not fully understand until after His resurrection, though they indeed got many lessons from His sayings). So when He told them that He would be crucified, they thought that it was another dark saying—one of the deep, hidden things, just as when He said, "Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."

They did not understand these things. They saw no evidence that the Roman Government would take any hand in crucifying Him, and they knew that their own nation had no authority for crucifixion. While they knew that some of the Scribes and Pharisees were very indignant, yet they remembered how the people had cried, "Hosanna," and hailed Him as King.

The disciples had been discussing the Kingdom, and questioning as to who should be greatest in that Kingdom. Two of them had made special requests at that time for seats next to Himself. Thus evidently their minds were far from the things that were approaching. When finally He said that some one should betray Him, one after another asked, "Is it I?" And finally St. Peter said, "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, ... though all should deny Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." But Jesus said, "This night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice."

They thought that the Lord was acting strangely simply because they did not know what He knew of the things near at hand. So this night, in the garden, He said, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation"; He meant for them to be on the alert, for He knew the trying times just at hand for them. But they did not know the battle that was being waged between Christ, the Prince of Light, and Satan, the Prince of Darkness.

They did not understand this in the way we do. They had not yet received the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The most that they could understand then was that there were temptations, and that they should be on the lookout, guarding themselves and being earnest of spirit—not drowsy nor frivolous, but on guard lest they should fall into some kind of temptation. They were not only to watch, but to pray. The praying would signify that they were watching, and that their own watching was not sufficient, but that they would need, additionally, Divine assistance. What they would be praying for they would be striving for. And the earnestness of the praying would help them in the watching.

The events for which they were to watch included not only our Lord's betrayal, trial and crucifixion, but also their experiences of the subsequent days when the disciples met within closed doors, and those which they were undergoing when Jesus appeared and explained to them that He was risen from the dead. In various ways He manifested Himself to them. If they were in the attitude of watchfulness, in the attitude of praying for wisdom from on High to help them to know the will of God, it would be a very great blessing to them, and the Lord knew this. He knew that they would need help during those days of trial. If they had not had strong faith, the events of the next few days might have overwhelmed them and their faith in the teachings of Jesus. But they were kept in that time of special trial and testing. Jesus prayed for them, and they came off victorious—but some of them with scars, as St. Peter and St. Thomas.

A SPECIAL SEASON OF TRIAL

This lesson is applicable to us as respects watching and praying. We live in this favored period since Pentecost, in which God's people are privileged to have the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit; therefore our watching and praying may be, and should be, still more earnest than that of the disciples at the time of our Lord. And as they were then entering into a time of special temptation, so we in the end of this Age are living in a time of special trial regarding all that we have learned in the School of Christ as New Creatures, along the lines of meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness and love. If we be found short in these, so far as the heart is concerned, we would not be counted worthy to be of the Kingdom class, and therefore would be separated in some way from those who were found worthy.

The Lord had temptations; and all of His faithful disciples must also have temptations. And the Apostle James assures us that the having of temptation and the resisting of temptation will bring us special blessing in our development of the character-likeness of Christ. The Lord, then, did not mean that by watching and praying we would not have temptations come to us, but that we would not fail in those temptations. We might even be ensnared, as St. Peter was, yet he wept bitterly and repented. We know not what his

prayers were, but we may be sure that they were full of deep contrition that he had denied his Master.

"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." This cannot be understood to mean what it would mean in our own case. The disciples at this time were not New Creatures in Christ. They did not receive the begetting of the Spirit until Pentecost. It means more to us than it did at that time to them. To them it merely meant that they were willing in spirit, in mind, in intention. These intentions were to be good. They were to demonstrate that they were "Israelites indeed," and that they were not hypocritical, even though their flesh was weak and had the depravity that had come down through the several thousand years since man fell into sin. Their intention was better than their ability to perform; consequently they needed specially to watch and to pray.

THE NATURE OF THE BATTLE

The same thing is true of the Church from Pentecost to the present time. We note, however, a special distinction between the spirit and the flesh. To the New Creature in Christ Jesus, old things have passed away and all things have become new. (2 Cor. 5:17.) But the New Creature is weak in one sense of the word, though strong in another sense. It must be strong in the sense that it is of strong determination to have no sympathy with sin or unrighteousness or evil-speaking.

The New Creature represents the power of God, so to speak, that has become identified with us. We have accepted God's will as our will, and have been begotten by His Holy Spirit to a new life. We are therefore styled New Creatures by this begetting. As New Creatures we are at first represented as babes. The difference between the New Creature and the old creature is that the New Creature expects to attain the Divine nature—glory, honor and immortality—while the old creature desires earthly things and comforts of the present life—honor of men, etc.—and is continually pulling toward the things which it desires and craves.

The New Creature must conquer the old creature and its desires, which more or less interfere with the New Creature's engagements in the Covenant of Sacrifice. Thus there is a conflict between the New Creature and the old creature. The New Creatures, who realize themselves to be at first but babes in Christ, must grow in grace—grow in the Lord and the power of His might—grow up into Him in all things. Thus gradually the New Creature becomes stronger and stronger.

But, alas, there is often difficulty here. Many of the Lord's people have not been fed on the strong meat; as the Apostle says, "When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." (Heb. 5:12.) Many of these do not know what justification by faith means; many do not understand what consecration or sanctification means.

They do not understand that they are merely babes. They have taken the first step, and there is a tendency to believe the word of the ministers, priests and bishops who have told them that they are not to know these deep things, but that their elders and pastors are to know them, and to do the thinking for them. This condition is quite contrary to God's Word. He wishes all of His people to be qualified for telling forth His Truth to others as they have opportunity. Therefore the Apostle advises that we "henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine," but that we become New Creatures in the Lord and thus prepare ourselves for the glorious things to which we have been invited by the Divine promises.—Eph. 4:14, 15.

The flesh is weak in that it is not up to the standard of righteousness. Father Adam was perfect, and his fleshly mind was a perfect mind, strong for righteousness. But as the fall brought our race lower and lower, mentally, morally and physically, this flesh gradually became weaker and weaker. Therefore all flesh is weak in its natural tendencies, the fallen nature strongly in the ascendancy. But we are strong in proportion as the New Creature overcomes these tendencies, so that the flesh is kept as a servant of the New Creature, that the New Creature may be ultimately developed into the character-likeness of the Master.

But people will say, "John ought to make a good business man; but he can talk or think of nothing but religion." Or in the social set, they will say, "Mrs. So-and-so was once very attractive, but now she can talk only about religion." And so it will be with everything else pertaining to the world, if we are true men and true women—performing our Covenant vows unto the Lord, walking faithfully in Jesus' footsteps.

Yet every one is dissatisfied with those who are double-minded. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." Jesus tells us that before becoming His followers we should sit down and count the cost of discipleship—the cost of serving God. If we do so and make the right decision and continue to serve in harmony with it, we shall get not only the future reward of everlasting life and Divine favor, with glory and honor, but we shall also have the present reward of the Lord's favor, the Lord's care, and fellowship one with another.

LUKEWARMNESS UNDESIRABLE

If after counting the cost of service you decide to serve Mammon, selfishness, then try to be a millionaire. If you desire to enter politics, aspire to be president. If you intend to enter social life, go into it with all your might. A man who is wishy-washy, who does not know what he is doing, does not accomplish much of anything. The Lord says that he likes men to be either hot or cold.

If we are determined to be servants of the Heavenly Father, we are to recognize no other master. This does not mean that we are not to recognize *headship*. Some one may be master of much of our time. But the controller of our *time* is not master of our hearts, which are given to the Lord. We seek to use our time, energy and strength in the service of the great King.

A certain portion of our time is necessary for providing for our physical needs and for the needs of those dependent upon us. In thus caring for our own we do not lose allegiance to the great God; for we should refuse to become servants of any earthly master if it would be in conflict with our service to the Heavenly Father. This would not interfere with the thought that in the Church of Christ there are varieties of service and activities, each department having its own organization and head. But the Body of Christ working together is to recognize Jesus as the Head over all things, and to seek to know each his own part in all the affairs of the Body.

We read, "One is your Master, even Christ." And yet Christ is not the one referred to here in our text—"No man can serve two masters"; these are God and Mammon. Jesus said, "I delight to do Thy will, O God." "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of the Father who sent Me." So, then, in serving Jesus and recognizing Him as our Master, we are not ignoring the Father. Likewise in recognizing order in the Church we are not ignoring the Father or the Son. And in serving an earthly master, we are not to think of this service as conflicting with the service of our Heavenly Father and of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are to see that we have been directed to provide things honest and decent in the sight of all men.—Romans 12:17.

NOVEMBER 4

He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant—Phil. 2:7.

As no man is able to serve two masters and satisfy both, and do justice to both, their interests conflicting, likewise we cannot please God and serve God and righteousness and at the same time be acceptable to the Adversary and those who are in harmony with him who now rules in this present dispensation, the "prince of this world." All the Lord's consecrated people, those who would lay up treasures in heaven and be rich toward God, must be willing to become of no reputation among those who are not consecrated, and who, whatever their professions, are really serving Mammon, selfishness, the present life, and not sacrificing these interests to the attainment of the Kingdom—Z '00, 318 (R 2715).

This verse and its preceding and following verses properly translated are among the strongest of the Bible to show that Jesus not only was not Almighty God, but that He gave up His prehuman nature and office to become a man; and therefore, while on earth was not a God-man, but before His begetting of the Spirit was only a perfect, sinless man. The properly translated expression, "He emptied Himself by having taken the form of a servant," means His giving up His prehuman nature and office with their glory; and the expression, "having become in the likeness of men," means His taking human nature. Thus He became exactly in nature and quality an equivalent to Father Adam; and this made it possible for Him to become the Ransom for Adam and his race—P '26, 156, 157.

Parallel passages: John 1:14; 2 Cor. 8:9; Heb. 2:9-18; Rom. 5:18, 19; Isa. 42:1; 52:13-15; 53:11; Matt. 20:27, 28; Luke 22:27; John 13:14.

Hymns: 168, 167, 308, 96, 139, 166, 141.

Poems of Dawn, 27: *Christ Within*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 35 (R 5842).

Questions: What effect did Christ's abasing Himself have on me this week? How? Why?

CHRIST WITHIN

A LIVING Christ, of wondrous birth,
Who trod the dreary paths of earth,
Shedding abroad His holy light
Through the deep gloom of sin's dark night.

A *dying Christ*, whose precious blood
Seals the poor sinner's peace with God;
And fills the soul with fullest love,
Like to the joy prepared above.

A Christ ascended—all is done,
A world redeemed, a victory won.
With angel hosts, a glorious throng,
We'll sing with joy salvation's song.

A living Christ our spirits need,
A loving Christ our souls to feed;
A dying Christ, our ransom He,
A risen Christ to set us free.

This, too, our need—a *Christ within*,
A life with God, afar from sin,
A Christ whose love our hearts shall fill,
And quite subdue our wayward will.

R5842: WHAT IS EMBODIED IN TRUE HUMILITY

"Doing nothing from party-spirit or vain-glory, but in humility esteeming others as excelling yourselves."—Philippians 2:3, Diaglott.

LOWLINESS of mind, humility, is a mental quality which enables its possessor to look up with appreciation, not only to God, but also to earthly beings, recognizing their good qualities. The Apostle urges that this lowliness of mind should be in all of God's people; this fact proves it to be a quality that demands careful cultivation.

Not all of the Lord's people are lowly in mind. Some of them think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. Some of them may be proud of having the Truth or of their ability to serve the Truth. Any such pride is very objectionable in the sight of the Lord, and indicates that its possessor has a very small mind; for, with a proper estimate of matters, the best of us can see that we have nothing of which to be proud, nothing of which to boast. If we have received anything of the Lord, we should boast of our receipts, instead of glorying in something as if we had attained it of ourselves.

So the Lord's people should spend earnest effort to stimulate and encourage humility. Some have this quality naturally; but the larger number have to contend against the reverse tendency—self-esteem, self-exaltation, pride—a feeling that they are superior to others.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION

When we come to consider St. Paul's injunction, "in humility esteeming others as excelling yourselves," it is a question as to just what the Apostle meant. Those who have come into Christ should make progress, and should therefore feel that they are better than they were before they came into Christ. Those who have come into Christ know that they

are not lower than all others. Evidently the Apostle did not mean that the Lord's people should rate themselves as inferior to other men. In his own case he felt that he was the chief of sinners, because he had been an open opposer of the Truth; and Jesus had said that whosoever should injure one of the least of His disciples would transgress seriously. We cannot say, therefore, that we are the chief of all sinners. We think that few of the Lord's people could say, I am the chief of sinners—either from the standpoint of committing crime or from that of persecuting the Church. We are not to bear false witness against ourselves.

In what way, then, are we to understand the Apostle's injunction? In this way: We are to realize that no two of the Lord's people are just alike. If we have the right focus upon the matter, we shall think of our own talents in a humble manner. We shall think, "I have something of this quality or that talent or grace; and therefore I have much responsibility to the Lord. I wonder whether I am using as faithfully as I could, this talent which I think is greater than that of my neighbor or my brother. Though they may have less than I have, they may be using all that they have with more resolute purpose to succeed than I am using what I have. If this be so, then he is better than I am, in this respect."

A PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD BRETHREN

As we look around in the Lord's family, we are bound to see the weaknesses and frailties of its various members. We are not to allow our thoughts to dwell too much upon their undesirable qualities, however, but are to remember all their good ones, especially their loyalty of heart. With ourself personally, it is always a recommendation in any one that God has called and accepted him. Whenever we see one who has come into the Truth, we say to ourself, "Well, no matter what he may be according to the flesh, God saw in his *heart* something good, noble and true; and since God is dealing with him as a son, he is therefore to be esteemed as a brother." Although we might not be able to esteem that man highly according to his natural qualities, yet we would do him good as we had opportunity. He might not be one whom we would select as a companion; yet God may esteem that brother more highly than He does us. Realizing this we would try to keep very humble and to learn whatever helpful lessons we might be able to get from that brother.

In all persons there are certain qualities that may be esteemed and appreciated; even as the old lady said that she could wish that others had as much *perseverance* as Satan. We are to appreciate good traits whenever we see them in others. We do not know whether in the Lord's sight they may not be more noble, more self-sacrificing, more lowly in mind than ourselves. Our duty is plain. We are not able to read the heart, and hence we are to think kindly and generously of all those whom God has brought into His family. "Love beareth all things, ... endureth all things." "As we have opportunity, therefore, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them of the Household of Faith."—1 Corinthians 13:7; Galatians 6:10.

HUMILITY THE PATH TO GLORY

The Apostles Peter and James also emphasize the necessity on the part of the Lord's people that they be clothed with humility. They tell us that this grace is indispensable to those who would abide in the Father's favor; for God resists the proud, while He continually shows favor to those who are of humble spirit. Thus He encourages humility and discourages pride. (1 Peter 5:5; James 4:6.) We can see a reason for this course. The Almighty sees that we have nothing whatever of which to be proud or to boast. Whatever we have has been of the Lord's providence, or favoring circumstances.

The Scriptures give some marked instances of the evil results of pride. Lucifer, one of the very highest of spirit beings, became proud and vain in his imagination, and encouraging these evil qualities he lost his exalted position, having become Satan, the adversary of God. If Mother Eve had possessed the proper humility she would have said, when tempted of the serpent, I will not listen to this suggestion to disobey my Creator; He knows what is for my highest good, and I therefore submit myself to Him who knows all things. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."—Prov. 16:18.

In contrast, we have given to us a beautiful illustration of the opposite spirit—humility—in the case of the Logos. We are shown how He humbled Himself, and how God has highly exalted Him—to the very position which Satan coveted. So if we are fully obedient to the Lord, the results with us will be as with the Lord Jesus, a great blessing, a high exaltation. After presenting this argument, the Apostle says, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—1 Peter 5:6.

The Heavenly Father has deeper love for those who are humble. This is the reason why we should humble ourselves. Since we find that "God resisteth the proud," and that humility is one of the basic principles of a properly crystallized character, we should more and more seek to develop this grace and attain to the attitude in which God can give us the greatest blessing.

THE "SOUND MIND" IS HUMBLE

To humble ourselves does not necessarily mean to think that we have no talent, no power, no ability. Such an attitude would be foolishness. But we should think soberly of ourselves. We should think of all our powers as coming from God. So if we find that we have some blessings more than our neighbor or our brother or our sister, let us be thankful; but let us not for a moment think that we have anything to make us proud. It is a *gift*. We should appreciate the gift, but we should not be puffed up over its possession. The fact that we have received the gift indicates that we *lacked* it, needed it.

The one who has naturally a proud heart, but who brings himself to the point of submission, manifests humility. If, on the other hand, one who by nature has too low an estimate of himself, will submit himself to God, the Father will show him the proper attitude of mind. The Apostle speaks of those who receive the Holy Spirit as having the "spirit of a sound mind." In proportion as we seek to become acquainted with God and to

submit ourselves to His will, in that same proportion we become balanced in mind. We become more and more sane, if you please. He who receives the mind of Christ, the mind of God, the holy mind, is instructed more thoroughly by the Word. Thus we are getting the balance of a sound mind, the spirit of a sound mind. Our reasoning faculties become more developed as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Truth.

ILLUSTRATION OF TRUE SUBMISSION

No one can come to the Father except through full consecration. We must admit that we need the Master, and that without Him we can do nothing. So we take this position: "I am nothing but a sinner; I know that I am imperfect, that I have nothing which I have not received. God provides everything; whatever I have is a gift from Him. Knowing all this, I gratefully accept these things, and humble myself under His mighty hand."

The world says, "No! I will not submit myself; if I need any punishment I will take what is coming to me." Such is the spirit of a worldly heart that has not yet learned its need and its impotence. But the spirit of a consecrated heart is that of submission to the will of the Lord. Such recognize that their only source of help is the Almighty God, through the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior. For those alone who become His disciples can our Lord become the Advocate; and unless He be the Advocate none can be accepted of the Father. We might have a blessing in the Times of Restitution, but nobody can come to God now except through the Advocate.

The terms of discipleship are that we lay down all earthly rights, earthly interests. *Everything* must be submitted before the Father will accept us as disciples of Christ at all, before He will beget us of the Holy Spirit, before we can become a part of the anointed Body of Christ. If we would make any true progress, we must say from the heart, "*Thy* will, not *mine*, be done." We know that God's will is best, whether we understand that will or not. A person with large self-esteem might, as a natural man, think his own will better; but when he comes to see the Truth, he will say, "I have made mistakes before; but now I will do the Lord's way, regardless of what my judgment may be."

Such a course would evidence real humility, no matter how proud-spirited one might be by nature. As he would progress in the good way, and see more clearly wherein he had made mistakes, his humility would increase. So we are to submit ourselves, humble ourselves, have no will of our own, but merely seek the Lord's will.

ILLUSTRATION OF FALSE HUMILITY

There is such a thing as a false submission, which might deceive even the person himself. One might talk a great deal about submission to the will of God, and yet be only *nominally* submitting while he is really doing his own will. We are to watch, therefore, that we are *carrying out* the profession of submission, and that in our daily course of life we are asking, "Is this the course which the Lord wishes me to pursue? Is this the will of God?"

The most submissive will receive the greatest blessings. God will test our submission and our humility. We cannot suppose that our Lord Jesus, who was perfect, did not know that He had perfect powers. But no matter what His own ideas were, He submitted Himself to the Father, and said, "Not My will, but Thine, be done." A man who had no tastes or preferences would be a nonentity. We may know what we would will for ourselves; and yet, knowing this, we are to say to ourselves, "You cannot have your own way about this; you are to seek to know what is the Lord's will concerning you in this matter, and to carry it out, as far as in you lies."

SUBMISSION A TEST OF LOYALTY

Sometimes the Lord's hand is *very heavy*. It was in the case of our Lord Jesus, heavy, *pressed down*. But when the Lord felt the Father's hand pressing down, He meekly bowed Himself beneath the weight, in humble acquiescence to the will of the One whose purpose He had come to carry out. But the Hand did not crush Him, although it seemed to do so. Instead of being a crushing, it was the Hand of Love, testing His obedience to the full. When His obedience was fully tested, the same Hand lifted Him up and "set Him at His own right hand in the Heavenly places; far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."—Ephesians 1:20-23.

Thus it will be with us, if we are found faithful. God will exalt us in due time. But He cannot exalt any who are not humble. Submission indicates faith. We would not submit ourselves unless we had absolute confidence in God. And not *faith* only, but *loyalty* also, is necessary. Therefore the Father tests us in these two qualities. Without these, we would be quite unfit for the Kingdom; and so the various tests of the present time are tests of faith and loyalty to God, and of entire submission to His will. It is to those "who, by *patient continuance* in well doing, *seek for* glory and honor and immortality" that God has promised "eternal life."—Romans 2:7.

We should recognize Divine providences and *look for* them. We should expect God's providential leadings in all of life's affairs. We should not pass through life with the thought that *we* are running this, or regulating that. As a child would look to his parent, or a pupil to his teacher, or as an apprentice to his master, or a maid to her mistress, so should our eyes be looking to the Lord asking His guidance.—Psalm 123:1, 2.

OUR ATTITUDE IN TRIAL

This Divine guidance we should seek in all things. Suppose that some business complication arises. Perhaps one loses his situation. A child of God who had not learned full submission to the Lord's will might immediately blame some one else or find fault with his employers. But the right attitude for the Lord's people would be to say, "The Father knows all about this matter; He could have prevented it and would have done so had it been for my best interests. There is some lesson here for me to learn, and I will look for it." If he should discover that there had been some carelessness on his part, then he must perceive that the logical consequence would be that he lose the position.

But if after careful investigation of matters, he feels that he could not have been more faithful or more loyal to duty, then he should look further and say, "Lord, I do not see wherein I have deserved to lose this situation, but I am looking to Thee, to see what is Thy providence in the matter; for Thou knowest that I must have some kind of employment; and therefore I merely pray, Give me this day my daily bread. I cannot suppose that this is accidental. Surely Thou hast some lesson for me in this experience. I know not what Thy providence may be. Give me, I pray, the necessary grace and wisdom to perceive Thy will."

As he *prays* thus, he should at the same time be *on the lookout* for the Lord's providences and guidance. The child of God who thus acknowledges the Lord, and is faithful to Him in all the details of life's affairs, is the one who will come off victorious and be participator with the Master in His Kingdom. This great exaltation will be given all who are fully submissive to God's will, whether their powers and talents be many or few.

THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF OBEDIENCE

In our context the Apostle Paul urges that the Church cultivate the mind of Christ. He says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." He had been reciting the qualities necessary to the Church in order that they could be acceptable to the Father. Amongst these was an eager desire to please God. The Apostle exhorts all such to pursue the course of humility and submission taken by our Lord as the only proper path for the Master's footstep followers. St. Paul was endeavoring to impress that the mind of Christ was eminently worthy of imitation and painstaking cultivation.

As a further evidence of the Master's great humility, the Apostle brings forcefully to their attention what Jesus was in His prehuman existence. As the Logos, He was in the form of God—the spirit condition. Yet He was not ambitious; He was not self-seeking. On the contrary, He made Himself of no reputation—divested Himself of His former glory and honor, that He might do the will of the Father. His spirit was directly opposite to that of Satan. The Logos thought not to usurp the Father's place, or to claim equality with Him, but manifested a very different disposition—an attitude of humility. Then "let this mind be in you," urges the Apostle. "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." Consider that God has called you with the same High Calling, that you might attain to a place at the right hand of Christ, even as He attained to a place at the Father's right hand. Realizing this, permit this mind of Christ to be in you.

God was not seeking to force this mind upon Christ, nor is He seeking to force it upon us. Our Lord having taken this position of humility, in order to be man's Redeemer, it was needful that He maintain that mind in order to work out the blessed fruitage of patience. Three and one half years were required for Jesus to complete His work; and it was not until after He reached the Cross and could say, "*It is finished,*" that He was "set down with the Father in His Throne." If we have become Jesus' disciples, if we have accepted

the conditions of the High Calling, if we have received this mind, then we are to let, or permit, this mind to work out in us the character-likeness of our Head.

THE UNIVERSAL STANDARD OF OBEDIENCE

We have seen that the Logos did not meditate the usurpation to be equal with God, but humbled Himself. Lucifer took the opposite course. Instead of humbling himself, he said, "I will be like the Most High." (Isaiah 14:14.) Here we have an illustration of what we should not do. It is a principle of the Divine Government that "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—Luke 14:11; 1 Peter 5:6.

Every creature of God, whether angel or man, should have this humble mind. This is the only proper attitude. This test comes during the Gospel Age to only the Lord and the Church. To what extent it may ever come to others is a question. It would seem to be impossible for this test to come to all. Those who have the right disposition will desire to do the Father's will at any cost. Doubtless if any one of the holy angels were allowed the privilege of becoming the Redeemer of a race, he would be glad to do so. We do not know, however, just how it would have been had the angels not seen the result of the obedience of the Logos to the will of the Father.

The world will be subjected to a test during the Millennial Age. The proper attitude for every creature would be to risk everything in the Father's service; it will eventually be the standing of the world of mankind—every one who shall attain everlasting life. We must remember, however, that *Divine Justice* never calls for *self-sacrifice*. It calls for *obedience*; and the obedience of the Church is the extreme of obedience—even "*unto death*." But the Father has offered a reward so high that such obedience has become the standard par excellence throughout the Universe.—Revelation 2:10.

NOVEMBER 5

Having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith—Heb. 10:21, 22.

Let us remember that He who has begun the good work changes never; and that if our hearts are still in harmony with Him, if our faith is still clear and firm in the great atonement, if our consecration is still full and complete, so that we seek not our own wills but His will to be done in our affairs, then we may indeed have the full assurance of faith, because knowing that God is unchangeable, and knowing that we are still in line with His promises and arrangements, we know that all His gracious providences are still being exercised on our behalf. This is full assurance of faith—full confidence in the Lord—Z '00, 170 (R 2642).

As children of God, we have Christ as our High Priest. This guarantees that our ignorance and unwilling weaknesses and faults are all covered; and thus we are enabled to remain in the Lord's favor. This made it possible for the Underpriests to draw near to the golden candlestick, seeing its beautiful light; to the table of shewbread, partaking of its strengthening food; to the incense altar, sacrificing with a sweet-smelling savor; and to the second veil, which, passing by death, they entered into the direct presence of God with faithful and pure hearts and full confidence in the Lord and His provisions. Let us draw near—P '36, 165.

Parallel passages: Heb. 3:1, 6; 4:14, 16; 7:27; 1 Tim. 3:15; Psa. 51:6; 1 John 3:21; John 1:47; Acts 8:37; Heb. 11:1-39; Psa. 118:8, 9; 125:1; Prov. 3:5; Isa. 26:3; 30:15; Mark 9:23, 24; Luke 17:5; Rom. 4:18-21; 15:13; Col. 1:23; Heb. 13:5, 6; Jas. 1:6; 1 Pet. 1:5, 7, 9, 21; 1 John 5:4.

Hymns: 137, 99, 110, 120, 174, 197, 293.

Poems of Dawn, 34: *Jesus*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 88 (R 5424).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? What did I do with it? What were the effects?

JESUS

THE gentle sighing of the wind among the pines,
The joyous singing of the lark at break of day,
The rippling of the water-brooks through cooling shade,
The patter of the softly falling rain at night,
Are sounds less sweet by far than His most precious name.

No art can show a form so gracious and so fair,
No master's hand hath drawn a smile so sweet,
Nor could depict the majesty of that pure brow;

No canvas ever glowed with such a holy light
As shines from His most radiant image in my heart.

The dearest earthly friend may fail in time of need,
The sweetest and the loveliest grow cold at heart,
The nearest may not heed the throbbing heart's sad cry,
The gayest throng may hold the loneliest solitude,
But Jesus, Jesus never fails my call to hear.

Oh, may the music of Thy name more clearly fall
Upon my ears attuned to catch that sweetest sound!
Oh, may Thine image in my heart so bright become
That I by gazing may be changed into the same;
Oh, blessed Jesus, let Thy presence ne'er depart,
Oh, come and reign forevermore within my heart!

R5424: LET US GO ON "IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH"!

"Having an High Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."—

Hebrews 10:21, 22.

THE Apostle Paul is here drawing to the attention of the Church, and especially to those familiar with the Jewish arrangements of that day, the fact that the Aaronic priesthood was only a typical one, designed for a time to illustrate greater things; that God's real Plan was not to be carried out by the Aaronic priesthood from the House of Levi, and that their sacrifices of bulls and goats could not take away sins; but that from year to year this arrangement merely shielded God's typical people—typically covered them—through their Covenant. The Apostle points out that there is to be a greater Priesthood, after the Order of Melchizedek; that our Lord is the Head of this Priesthood, and that the Gospel Church are His members, the under-priesthood. He then asks, why should a better priesthood be needed than the one that God provided in Aaron and his sons? The answer is that they were sinners, and could never really cancel sin; and the blood of those animals possessed no real merit. Those priests themselves never really got back into favor with God. They merely had access into a typical Holy and Most Holy.

But now we have Christ as the Head of this new Order of Priesthood; let us realize our position as under-priests of this order. Our High Priest has entered into the true Most Holy. The evidence of this came in the Pentecostal blessing showing that the Father was well pleased with the sacrifice made by our Lord, and that all things were then ready to permit us also to come near to God, sharing our Redeemer's experiences, that we might later go to Him beyond the veil and share His glory. Seeing that God has thus made all these gracious provisions, and has accepted us as the House of God to take the place of the House of Aaron—and so much greater than his House—let us enter into the real Holy and Most Holy, "with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."

The under-priests were permitted to enter into the Holy, and after the Day of Atonement into the Most Holy. All, in this Gospel Age, who have made consecration to God, and have been begotten of the Spirit, are in the first Holy. Aaron and his sons were a *type* of the true Priesthood; but we are not of the order of Aaron; we are not members of the Aaronic priesthood, but of the Melchizedek Priesthood, under its great High Priest. "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9.

LET US COME WITH TRUE HEARTS

Seeing, then, that we have confidence that God has made this arrangement, confidence to take the proper steps, and have presented our bodies living sacrifices, have gone through the antitypical consecration, and received the begetting of the Holy Spirit, let us begin at once the work of the new Order of Priesthood. There are great things to be accomplished: let us fully enter in with Him—let us become full participators in this work—in everything that God has for us to do. Let us come with true hearts, however, realizing how wonderful are our blessings, how precious is the provision of the covering of our Savior's merit. Let us be true and loyal to this Covenant into which we have entered with God.

The Lord's call under this Covenant is, "Gather My saints together unto Me, those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5.) This call, or invitation, has been going forth during the entire Gospel Age. And all the holy ones, all who have entered into this Covenant, are privileged to have a share in the sacrifice of Christ and to co-labor with Him.

Let us come with full assurance of faith in the sense that we shall have no doubt whatever that God's promises are true and *for us*. The world sees no cause for sacrificing in the present life, and they count us fools all the day long, as the Apostle says. But nevertheless in full assurance of faith, let us go on! Let us loyally press forward unto the end of the way, until we shall be joined to our great High Priest, and enter into His rest!

ANOINTED IN HIM

The anointing of the high priest in the type represented the Divine appointment to office. Aaron was thus anointed of God. The Apostle Paul says that "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron." Even Christ took not this honor upon Himself. God appointed Him, saying, "Thou art a Priest forever, after the Order of Melchizedek." (Hebrews 5:4-6.) God's direct dealings were with the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the One acceptable to the Father. God gave His Holy Spirit to our Lord in fullest degree. Jesus Himself tells us that God gave not His Spirit by measure unto Him, because He was able to receive the Holy Spirit in full measure. Those who are counted as His members are not able to receive the Spirit in full measure, because of their

imperfection. The less fallen man can receive more of the Spirit, and the more fallen man can receive less.

When Christ appeared in the presence of God for us, and applied His merit for those who would offer themselves to become members of His Body, to be associated with Him in the glorious Kingdom work, He received Divine approval and sanction, which was manifested by the begetting by the Holy Spirit of those who had presented themselves in consecration, the Holy Spirit being first given at Pentecost. The Apostle Peter says that God fulfilled His promise to Jesus by granting Him the Holy Spirit to shed forth upon His disciples. (Acts 2:33.) It is *of* the Father, and *by* the Son.

It was not necessary that the Heavenly Father should pour out His Holy Spirit upon each individual member of the body. We understand that the picture given in the type is quite complete. The Holy Spirit being poured out upon the Head of the great High Priest, and flowing down over the skirts of His garments, all His Body is thus anointed. We each receive our share of the anointing when we come into the Body, and under the Robe.

FULL ASSURANCE BASED ON KNOWLEDGE

Speaking to those who are privileged to come to God in prayer, the Apostle says, "Let *us* draw near in full assurance of faith." He is speaking to the *House of God* class. Natural Israel were of the House of God, too, but they were servants. The servants belong to the House, of course, but not in the very special sense, as do the children. We have the suggestion given us that Moses was faithful as a servant over his House, but that the Church of Christ are a House of Sons, and that Christ is Head over this House. It is this House of Sons that may draw near to God. The assurance with which these may rightly approach is dependent upon certain conditions here indicated. They must have a *true heart*, and are not to be double-minded. Entire heart loyalty must be theirs; they must fully demonstrate that they meant what they said when they gave their lives to God. Then they may come to the Lord with holy boldness, in full assurance of faith. All the steps of God's true people are steps of faith, of realization of His care. But there is a *full* assurance of faith in contrast with a *lesser* faith. A faith that is only partial will bring us somewhat near to God. A faith that is strong will bring us nearer. But a *full assurance* of faith is that faith which, if retained, will bring us off "more than conquerors," and make us at last members in full of the Royal Priesthood—in glory.

This full assurance of faith cannot be attained in a day. It requires quite a degree of information. And God has provided this information by instructing us in His Word as to what Christ did for us, and what He is *willing* to do; why He died for us, etc. All this is furnished us as a basis for faith. Then to further strengthen our faith, we have all the exceeding great and precious promises, and His daily providences over us. Therefore this fully consecrated class may draw near, and have the full assurance that they may attain all the glorious things to which God has invited them—to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

FULL ASSURANCE NECESSARY TO GOD'S APPROVAL

The Apostle intimates that without this full assurance of faith the child of God cannot come close to Him. Only those who trust the Father as a little child would trust its earthly parent, can expect to make good progress in the narrow way and have the courage and confidence which it is the privilege of all who are His to have, and without which we cannot have the perfect peace and rest of heart promised. "According to your *faith* be it unto you," is the promise. The desire to draw nearer and nearer to God must be in *our heart*; else we shall fail to go on and attain our privilege in Christ. Such a desire is a manifestation of our hunger and thirst after righteousness, which the Lord expects to see before He makes good to such His engagement that they shall be *filled*.

There are definite conditions specified in the Word as necessary to continued progress along this line. As we cannot draw close to the Lord except through this full assurance, neither can we *have* the assurance unless our hearts are kept "sprinkled from an evil conscience," or a consciousness of evil; for, as the Apostle also declares, "If our own heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." (1 John 3:20.) We may be sure that if our course as New Creatures in Christ is condemned by our own conscience it would also be condemned by God.

Therefore, if the child of God would draw very near, and would have the blessed realization of the Father's smile of approval continually, he must seek to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men—a conscience which can truthfully say, I am striving to do that which would be pleasing to the Lord, that which is in full harmony with my Covenant of Sacrifice; and I am striving also to do that which would justly have the approval of righteous men. Nothing short of this is at all permissible in those who have consecrated themselves to be members of the Royal Priesthood, to sacrifice their lives in the Lord's service that they may reign with Him.

CAUSE AND REMEDY FOR LACK OF FAITH

He who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. (Philippians 1:6.) But how few children of God, comparatively, have this "full assurance of faith" which is our glorious privilege! How few can say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and *I shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever!*" Surely, by God's grace I shall ultimately gain the Heavenly Kingdom and the glorious things which He has promised to those who love Him. The few who can thus enter fully into sympathy with the Apostle Paul and the Prophet David in their expressions of confidence have therein a great joy, a great blessing, a great rest of heart which none others possess.

Let us therefore inquire why it is that the number who thus enter into the rest of faith is so small. What are the hindrances to others, and how can these hindrances be removed? How can each one of the children of God enjoy fully this, his blessed patrimony? Many say, or *think* if they do not *say*, Oh, that I could feel sure that God's goodness and mercy

would continue with me to the end! Oh, that I could remove my doubts of gaining the Kingdom, of being ultimately "more than conqueror"!

What is the difficulty with these? Why do they not have the "full assurance of faith" of their acceptance? We answer that their difficulty is a lack of trust in God; and such a lack is not pleasing to Him, for "without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He *is*, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6.) Moreover, this lack of faith is a constant hindrance to their overcoming; as it is written: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our FAITH." (1 John 5:4.) The Christian who has not the shield of faith, and a *large* one, is continually at a disadvantage before the Adversary, and all the hosts of evil.

Then let each one who realizes a lack in this direction pray earnestly, as the Apostles of old, "Lord, increase our faith!" And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, let such a one cultivate such faith in his or her own heart. (1) Let him refresh his memory continually with the precious promises of the Word, becoming very familiar with these. (2) Let him seek more and more to remember that, having made a covenant with the Lord, these promises are *his*; and in his *heart* and with his *lips* let him claim them as *his* before the Throne of Grace, with thanksgiving. Let him claim them in his *thoughts*, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

When trials or difficulties arise, he should call to mind these precious promises, remembering that they *belong to* him, because God has given these promises to such as love Him and have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5; Malachi 3:17.) He should resolve that henceforth he will trust the Word of his Heavenly Father implicitly. If some seeming accident befall him, let him call to mind the promise, "All things work together for good to them that love God, who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28.) Let him thus assure himself that the *seeming* accident could not have occurred had God not seen a way to make it the channel of a needed lesson or blessing to him.

Let us never forget that He who has begun this good work in us *changes never*, and that if we keep our hearts in harmony with Him, if our faith is still firm and clear in the great Atonement made for our sins, and we continually renew our consecration to Him, keeping our all on the altar of sacrifice, letting the Lord consume it in His own way, seeking not our own will, our own way, but *His will alone*, we have every reason to have full confidence that this good work in us will be finished, that we shall enter with joy into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord, and shall hear His blessed words of approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

NOVEMBER 6

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service—Rom. 12:1.

To render all we have to the Lord's service is not only a reasonable thing, but an offering far too small—far less than what we would like to render to Him who has manifested such compassion and grace toward us. And we should feel thus, even if there were no rewards attached to such a consecration of ourselves. But inasmuch as God has attached great rewards and blessings, we should feel not only that a refusal to accept would be an indication of non-appreciation of Divine mercy but also an indication of weakness of mind, of judgment, which is unable to balance the trifling and transitory pleasures of self-will for a few short years, with an eternity of joy and blessing and glory, in harmony with the Lord—Z '00, 170 (R 2642).

This exhortation is not given to induce us to consecrate in the hope of getting thereby a great reward; but rather to do so out of a thorough trust in God, a thankful love for the good already received and an appreciative love for the good that God is and does. These qualities, wrought in us by the Truth seen and experienced in justification, enable us to render the Lord our little all, not only in its presentation but also unto its full consummation in death as a sacrifice. If we exercise the power, love, justice and wisdom that the Lord daily works in us, we will be enabled to carry out our consecration unto God's glory, others' profit and our eternal welfare—P '30, 183.

Parallel passages: 2 Cor. 10:1; Psa. 50:5, 14; 45:10, 11; Prov. 23:26; Matt. 13:44-46; 16:24; Rom. 6:13, 16; 1 Cor. 6:13, 20; 2 Cor. 8:5; Heb. 10:7; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9.

Hymns: 160, 114, 134, 191, 244, 8, 14.

Poems of Dawn, 37: *My Sacrifice*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 86 (R 5422).

Questions: Have I been carrying out my consecration this week? Under what circumstances was my consecration tested? How have I been meeting the calls on my consecration? What has helped or hindered me? What are the effects?

MY SACRIFICE

LAI D on Thine altar, O my Lord Divine,
Accept this gift to-day, for Jesus' sake.
I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine,
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make;
But here I bring, within my trembling hand,
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small;
And Thou alone, O Lord, canst understand
How, when I yield Thee this, I yield mine all.

Hidden therein Thy searching gaze canst see
Struggles of passions, visions of delight,
All that I have, or am, or fain would be—
Deep loves, fond hopes, and longings infinite.
It hath been wet with tears, and dimmed with sighs,
Clenched in my grasp till beauty hath it none.
Now, from Thy footstool, where it vanquished lies,
The prayer ascendeth—"May Thy will be done!"

Take it, O Father, ere my courage fail;
And merge it so in Thine own will that I
May never have a wish to take it back;
When heart and courage fail, to Thee I'd fly.
So change, so purify, so like Thine own
Make Thou my will, so graced with love Divine,
I may not know or feel it as mine own,
But recognize my will as one with Thine.

R5422: OUR REASONABLE SERVICE

"I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Romans 12:1.

THIS exhortation of St. Paul's is based upon the preceding statements of the eleventh chapter of this same Epistle, as is shown by the connecting word *therefore—because of* those things recited in that chapter. The eleventh chapter tells of the mercies of God toward both Natural Israel and Spiritual Israel—not so much to the world. But the *tenth* chapter takes up in elaborate form the mercies of God toward all His creatures. In this Epistle the Apostle is addressing those who had been Gentiles. In view of these mercies of God (His Plan of Salvation and the call of some of the Gentiles to take the places in the Body of Christ, lost by Natural Israel) St. Paul exhorts his hearers to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable.

The question naturally arises, Whom did the Apostle address? He evidently is using these words as an exhortation, not to the world, but to believers. The introduction to the Epistle indicates that it was written to those already consecrated. But evidently some connected with the Church at Rome had not yet made a consecration. Some who were believers, who had come to a knowledge of the Lord and had counted the cost of self-sacrifice, but who had not given themselves fully to the Lord, might yet become brethren in the Truth in the full sense. The Apostle's words would apply equally to both classes—those who had presented their bodies living sacrifices, and those contemplating doing so. It would have been fully as proper to say, Brethren, you who have already given

yourselves to the Lord, I beseech you that you fulfil your Vow of Consecration; for your bodies are holy and acceptable to God.

The Heavenly Father never forces anybody; but He tells them that He is willing to accept sacrifices, and that now is the acceptable time to present them. He sets forth the fact that self-denial and sacrifice are the only terms upon which one can come into fellowship with Him. But nowhere does He urge or command any one to make a consecration. To do so would be to *change* the matter from *sacrifice* to *obligation*; and the very thought of *sacrifice* is in opposition to *requirement*.

THE TERMS OF DISCIPLESHIP

Our best example of what we should do is shown by our Lord and the Apostles, the chief members of God's royal family. Our Lord did not seek to entrap any into His service—as we see done today. On the contrary, He proceeded along high and noble lines. He said, "Come unto Me, all ye that are oppressed and heavy-laden." This is an appeal to reason. If you have found that you are sin-sick, come unto Me—I have the will and the way to help you to come to the Father.

When talking to the young ruler of the synagogue, our Lord set forth the terms of discipleship. He did not say, Never mind; do not make it too serious a matter. On the contrary, He stated just what are the terms of consecration. No man *could* be His disciple unless he would surrender *all*. To this rich young man our Lord showed that with all his morality there was inconsistency. He possessed wealth, and should use that wealth to the glory of the Lord. He must not be selfish, or he could not be Christ's disciple.

The young man might have said, I have some children for whom I must make provision. But the Lord said, Give all that you have to God. A parent can consecrate his children, so far as he is concerned. The Lord would not ask any one to do that which he was unable to do. But he said, "Take up *your* cross and follow Me," if you would be My disciple.—Mark 10:21.

Again our Lord said, "He that putteth his hand to the plow, and looketh back, is not fit for the Kingdom." (Luke 9:62.) We should make up our mind to use all of our powers, or else stand aside. The Lord's method should be our guide. We should not try to entrap any one or resort to hocus-pocus to convince any one. We should not plead what there is to be gained in a material way by becoming a Christian. We should tell people that there is no other way to come into Christ but by the way of the cross. We cannot reach Him in any other way. It is the *Lord's* way or *no* way. We must bear the cross, as He bore it. We believe that we do the people more good by setting forth the Message with no uncertain sound than trying to entrap them. Nevertheless, in putting before them the trials and cross, we should also put before them the glory to follow.

TEXT APPLIED TO THE CONSECRATED

To those who have already made a consecration the thought would be, You have entered into a Covenant with God to follow Jesus. You have given up your own human will. Remember that this includes your mortal body. Continue the work of presenting your body—of dying daily. Keep before your mind this Covenant of Sacrifice; for it is not yet fulfilled. The mere *promise* to fulfil a covenant is not *fulfilling* it.

The Father begets us of the Holy Spirit, and gives us the great privileges that belong to those who have become New Creatures in Christ. Then it is for us to go forward, and day by day lay down our lives in His service. It would be appropriate, therefore, for the Apostle to say to such, Lay down your lives daily. Remember that it is your mortal bodies which you are to sacrifice in the Lord's service. It is yourselves as old creatures, human beings, and not as New Creatures, that are being sacrificed. Yours is a living sacrifice in the sense that this body, reckonedly passed out of sin, is being continually sacrificed. It is not given to *preserve*, or to be your everlasting possession; but it is your covenant and privilege to accomplish the sacrifice of your flesh. Therefore I beseech you to do this.

TEXT APPLIED TO THE TENTATIVELY JUSTIFIED

To those whose justification has not been vitalized, the text might mean, You are desirous of serving God. This is indicated in your attending the meetings of the Church. The fact that you assemble with the saints of this congregation signifies that you love holy things—that you desire to know the will of God. Now then, brethren, I beseech you to make a full consecration of yourselves to God. Consider your body as a living sacrifice—not that you are to commit suicide and destroy your body, but that you are to esteem your body a living sacrifice, day by day using your strength and your life in the Lord's service.

The exhortation, "Present your bodies," then, would seem to be applicable both to the consecrated and to those who are following on to know the Lord. The next statement should be understood to be in harmony—"holy and acceptable to God." If this statement be taken in relation to those who are already consecrated, then the Apostle is saying, This vitalization of your justification which the Lord has granted you has constituted you holy. And because the Lord counts you holy, and yourselves wholly acceptable to Him, you should continue to do good works—complete the good work which you have begun. The sacrifice being esteemed of God holy and acceptable, the results will be grand and glorious.

This exhortation, viewed from the standpoint of one who has not completed his consecration, might be understood to mean, if you take this step of consecration, remember that then the merit of Christ will be imputed to you, and that through the arrangement which He has made in Christ God is willing to accept you.

CONSECRATION TO DEATH MOST REASONABLE

Every one who recognizes God's mercies and blessings finds it a "reasonable service" to sacrifice the earthly things for the precious privilege of serving Him. If it was a

reasonable service for Jesus to leave the Heavenly glory, to become a man, and to sacrifice Himself unto death, then surely ours is most reasonable. We, being imperfect, have very little to give; and when there is an opportunity for showing our appreciation of the Heavenly Father, then we should make haste to use it.

The Father made a proposition to the Lord Jesus, and it is not to be supposed that He would suggest anything but a reasonable service. To have asked Jesus to sacrifice His life for humanity without any reward of a future life would have been a most unreasonable thing. The Father set before the Redeemer a great joy, to be the recompense of His obedience. And so with us. The Lord does not invite us to sacrifice ourselves at the present time without any reward from Him. He tells us that if we do this He will make us joint-heirs with His Son, participators with Him in all the joys of the Kingdom.

CONSECRATION NOT THE END OF OUR WORK

The term *Brethren* may be viewed from two different standpoints. On the one hand, we may apply it to those who are in the state of prospective justification, in a justified attitude of mind, and whose justification is growing by every step they take toward God. On the other hand, it would refer to those who have become brethren in the fullest sense—who have taken the step of consecration, and whose consecration has been accepted by the Father through the Lord Jesus. With these there is a continual, a daily presentation. This morning we presented ourselves before the Lord and asked His blessing on the day. It is a presentation day by day and hour by hour. It is a constant surrender of self-will, in this way and in that way—a daily waving of our offering before the Lord. So it was with our Lord Jesus. He not only made the full consecration at the beginning, but day by day He laid down His life, until the sacrifice was completed on Calvary.

For one to make a consecration of his time and his talents, and then to withhold his offering, would insure his not gaining the great prize for which the Father invited him to run. The Great Company will be made up of those who have presented their bodies, but who neglected their opportunities for laying down their lives—their time, influence, money, all—in the Lord's service. This neglect will lose them their place in the Throne, their privilege of being a part of the Bride class. The Bride will be made up of those who not only have presented their bodies in the beginning, but have faithfully continued that presentation unto death.

CONSTRAINED BY GOD'S MERCIES

The Apostle states the reason why we should make this presentation of ourselves as being the "mercies of God"—"I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies." God's mercies are to a certain extent over all. He sends His sunshine and His rain upon the evil as well as upon the good. For many centuries God's special mercies were granted only to the Jews. But the arrangement of God's Plan is such that Gentiles, as well as Jews, may now come into God's favor. God broke down the middle wall of partition through Christ, and thus gave all people an opportunity to come back into harmony with

Him and to have Him as their Father, their Life-Giver, and through Christ to share His blessings.

As many as see and hear and have the eyes of their understanding opened, should consider this a reason for a full consecration, a full surrender, to the Lord. It is truly a most reasonable service, as the Apostle points out; and the prize which He attaches to the matter makes it unspeakably desirable and precious. It would be very *un* reasonable to accept God's marvelous favors and then neglect to live up to the conditions attached to them. If we really *believe* God, if we have a proper faith in His exceeding great and precious promises, we will joyfully and faithfully meet the requirements.

A lady said to us recently: You put more stress on godly living than we in our Church have done. You say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." You put a special stress on *believing*. Yes, we replied, this word *believe* has a most important bearing on the entire matter. If we should say to you that if on your way home today you would stop at a certain house, of a certain number, you would find, in a particular corner under the steps, a little bag, and that it contained valuable treasure which should be yours—if you believed our words you would go and get that bag. If you said that you believed us, and then went another way altogether, we would be sure that you had not believed us. Your course would prove it.

Now the Lord has offered us the opportunity of being joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord in "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away." If we *believe* this fact, we will seek to know just what the conditions are. Whoever *really believes* will find that the conditions are very easy in comparison with the great reward. But if he fails to put forth his greatest effort to win this great prize, he will show that he has not *believed* the Message; for if he recognizes the offer and *believes* it, he will surely be eager to lay aside every weight and encumbrance and run patiently to the end to obtain the crown.—Hebrews 12:1, 2.

THE COMPLETENESS OF OUR OFFERING

It is, therefore, a reasonable service. The Apostle tells us the conditions. All who would have this great blessing must offer themselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God. It is ours to present our bodies. It is not the New Creature who does the presenting; there is no New Creature at the time the body is presented. Our natural mind discerned from the Message of the Lord that there is a more excellent way—of harmony with the Lord—and we desired to come thus into harmony with Him. And that new, or changed, will presents our earthly interests and *all that we have* in sacrifice. We are altogether *human* when we offer ourselves to the Lord. We are then begotten to a new mind, a new hope, and thus are New Creatures.

While we present ourselves to God, we do not come to Him directly with our presentation. We come through the great High Priest—as in the type, the offering of the Lord's goat was presented by the high priest. We come to the Father through the

Redeemer. We do not offer a justified sacrifice, but come with all our sins, for cleansing in that fountain opened for us. The sentiment of our hearts is:

"Just as I am without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee—
O Lamb of God, I come!"

But God could not accept a sacrifice in that imperfect condition; it is only as we come through the Priest that He recognizes us. If we were *perfect*, we might come in our own name; but *we are not* perfect, and so we come only through this High Priest, Jesus. The great High Priest then imputes His merit, and includes our sacrifice as a part of His own. The Divine blessing then comes upon us—we are begotten of the Holy Spirit. Thenceforth we are New Creatures in Christ. We have been presented in God's way and have been accepted.

REFUSAL TO ACCEPT SHOWS LACK OF APPRECIATION

Now we are dead; and our life is hid with Christ in God. We presented our bodies, and they were made *living* sacrifices: they were then received by God and were slain with Christ and we arose to walk in newness of life. By the *body* is meant also all the earthly interests, both present, past and future—every interest that we ever had or might ever have. Such a one gives up all the hope or right he might otherwise have had in a future Restitution. The covenant is a complete one. The sacrifice of such became holy and acceptable to God as soon as the merit of Jesus was imputed; and our offering continues to be acceptable to the end. And as day by day we lay down our lives in the Lord's service, it brings us more and more of the Lord's blessings, and we are more and more filled with His Spirit.

To render all that we have in the service of the Lord is not only a most reasonable thing, but an offering far too small. It is far less than we would gladly render to Him who has manifested toward us such wondrous compassion and grace. When God has offered us so great a reward and blessing in return for our poor lives, we should feel that a refusal to accept this offer would be an indication not only of a pitiful lack of appreciation of Infinite Goodness, but also a weakness of mind. It would show a puerility of judgment which is unable to weigh and compare the trifling and transitory pleasures of self-will for this brief life with an eternity of joy and blessing and glory on the Divine plane, far above angels and principalities and powers and every name that is named, next to our glorious Lord and Head—a station so glorious, so exalted, that no human mind can grasp its infinitude. Let us be faithful—even unto death!

NOVEMBER 7

And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God—Rev. 20:4.

Although this beheading is figurative and not literal, it nevertheless has a deep significance. ... It signifies, not only death to *self-will* but also to be cut off from all other heads, governments and law-givers, and to recognize no "Head" but Jesus, whom God has appointed to be the Head of the Church, which is His Body—the Head of every member of it. It means not only to be *cut off* from institutional heads and authorities but also to cease to have heads and wills of our own, and to accept, instead, the Headship, the will, of our Lord Jesus. It is the same thought that is drawn to our attention by the Apostle in Rom. 6:3, where he declares that the Little Flock have been baptized into the Body of Christ, as members of that *Body*, under the one Head, Christ, by being baptized into His death—a full consecration of the wills, and a full laying down of the lives, faithfully unto death—Z '00, 285 (R 2699).

The beheading here meant cannot refer to a literal beheading; for that would exclude Jesus, Peter, Stephen, John and Thomas from the Little Flock, of whom we have inspired evidence that they overcame. Doubtless it would exclude many others from it who are of it. It must, therefore, be a symbolic beheading, *i.e.*, a giving up of natural hearts, minds and wills, so that Jesus can be taken in His heart, mind and will as the Head. We undergo and maintain this beheading on account of our allegiance to the Truth, which describes God and Christ in relation to our and the world's salvation—P '35, 171.

Parallel passages: Matt. 13:44-46; Rom. 6:3-11, 16, 19; 12:1-5; 2 Cor. 8:12; Matt. 7:21-23; Mark 10:35-39; 12:42, 43; Acts 18:5; Rom. 10:9-11; 1 John 1:6; Rev. 6:11.

Hymns: 322, 134, 8, 259, 208, 191, 299.

Poems of Dawn, 256: *In Due Time*.

Tower Reading: Z '01, 227 (R 2844).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? What were the circumstances and results?

"IN DUE TIME"

IN Thy due time, our Heavenly Father, shall be
known
Thy gracious plan, which now is hid
Except unto thy saints alone.
O glorious day, when Thine All-wisdom, justice,
power and love,
The whole creation shall approve!

In *His* due time, O blessed Jesus, Thou shalt see

The travail of Thy soul, and shalt
Be satisfied eternally;
Thine agony on Calvary,—the price that Thou didst
give,
Shall cause the dead again to live!

In God's due time, O pilgrim on the "narrow way,"
Thy painful journey ended, darkest
Night shall turn to brightest day;
Thine every trial, then, thine every tear, shall prove
a gem
To beautify thy diadem!

In His due time, O weary, groaning, sin-cursed Earth,
The Lord will wipe away thy tears,
And bring the promised "second birth;"
And there shall be no pain, nor any death in that
blest day
When sin and sorrow flee away!

In His due time angelic choirs shall sing again
In grander strain that heavenly message,
"Peace on earth, good will toward men!"
And every knee shall bow, and every loving heart
confess
The Christ who comes to reign and bless!

R2844: "BEHEADED FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS."

"And I saw the souls [persons] of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God; ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."—Rev. 20:4.

ALL constituting the Kingdom class are here referred to as beheaded—every member of the glorified Church must, eventually, have this experience, whatever it signifies. But we reflect that our Lord was not beheaded and, so far as history shows, few, if any, of the apostles were literally beheaded; indeed, very few, if any, of the Lord's saints, from Pentecost to the present time, have died by decapitation. We are to remember, however, that this statement is from the symbolical book, and is therefore a figure of speech, a word-picture, and its meaning must be sought for accordingly.

The Apostle gives us the key, saying, "The head of every man is Christ; the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." (1 Cor. 11:3.) As a woman who becomes a wife accepts her husband as the head of the family, so the Church accepts Christ as its head, and each member of the Church thus comes into relationship with the

Lord as a member of his body—not the head; and all of these, to be acceptable as members of the figurative body of Christ, must be will-less, headless: their own wills must be surrendered, so that, like their Lord, they can say, "Not my will, but thine, be done." They must be headless in the sense of ignoring their own wills, being dead to self and actuated henceforth by the will of the head of the body, Christ Jesus. His will, his mind, his spirit, must dwell in each member of the body, and abound, if it would abide a member of his body, the Church. Thus, as the wife loses her own name, and accepts the name of her husband and his headship, so each member of the bride of Christ must lose his or her individuality in order to be accepted as the Bride of Christ. It is this self-surrender to Christ on the part of his Church that is represented in the symbolism of the text before us.

One of the prime hindrances to Christian growth is the failure to discern the completeness of the sacrifice requisite in those who would be accounted as members of the elect Church, the body of Christ. No one can be of this elect number, to live and reign with Christ in his Millennial Kingdom, who has not been thus beheaded. We often think of this when we hear well-meaning Christian people say, "I have a mind of my own; I do my own thinking." It is certainly better, in many instances, that one should do his own thinking than that he should let another man or another woman do it for him; than that he should allow a body of men to make a creed for him, even tho that body of men, professing to be his head, be called a Synod or a Presbytery or a Conference, and desire that the individual shall submit himself to its headship, and become a member of some earthly church. Such sectarian systems—heads and members—are false bodies of Christ, which the real Head never recognized.

It is required of every one who would be counted in as a member of the true Church, that he should be not only beheaded (lose his self-will), but that he shall be *united to the true Head* of the Church and recognize himself as a member of the *true body of Christ*—"the Church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven." Membership in the Presbyterian *body*, or in the Methodist *body*, or in the Lutheran *body*, or in the Baptist *body*, or in any other human institution, does not count anything, for the simple reason that Christ never recognized any of them, never founded any of them, never joined or agreed to join any of them as *their head*. There are not *many* bodies of Christ, but only *one*, the Church of the living God—there is one body, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. The Lord is not the head of these human institutions, which call themselves his bodies, and membership in them will avail nothing as respects the reward of joint-heirship with Christ in the Kingdom; but rather (as intimated in the words of this verse which we have omitted), the worship, reverence, of these human systems, when once they are seen to be counterfeits of the true body, would be a barrier to a place in the true body and in the Kingdom glories.

As Jesus was not the founder or institutor of these bodies, neither is he their head; neither were the apostles members of any of these human sects or parties, and all of the Lord's true saints who, under Satan's misrepresentations, have been led to consider these human institutions as bodies of Christ, and to join them, while really in heart holding an allegiance to Christ as far above them, as the only true authority and Head—these are

now urged to come out of all these various systems; and the light of present truth is for the purpose of showing them where they are, and permitting them to renounce their allegiance to the human systems, and to declare their allegiance only to the *one* Head and to the *one* "Church which is his body." These systems are so numerous, and their theories so diverse and confused, that the general term "Babylon" (confusion) is applied to them as a general or family name, and God's true children are admonished, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. 18:4.

In Israel God gave a typical representation of his Church in Aaron, the high priest, and his sons, the under priests. So, says the Apostle, we are "a Royal Priesthood," and again, "Consider the high priest of our profession [or order of priesthood], Christ Jesus." Now, be it noted, that in the type the beheading of the under-priests was fully illustrated in the fact that the under-priests were required to wear "bonnets," while the high priest alone was without the bonnet and wore the mitre. The high priest was thus proclaimed to be the *head* of the priesthood; and in covering their heads the under-priests said in the type, We are headless; look to the high priest; he is our head. So, in the antitype, the spiritual Royal Priesthood must all be headless, must all, in the language of the hymn, say:—

"O to be nothing, nothing,
To him let all voices be raised;
He is the fountain of blessing,
He only is most to be praised."

And this headless or will-less condition is not merely a sentiment; it must be a reality, so far as the new creature is concerned. All those who are really "members of the *body* of Christ" must in their hearts reach that condition where they can say with the greatest sincerity of heart, The Lord's will be done, Teach me thy will, O Lord. They must reach that attitude of relationship to Christ that will be continually seeking to know the will of the Head, and seeking to do it. True, the new creature must operate through, and think with, the human organism; and the latter being imperfect, through the fall, the result may frequently be an imperfect apprehension of the will of Christ, as well as an imperfect doing of that will. However, the imperfections of the *flesh* are not imputed against the *new creature*, if the heart be loyal in seeking to know and in seeking to do the will of Christ.

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" and the intimation of our text is that it will be fidelity to this spirit of the truth, the spirit of Christ working in us, in conjunction with the Word of God, the "exceeding great and precious promises," that will work upon us to effect the change from our own wills to the will of Christ—beheading us, making us dead to self and alive toward God through Jesus Christ our Lord. There is no intimation here of dependence upon sectarian arrangements and institutions; each "*soul*" (individual) must be beheaded for himself, and must be individually united to Christ, the Head of the Church. There is no intimation of the acceptance of sects and parties. On the contrary, sectarianism, in every sense and degree, is opposed to the

Scriptural arrangement of union, direct and complete, between the Lord and the individual alone.

What an honor and dignity are thus given to the Word of God—and the testimony of Jesus,—not in his own words only, but especially in his life and example, the spirit of which all members of the body must partake of, ere they can have fellowship in his sufferings, walking in his footsteps in the same narrow way of self-sacrifice—thus to be made meet for a share with him in the Kingdom. However, nothing in this should be understood to imply that there are no helps, no assistances, to be rendered and to be accepted and appreciated in the body of Christ, as between the various members; indeed, other Scriptures show us that if one member of the body rejoices, other members are comforted; and if one member suffers the others share the injury. And the Apostle makes very clear to us that our Lord, the Head, communicates with the members of his body by using certain of their own number as his representatives—so that one member may serve the body as an eye, another as an ear, another as a mouth. (1 Cor. 12:12-31.) Nevertheless, we must always consider the headship of the Lord; and the provision which he makes for the body is what in every instance is to be sought, and not what men may scheme or do in self-exaltation and as would-be teachers in the body of Christ.

Dear brethren, let us consider well the force of this strong symbolic statement. Let us ask ourselves, (1) Have I in obedience to the spirit and example of Jesus, and the testimony of God's Word, given up my own self-control, self-will? (2) If I have, to whom did I give it?—to a large denomination, professing to be the body of Christ, or to a little denomination, professing the same? (3) Am I looking to these as my head, my instructors, guides to my conscience, the directors of my spiritual energies? Or have I renounced my own headship and fully accepted the headship of Christ Jesus,—to the ignoring of all other contrary heads and authorities—to be taught of the Lord, guided of the Lord, used of the Lord, and given such experiences as his infinite wisdom sees best for me? (4) And am I fully content to be thus a member of *his body*, cut off from all others, and to be used according to his will as I find it recorded in his Word? Or am I, so to speak, a double-headed man, seeking to go through life acknowledging the headship of Jesus, but at the same time having another head or will of my own—and thus what the Apostle James called "a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways," attempting to follow my own inclinations at times, and the Lord's directions at other times, and thus unstable, unreliable, as a member of his body, and unsuitable to be used by him, but in a condition to be ultimately repudiated if I do not become entirely beheaded as respects my own will? (5) Or have I, still worse than this, three heads, or parts of three heads,—some of my own head, or will, not fully cut off; some of the head or will of Christ, incompletely attached; and some of a sectarian, man-made head—a confusion worse confounded, which renders me utterly unfit to comprehend and obey the mind of the spirit?

Dearly beloved, the time is short, the great prize we seek is near, the "mark" or standard of character to be attained is plainly set before us, and the Scriptures are luminous with illustrations of the necessity for complete consecration to the Lord,—showing us that it means deadness to self. Shall we not each see to it that by the grace of

God every other head and authority is completely cut off and cast aside, and that henceforth, as the Apostle expressed it, "For me to live is Christ"—as a member of the body of Christ, guided by his will as discerned through his Word and providence and example? This is another picture of full completion of character-likeness to our Lord. Did he not fully give up his own headship, his own will, to the Father's will? He surely did; and as that full consecration was rewarded by the Father, so we have the assurance that our full consecration (and nothing less than this) will be fully rewarded by our Lord and Head in the Kingdom.

NOVEMBER 8

Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain—Exodus 20:7.

Although this commandment was not given to spiritual Israel, we can readily see how the spirit of it comes to us. ... We have taken the name of Christ as our name. ... The holy name of the Head belongs to all the consecrated. ... What carefulness the thought of this should give us, and how appropriately we should say to ourselves: "I must see to it that I have not taken the Lord's name *in vain*, that I appreciate the honor, dignity and responsibility of my position as His representative and ambassador in the world. I will walk circumspectly, seeking as far as possible to bring no dishonor to that name, but contrariwise to honor it in every thought and word and deed"—Z '04, 73 (R 3329).

The name of God stands for His appellation, nature, character, reputation, honor, office and word. As God's representatives, the consecrated take His name in all these ways—now tentatively, and after the resurrection fixedly and eternally. To take His name in vain would imply either to neglect to use, or to misuse the privileges that come to us in our consecration as God's representatives. Accordingly, he who is unfaithful in his consecration takes the name of God in vain; while he who is faithful to his consecration vows, takes God's name properly and in harmony with its purpose. So to do should be our daily purpose—P '34, 159.

Parallel passages: Lev. 19:12; 22:32; 24:10-16; Deut. 4:10; 5:29; 10:12, 20, 21; Josh. 24:14; 1 Sam. 2:30; Job 21:14; 40:2; Prov. 30:8, 9; Rom. 12:1; Matt. 10:22; 25:14-29.

Hymns: 278, 14, 196, 224, 277, 198, 8.

Poems of Dawn, 92: *Believe Good Things of God*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 55 (R 5404).

Questions: What have I done this week with God's name? How? Why? With what results?

BELIEVE GOOD THINGS OF GOD

WHEN in the storm it seems to thee
That He who rules the raging sea
Is sleeping, still, on bended knee,
Believe good things of God.

When thou hast sought in vain to find
The silver thread of love entwined
In life's soft, tangled web, resigned,
Believe good things of God.

And should He smite thee till thy heart

Is crushed beneath the bruising smart,
Still, while the bitter teardrops start,
Believe good things of God.

'Tis true thou mayst not understand
The dealings of thy Father's hand;
But trusting what His love hath planned,
Believe good things of God.

He loves thee; in that love confide;
Unchanging, faithful, true and tried;
And through whatever may betide,
Believe good things of God.

R5404: CARELESS LIVING A FORM OF PROFANITY

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."—Exodus 20:7.

THIS command was not given to the Gentiles; for the Lord had no dealings with the world. It was given to the Jewish people, who had come into relationship with God through the Law Covenant. We have every reason to believe that many of the Jews tried very hard *outwardly* to keep the Ten Commandments, the *keeping* of which meant *life*, the *failure* to keep which meant *death*. All of their endeavors failed, and they continued to die.—Romans 7:10.

Notwithstanding the endeavor of many to observe this command of our text, St. Paul declared respecting them that the name of God was blasphemed *through them* amongst the Gentiles. (Romans 2:24.) We cannot suppose that the grosser meaning of blasphemy was the Apostle's thought. Blasphemy was a terrible thing among the Jews. Even a *parent* who heard his *own child* blaspheme was instructed to *stone* that child *to death* for so doing. We suppose the Apostle meant that the kind of living practised among the Jews really blasphemed God's name before the world. They were professedly *God's* people. And if under Divine instruction, Divine care, and Divine recognition, they did the things dishonoring to God, they were blaspheming His name.

While the Ten Commandments were not given to the Church, yet every feature of the Ten Commandments is a command; for by the character of our consecration we are bound to seek to know God's will, even beyond the mere *letter* of His Word. Hence, while the Church is *not under* the Law Covenant, we are under the general instruction of the Ten Commandments. Therefore the Apostle says that "the *righteousness* of the Law [the *true meaning* of the Law] is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans 8:4.

It is not supposable that any real child of God, any consecrated follower of Christ, could have a desire to take the name of the Father in vain. Hence the *apparent* meaning

of this command is not applicable to us; for since we have become His children, and have received His Spirit, it would be the farthest thing from us to wish to profane His name. But as the Jews profaned the name of the Lord by careless living amongst the Gentiles, so there is great danger of Christians profaning His name by careless living. And this is indicated in the Scriptures as being a danger.

Our Lord speaks of some who, at His Second Coming, will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name done many wonderful works, and in Thy name cast out devils?" And He will say, "I do not recognize you." They have been deceiving themselves. (Matthew 7:21-23.) They did not come in by the door of the sheep-fold, and have never been recognized by the Lord as His sheep. Amongst them there will perhaps be a great many who have done philanthropic and reform work.

But the thousand years of Christ's Reign will be the time when God will institute the real Reform Work, through Christ's Kingdom. Now the Lord is working in the *hearts* of His people, through His promises, seeking the particular class who are moved and exercised by these promises. Thus He is finding a Little Flock, a peculiar people, to be joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom.

LET US TAKE NOT HIS NAME IN VAIN

From this standpoint, all of God's people should be very much on guard that they do not take the name of the Lord in vain when they profess to be His people, His children—when they profess to be the followers of Jesus and call themselves Christians. It would be far better if many professed Christians did not take the name of Christian at all. The only ones who may properly take Christ's name are those who really become His disciples. The only condition under which any may become His disciple is to take up his cross and follow Him—give up his life, surrender his will.

Although this commandment was not given to Spiritual Israel, we can readily see how the *spirit* of it applies to us. We have taken the name of Christ as our name. We profess to be members of the Body of Christ. And the holy name of the Head belongs to all the members of His Body. The honored name of the Bridegroom belongs to His Espoused. What carefulness the thought of this should give us, and how appropriate it is that we should see to it that we have not taken that blessed name in vain; that we appreciate the honor, the dignity, the responsibility, of our position as His representatives and ambassadors in the world! Let us, therefore, walk circumspectly, taking earnest heed that we bring no dishonor to that hallowed name; but on the contrary, that we honor it in our every thought and word and deed.

"What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [behavior] and godliness?" "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [behavior]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."—2 Peter 3:11; 1 Peter 1:15, 16.

NOVEMBER 9

The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would—Gal. 5:17.

Here is the great and continual battle; for although the new will asserts itself and puts the body under and compels its subjection to the new mind, nevertheless the mortal body, not being actually dead, is continually coming in contact with the world and the Adversary and is continually being stimulated by these and reinvigorated with earthly cares, ambitions, methods, strivings, conflicts and insubordination to our new will. No saint is without experiences of this kind—fightings without and within. It must be a fight to the finish or the great prize for which we fight will not be gained. For although the new heart, mind and will masters the mortal body by the Lord's grace and strength repeatedly, nevertheless until death there can be no cessation of the conflict—Z '03, 424 (R 3272).

By the word *flesh* here the human disposition, natural or acquired, is meant; while by the word *spirit* the new heart, mind and will, undeveloped or developed, is meant. Even if the flesh were not depraved, it would yet be inimical to the spirit; for it is of the earth, earthy, and hence aspires to earthly things, while the spirit is of the heavens, heavenly, and aspires to heavenly things, which can be obtained only at the sacrifice of earthly things. Consequently there is a constant conflict between the flesh and the spirit. This prevents our doing perfectly, as we will to do. This conflict will continue until the flesh or spirit dies—P '33, 162.

Parallel passages: Matt. 26:41; Mark 7:21-23; Rom. 6:12-22; 7:14-25; 8:1-13; 13:11-14; 1 Pet. 2:11; 1 Cor. 2:9; Eph. 5:3-5; Col. 3:5; Jas. 3:14-16; Gal. 5:16.

Hymns: 343, 150, 78, 4, 47, 196, 198.
Poems of Dawn, 199: "So As by Fire."
Tower Reading: Z '13, 103 (R 5211).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences as to this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered? What were the results?

"SO AS BY FIRE"

I SOMETIMES feel so passionate a yearning
For spiritual perfection here below,
This vigorous frame with healthful fervor burning,
Seems my determined foe.

So actively it makes a stern resistance,
So cruelly it sometimes wages war
Against the higher spiritual existence,
Which I am striving for.

It interrupts my soul's intense devotions;
Some hope it strangles at its very birth
With a swift rush of violent emotions
Which link me to the earth.

It is as if two mortal foes contended
Within my bosom in a deadly strife;
One for the loftier aims Jesus intended,
One for the "Mammon" life.

And yet I know this very war within me,
Which brings out all my will-power and control;
This very conflict yet through Christ shall win me
The loved and longed-for goal.

And when in the immortal ranks enlisted,
Sometimes I wonder if we shall not find
That not for deeds alone, but also what's resisted,
Our places were assigned.

R5211: THE CONFLICT BETWEEN FLESH AND SPIRIT

**"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—
Galatians 5:17.**

THE APOSTLE is addressing these words to Christians, who have become New Creatures in Christ, to whom old things have passed away, and all things have become new. These are said to be begotten of the Holy Spirit and therefore to be, in reality, spirit beings, who will be changed in the Resurrection, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"—spirit beings who have not yet been completed. But the New Creature has only the flesh in which to operate at the present time.

God expects that the New Creature will manifest his loyalty, and demonstrate worthiness of perfection of the spirit in the First Resurrection. The Apostle says that such must expect to find a conflict going on—the Spirit lusting against the flesh and the flesh against the Spirit. The word *lust* here used is a good Anglo-Saxon word meaning *desire*. The *New Creature* strongly desires to be loyal to God and to do His will. The *flesh* strongly desires *against* all this.

These two spirits are in opposition. The two are in antagonism. The flesh desires to serve itself. It has earthly desires, earthly objects, earthly aims. The New Creature desires to set its affections on the Heavenly things and to sacrifice the earthly interests and aims and prospects, to live as a spirit being tabernacling in the flesh—to live no longer as a

human being with earthly interests. Whatever serves the one interest is in conflict with the other interest.

NEW CREATURES HAMPERED BY THE FLESH

The words of our text are not addressed to the world, but to the Church. The Church has been begotten of the Holy Spirit—a New Creation. If these live after the flesh, if they renounce their covenant of sacrifice, they will die. But if they mortify, or kill, the deeds of the flesh and abandon this wholly for the Spirit, they shall live—have everlasting life. We all see that in our Lord Jesus, holy, harmless, undefiled, there was such a contrast; the earthly interests drawing one way, and the Heavenly interests another. These were all pure and perfect desires; nevertheless, as the New Creature, begotten of the Holy Spirit, He was obliged to overcome them.

We recall our Lord's words very near the conclusion of His ministry: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50.) The conflict was going on; but the Lord's spirit was firm, and He was obedient to the terms of His sacrifice. Being *perfect*, however, *He could* do those things that He would. He did them, and won the great victory.

In our case the matter is different. *We* are by nature *fallen*. Our earthly appetites and tastes are depraved. All are more or less selfish; some more depraved than are others.

Our flesh is depraved; *we cannot* do the things that we would. Hence we need the merit of Christ to assist us; hence the Apostle tells us that every time we as New Creatures have done wrong, we should acknowledge the error and go to the Throne of Heavenly Grace to obtain mercy and find help for future needs. Thus we show to God the loyalty of our hearts. All those having Christ's mind and disposition are hampered merely by the weaknesses of the flesh, the *fallen* flesh; but they have an Advocate, to whom they may go and have these weaknesses of the fallen flesh compensated for.

The question may arise, Why should there be any conflict between the flesh and the spirit in our case? and how do we overcome these weaknesses sufficiently to desire to become joint-sacrificers with Christ, before we are begotten of the Spirit at all? The answer is that while the whole race is fallen, many of the fallen ones realize the shame of their condition and long to do righteously, but are unable to do so. They find themselves to be slaves of sin. They are weak; they are so bound that they cannot do the things that they would. Many of the Jews were in this condition. They were desirous to do God's will, but were unable to do so. The *desire* was there, the *will* was there. But because of man's fallen condition there were other qualities of their mind in opposition.

The human mind is made up of various qualities. When sin came in, the lower and baser of these qualities of the original man gained the ascendancy, and the nobler of these qualities gradually became effaced, until the original likeness of God was measurably gone from humanity. But in some of the sons and daughters of Adam there is sufficient of

the original God-likeness to oppose sin and to seek to have reformation of life. Such good influences are manifest even amongst the heathen.

During the Jewish Age, some amongst the Jews were seeking to live in harmony with God. Others were following the course of Belial, and serving Satan and giving themselves up to selfishness. And so it is today. The Jews could not keep their Law, and unless they could keep the Law perfectly, they would fail of getting everlasting life, just the same as those who had never been under the Law. Since Pentecost there has been a different arrangement. God has provided a Savior, whose death is efficacious for the sins of the world.

THE CONFLICT ENDS WITH DEATH

Why, then, has this death not yet been effective for the world? God is wishing to find a class willing to lay down life itself in God's service. Some of these fallen children of Adam, noting the call of God's Word—to become footstep-followers of Jesus—have enough strength of character to follow in Christ's footsteps. They manifest their determination by consecrating their lives to His service. Such a consecration means that the higher qualities of the mind have united, and have gotten control, of the lower qualities of the mind, putting them under constraint.

Under the inspiring influence of God's promises and the Message of the Gospel, they are through the great Advocate received as members of His Body—as New Creatures in Christ, begotten of the Holy Spirit. Thenceforth they have a relationship with God. They are expected then to go forward from step to step, continually fighting against the snares of Satan. This is the Christian's life—the battle mentioned in our text. The two influences—the flesh and the Spirit—are contrary; hence the conflict.

There is no need to go *outside* and battle with *others*. There is plenty to do *within*. *Happy* are those who, by their endeavors, show their loyalty to God! In due time, by the power of the First Resurrection, they will lose the old body altogether and will be clothed upon with immortality. If we are "faithful unto death," we shall be like Him, our Lord and Head, see Him as He is, and share His glory.

There is, however, a great and continuous battle; for although the new will asserts itself, puts the body under and compels its subjection to the new mind, nevertheless, the mortal body, not being actually dead, is continually coming in contact with the world and the Adversary, and is continually being stimulated by these and by earthly cares, ambitions, methods, strivings, conflicts, to insubordination to our new will.

No saint is without experience of this kind—fightings without and within. It must be a fight *to the finish*, or the great prize for which we fight will not be gained. For although the New Creature, by the Lord's grace and strength, repeatedly masters the mortal body, nevertheless, *until death* there can be *no cessation of the conflict*.

"How goes the fight with thee?"

The life-long battle 'gainst all evil things?
Thine no low strife, and thine no selfish aim;
It is the war of giants and of kings!

* * *

"Say not the fight is long;
'Tis but one battle and the fight is o'er;
No second warfare mars thy victory,
And the one triumph is for evermore!"

NOVEMBER 10

Love ... rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth—1 Cor. 13:4, 6.

Are the principles of right and wrong so firmly fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with the right and so opposed to the wrong, that I would not encourage the wrong, but must condemn it, even if it brought advantage to me? Am I so in accord with right, with truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the Truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests? The love of God, which the Apostle is here describing as the spirit of the Lord's people, is a love which is far above selfishness, and is based upon fixed principles which should, day by day, be more and more distinctly discerned, and always firmly adhered to at any cost—Z '03, 57 (R 3150).

Iniquity is untruth in theory and practice. Charity, being based on a delight in good principles, cannot rejoice in iniquity. While it sympathizes with the brethren and pities the world in their iniquities, it is pained and distressed by the latter, which it abhors correspondingly as it rejoices in the Truth in theory and practice. It cannot but rejoice in God's Plan and Spirit because they are the embodiment of every good principle in faith and conduct. It rejoices in the principles, aims, conflicts, works, successes, triumphs and spirit of the Truth, and that because of its delight in good principles and things—P '32, 167.

Parallel passages: Psa. 10:3; Rom. 1:32; 2 John 4; Neh. 8:10-12; Psa. 9:2; 13:5; 19:8; 40:16; 46:4; 89:15; 97:11, 12; 119:1, 16, 55, 111, 165; Isa. 12; Jer. 15:16; Heb. 10:34; 1 Pet. 1:8; Acts 11:18, 22, 23.

Hymns: 95, 130, 136, 165, 149, 179, 204.

Poems of Dawn, 120: *Master, Say On!*

Tower Reading: Z '02, 197 (R 3033).

Questions: Have I this week rejoiced in iniquity or in the Truth? Why? How? With what results?

MASTER, SAY ON!

MASTER, speak! Thy servant heareth,
Longing for Thy gracious word,
Longing for Thy voice that cheereth;
Master, let it now be heard.
I am listening, Lord, for Thee;
What hast Thou to say to me?

Often through my heart is pealing
Many another voice than Thine,

Many an unwilling echo stealing
From the walls of this Thy shrine.
Let Thy longed-for accents fall;
Master, speak! and silence all.

Master, speak! I cannot doubt Thee;
Thou wilt through life's pathway lead;
Savior, Shepherd, oh! without Thee
Life would be a blank indeed.
Yet I seek still fuller light,
Deeper love, and clearer sight.

Resting on the "faithful saying,"
Trusting what Thy gospel saith,
On Thy written promise staying
All my hope in life and death;—
Yet I ask for more and more
From Thy love's exhaustless store.

Master, speak! And make me ready,
As Thy voice is daily heard,
With obedience glad and steady
Still to follow every word.
I am listening, Lord, for Thee:
Master, speak, speak on, to me!

R3033: "LOVE—MAKING A DIFFERENCE."

"Keep yourselves in the love of God ... and of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire."—Jude 21-23.

WITH OUR MINDS all unbalanced through the fall, resulting from original sin,—tho not all fallen exactly in the same direction,—it is not surprising that we frequently find ourselves and other brethren in Christ in more or less confusion respecting the application of certain principles laid down in the Word of God. For instance, we are instructed that love is the fulfilling of the divine law; and that love of the brethren is one of the evidences of our having passed from death unto life; and that if we love not our brother, whom we have seen, it is a sure evidence that we do not truly love our Heavenly Father, whom we have not seen. (Rom. 13:10; I John 3:14; 4:20.) In their endeavor to measure up to these requirements of the divine standard, some are in danger of erring in an opposite direction—in danger of manifesting a brotherly love where it should be withheld, and that in the interest of the brother. Let us note the different kinds, or degrees of love which the Heavenly Father exercises and manifests.

First, we have the love for the world. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" to die for us. (John 3:16.) Second, in a much higher and special sense, "The Father himself loveth you"—you who have accepted Jesus Christ as your Redeemer, and who, in his name and strength and merit have consecrated yourselves to him—you are seeking now to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. (John 16:27.) But that this special love of God can be lost in part, or eventually wholly, is clearly set forth by the Apostle's statement, "Keep yourselves in the love of God". (Jude 21.) If any, after having tasted of the good Word of God, the powers of the world to come, and being made partakers of the holy spirit, etc., shall walk after the flesh and not after the spirit, we may be sure that such will proportionately lose the love of God;—and, if he persist in this course, as a result will ultimately be "none of his." For, instead of loving such, who through their knowledge and attainments and disobedient course have become wicked, the Lord declares that he is "angry with the wicked," and that "all the wicked will he destroy."—Psa. 7:11; 145:20; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29.

As sons of the Highest, who are seeking to be like unto our Father in heaven, and like unto the copy which he has set before us in his dear Son, our Lord, we are to have for the world in general that broad sympathetic pity and mercy-love which would delight in doing any and everything possible to be done for their uplifting, in accord with the divine program, in the divine time and order. Like our Father and our Elder Brother, we are to love the brethren "with a pure heart, *fervently*"—with sincerity. This love for the brethren is nothing like the love for the world. It is not the pity-love, nor mere generosity. It is far more; it is brotherly love. All of the children of God are brethren, as new creatures; all these brethren have hopes, ambitions, interests and promises linked together in the Lord Jesus and in the heavenly Kingdom in which they hope to share. All these brethren are joint-heirs, fellow-heirs one with the other and with the Lord. They are partners; their interests are mutual and co-ordinating.

Additionally, they have a special mutual sympathy of compassion; for while, as new creatures, they are rich in divine favor and promises, they all have serious weaknesses, according to the flesh—draw-backs; altho the Lord is not reckoning with them according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, the intention, the heart desires, nevertheless, they each and all have besetments arising from these weaknesses and imperfections of the earthly tabernacle, which cause them to "groan," and to sympathize one with the other in their groanings. As the Apostle says, "We which have the first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our *body*"—the complete Church. Thus the sons of God have a further mutual sympathy and love and care for each other, an interest in each other, helpfulness toward each other, which is entirely beyond and above and outside of any feelings which could possibly be appreciated by the world or exercised toward it;—because the world has no such conflict between the old nature and the new; no such covenant of sacrifice; no such acceptance in the Beloved; no such union of heart and purpose and aim and spirit. Oh, yes! the exhortation to love as brethren, *fervently*, is one which appeals to us specially.

But now we come to another point. Our love for the brethren cannot be exactly of the same measure and exactly of the same intensity or fervency toward all. There is

something which gauges or regulates it. What is it? It is that we love God and the glorious principles of righteousness, which are represented in his character; and we love our Lord Jesus from the same standpoint, as being the very exemplifications of all that is good, noble, true, just, generous, loving; and our love for the brethren must, of necessity, be in proportion as we find the brethren to be copies of our Lord. We do not mean copies in the flesh, but viewed from the Lord's standpoint; copies in spirit, copies in heart, copies in motive, copies in intention, copies in loving zeal for righteousness, truth, etc. Thus, as we grow in the love of God and in the love of Christ and in the love of the principles which they represent, we grow also in love toward all men and toward the brethren, but particularly toward those who are growing most in likeness to the Lord. This is not partiality; this is not doing to others different from what we should wish them to do to us. This is following the Lord Jesus' example; for we find that amongst his apostles, even, all of whom were chosen, there were three specially beloved; and of those three one is specially noted as "that disciple whom Jesus loved." He was specially loved, because he was specially lovable; and so with us and the brethren. We should love them all warmly, fervently, but of necessity with varying degrees of fervor, and the fervor should increase with each in proportion as we note his growth in heart-likeness to our Lord.

And if this be so, what shall we say of those who, after having come to a knowledge of the truth, and after having tasted and appreciated its goodness, fall away into sin?—of those who cease to walk after the spirit, and begin to walk after the flesh? Can our love for them burn with the same fervency as before? By no means; it should not do so. As the Apostle says in our text, we should make a *difference*. In doing so we are following the example of our Heavenly Father; for we have just noted that only by walking after the spirit can any of us keep ourselves in the love of God. Only by following the same course, therefore, should any be able to keep himself in the love of the brethren. Any deflection should bring corresponding loss of brotherly love and fellowship.

This making of a difference is really essential to the purity and progress of the Church. If we make no difference between those brethren who walk after the spirit and those who walk disorderly, or after the flesh, we are taking away the very premium and blessing which the Lord intended should go to those who walk after the spirit; and we are giving a premium, which the Lord did not intend should be given, to those who walk contrary to his Word, after the flesh. It is as much our duty to withdraw fellowship from those who are unworthy of it as it is our duty to grant fellowship, and that with fervency, to those whom we see to be walking in the footsteps of Jesus. We are not to think that it is love that is prompting us to take the wrong course of encouraging wrong-doers,—it is not love, but ignorance; and the remedy for ignorance is to learn of the Lord, from his Word and from his example.

The Apostle Paul calls our attention to our duty respecting the brethren, and how we should conduct ourselves toward them under varying circumstances, saying that faithful brethren should be esteemed very highly in love for their works' sake; that other brethren who are unruly should be warned; that those who are feeble in their mental

comprehension of the truth should be strengthened; that those who are weak should be helped, supported; and that we should exercise patience toward all.—I Thess. 5:12-14.

We are at present specially referring to the proper attitude to be observed toward unruly brethren—they are not to be treated as those who are esteemed very highly in love for their works; otherwise they would be encouraged in being unruly. On the contrary they are to be warned, cautioned,—in love, truly, and with patience, but not with marks of the same love and esteem as tho they were walking orderly in the footsteps of Jesus and in harmony with the directions of his Word. The marks and evidences of our love and esteem must be sincere; and must be in proportion as we see in the brethren evidences of the right desires of heart,—to walk after the spirit of the truth. The Apostle Paul intimates how our disapproval ought to be shown, in cases which seem, in our judgment, to be of sufficient importance to demand a manifestation of disapproval.

Evidently the Apostle did not mean that the brethren should be watching each other for an occasion of fault-finding in every word and every act; but that, on the contrary, they should be so full of love one for the other that trivial matters would be entirely passed over, as merely of the weakness of the flesh, and not at all of intention, of the heart. The matters to be considered worthy of manifestations of disapproval and warning are, rather, those which are so open and manifest on the surface as to leave no room to question the fact that they are displeasing to the Lord, and injurious in their influence upon the brother or upon the household of faith. For instance, if the brother had been seen under the influence of liquor; if he had been heard to utter vile or otherwise improper language; if it were a matter of general knowledge that he was living in sin; these would be such grounds as we believe the Apostle had in mind. But evidently the Apostle had no intention of cultivating a spirit of fault-finding and judging one another as respects the heart and private affairs,—use of time or money, etc. These belong to our individual stewardship and none should endeavor to interfere with the proper liberties of conscience and conduct which the Lord has granted to each. The Apostle is very stringent in his condemnation of such judging of one another, which so often leads to roots of bitterness, misunderstanding, disfellowship, etc., and which, as the old leaven, should be purged out of our hearts and lives.—Rom. 14:10, 13.

But now, for those who "obey not our word," the apostolic Scriptural directions in respect to their conduct, etc., is "note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." Nevertheless, knowing the tendency of the fallen mind to go from one extreme to another, either of too great leniency or of too great severity, the apostle continues, "Yet count him not an enemy, but admonish as a brother." (2 Thess. 3:13-15.) To admonish as a brother does not mean to denounce roundly and severely; it means to admonish in a spirit of love, gentleness, meekness, patience, and with a sincere desire to help the brother to see the fault which we are certain exists, and which we are sure is not evil surmising on our part.

The Apostle John shows us that this matter of distinguishing as between brethren that are to be esteemed and brethren that are to be warned, appertains not merely to conduct but also to doctrinal matters. Yet we may be sure that he does not mean that we are to

disfellowship a brother merely because of some differences of view on non-essential questions. We may be sure that he does mean his words to apply strictly and only to the fundamentals of the doctrine of Christ: for instance, faith in God; faith in Jesus as our Redeemer; faith in the promises of the divine Word. These will be marks of a "brother," if supported by Christian conduct, walking after the spirit of the truth;—even tho the brother might have other views which would differ from ours in respect to certain features of the plan of God not so clearly and specifically set forth in the Scriptures. But for those whom we recognize as being doctrinally astray from the foundation principles of Christ, the Apostle intimates that very drastic measures are appropriate;—not persecutions, nor railing; not bitter and acrimonious disputes; not hatred, either open or secret; but a proper showing of our disfellowship with the false doctrines held and taught by them; a proper protection, so that our influence shall not be in any manner or degree used to uphold his denial of the fundamentals of the Gospel. This drastic course is outlined by the Apostle in these words: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine [confessing Christ to have come into the world, in the flesh, to redeem our race, etc.] receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds."—2 John 10, 11.

But, as our text intimates, we are to use discretion, judgment,—and of some have compassion, making a difference." Some we may recognize as being merely entrapped of the Adversary, either in sin or in false doctrine, as the case may be, and not wilfully, intelligently, of their own volition. Toward such, still maintaining an attitude of firmness, we are nevertheless to express freely our trust that they are only temporarily wrong; and to seek to restore them, either doctrinally or in respect to their perverse moral course, to the position of fellowship with the Lord and with all the brethren who are in fellowship with him. Others we are to "save with fear, pulling them out of the fire." We may be obliged to speak very plainly to them; we may be obliged to tear open and expose before their eyes the sores of their own immoral course, showing them, as the case may be, the grossness of the sin or the grossness of the error in which they are involved; and doing so perhaps in strong language, if we realize that nothing short of this has availed to arouse them from their lethargy. In pulling them out of sin we are "pulling them out of the fire"—out of the Second Death—as the Apostle James says, speaking of this same class: "Let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death"—a brother who is a sinner, a brother, he explains, who has "erred from the truth."—James 5:19, 20.

Finally, we remark that the dealing of the brethren with the disorderly is not to be in the nature of a *punishment*; for it is not with us to punish. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Our warnings or reproofs or withdrawals of fellowship, are to be merely in the nature of correctives, with a view, as the Apostle says, to the restoring of such an one. "Ye that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted";—if not in the same manner, possibly in some other manner, in which you are weaker.—Gal. 6:1.

As to what would be a sufficiency of *evidence* of repentance and reformation, each will require great wisdom and grace to determine. The heart in which brotherly love

dwells richly, the heart which loves righteousness and hates iniquity, the heart which realizes its own imperfections, and that it is acceptable only through the Beloved and the New Covenant—that heart will rejoice at the first evidences of contrition and repentance on the part of the disorderly brother. If very full of love, his heart may go out to him almost too quickly; he may need to restrain himself; especially if it be a second or a third offense of the kind, or the circumstances otherwise very grievous. It will be apparently his duty to look for works in harmony with the repentance, and to wait to see some demonstration, in the nature of restitution for wrong done, or such an open and radical change of conduct as will give evidence that the heart has returned to its loyalty to God, to the truth, and to righteousness.

The erring brother, truly repentant, will not be averse to giving such evidences, nor consider it unreasonable that his professed reformation shall be thus attested. Indeed, we may expect that such will feel so humbled in respect to his attitude, and the disgrace which he may have brought upon the cause, that he will feel disposed of himself, either to remain absent for a while from the company of the brethren, in penitence, or, if acceptable to their company, he will feel disposed to take a back seat—a very humble position amongst the brethren. And if the repentant offender had occupied the position of a leader in the company, humility on his part, no less than discretion on the part of the brethren, would seem to indicate that he should not be restored to any official or leading position in the congregation for a considerable time,—until ample evidence had been given of the sincerity of his reformation.

But we close as we began, by urging that facts, evil deeds or evil doctrines, and not evil surmisings, knowledge, and not rumors, are the bases of Scriptural disfellowship. Hence the necessity for the observance of the Lord's rule. (Matt. 18:15.) While we are not to close our eyes to wrong in a brother, love will refuse to keep picking to find fault where none is openly apparent. And if fault is apparently discovered it is not to be "*discussed* among the brethren," but as the Lord directs should be taken direct to the offender by the discoverer and not so much as mentioned to others unless offender refuse to hear;—refuses to correct the fault. Oh, how much trouble would be saved, how many mistakes and heart-aches avoided if this rule were strictly followed!

NOVEMBER 11

Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue [fortitude]—2 Pet. 1:5.

One great difficulty with the Lord's people is that, even when determined for a right course and thus resisting the temptation, they do not take sufficiently positive action. Many say to the tempter, I have concluded not to yield at this time. Thus they leave in their own minds an opportunity open by which the tempter may return. Our Lord's course was the proper one: we should dismiss the tempter once and forever. We should take our stand so firmly that even the Adversary would not think it worthwhile to come back at us along that line; "Leave me, Adversary, I will worship and serve my God alone"—Z '04, 10 (R 3296).

After we have developed mental appreciation of, and heart reliance upon God and Christ as the foundation of Christian character, we are to build upon this basis the other higher primary graces, beginning with fortitude, whose essence is hope for victory. The Lord has given us the objects for such hope and a sure basis for it in His Oath-bound Covenant, Christ's Priestly office and the Spirit's participation. Such hope will make us brave to meet any difficulty and to fight on against any foe. To develop such fortitude will require constant diligence. Otherwise our efforts, unsustained by faithfulness, will ultimately prove insufficient for overcoming—P '26, 157.

Parallel passages: Heb. 11:1, 2, 39; Psa. 27:13; Rom. 8:24, 25; 2 Cor. 4:18; 5:7; Josh. 1:1-9; 2 Chron. 19:11; Prov. 28:1; 1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 1:27, 28; 2 Tim. 1:7.

Hymns: 197, 174, 228, 92, 29, 58, 201.

Poems of Dawn, 76: *O Soul of Mine!*

Tower Reading: Z '15, 179 (R 5705).

Questions: Have I this week added fortitude to faith? How? Under what circumstances? With what results?

O SOUL OF MINE!

O SOUL of mine, be calm, be still,
Submit thyself to God,
In all thy ways yield to His will,
Nor faint beneath the rod.

O soul of mine, like potter's clay
Within the Master's hand,
O let Him mould thee day by day,
Till faultless thou shalt stand.

O soul of mine, have faith, believe,
Nor count the cost of strife,

Fight on, faint not, thou shalt receive
At last the Crown of Life!

R5705: OUR CONQUEST OF THE ANTITYPICAL CANAANITES

"Be thou strong and very courageous."—Joshua 1:7.

JOSHUA records these words of Jehovah God, spoken to him at the time when, after Moses' death, he took command of Israel. The Israelites had then had their forty years' experience in the wilderness, and were just about to cross the Jordan and take possession of the land of Canaan. Joshua had become Moses' successor. The people had learned many lessons in their wilderness experiences; and now that Moses was dead, they looked to Joshua as their leader.

Joshua expressed his inability to serve in the place of Moses, through whom God had signally manifested Himself. But the Lord assured Joshua that He would bless him all the days of his life, even as He had blessed Moses. Joshua had been found faithful in all his experiences. He was one of the two survivors of the wilderness experiences who, when starting out from Egypt, were over twenty years of age. Because of the faithfulness of Joshua and Caleb, the Lord had promised them that they alone of all the adults who left Egypt should enter the Promised Land. The others had died in the wilderness, save Moses and Aaron, Aaron dying in Mount Hor and Moses a little later in Mount Nebo, before the people crossed over Jordan.

The Lord's exhortation for Joshua to be strong and very courageous was in connection with the instruction that the Israelites were to take possession of the land of Canaan and destroy the inhabitants of the land. This command of God has been a stumbling-block to many. They have supposed that the Bible could not be of God when it bears such instructions. They have felt that it would be an act of injustice for the Israelites to go in and possess Canaan. What right, they say, had Israel to kill those people and take possession of their land? It belonged more to the people who already possessed it than to anybody else. To invade their country, destroy their lives and confiscate their lands and their possessions would be very unjust. The course of Israel is held up as an illustration of the "land-grabbing" disposition of the natural man, which has seemed to grow stronger century by century, notwithstanding the increase of civilization and his professed appreciation of justice.

This is the view that many take, and much to their own injury; for they do not understand the matter they discuss. When we say that they do not understand the matter, we do not mean that they are people of inferior mind, but that they have not taken God's viewpoint. From any other than the right viewpoint, the whole course of Israel in this matter must seem to be unjust and ungodlike. From the right viewpoint, however, the matter is seen to be reasonable, just and righteous altogether. The sins and abominations of these Gentile people were such that their destruction was a very desirable thing. God had a great surprise in mind for this land of Canaan, which they inhabited. Moreover, the

Jewish Age was an Age of Types. Both Israel and these corrupt Gentile nations were typical.

CHRISTIANS TO BE NON-RESISTANT

In the present Age, the Lord's people are not to take possession of either the persons or the property of others. They are not to destroy life under any circumstances. They are not to battle with any kind of carnal weapons. They are to be non-resistant. We are not of those who would defend the course of the professed Christian nations of modern times along these lines. As Christians, guided by our Master's example and instruction, we should seek to do good to all men as we have opportunity, and to leave them in peaceable possession of their homes, their property and their liberties. There is a great difference between the Divine Law of Love, which is the motive power operating in the true children of God today, and the law of selfishness, under which the masses of mankind—including the vast majority of nominal Christendom—still operate, and will continue to operate until the New Dispensation shall be fully ushered in by Divine Power.

Nevertheless, seeing that the true Church is separate from the world in the Lord's Plan and His dealings, we can look with comparative equanimity upon the overriding of justice and equity by the kingdoms of this world, and may realize that the Lord, especially at the present time, is taking advantage of their natural disposition toward warfare and conquest and empire-building. He will cause the wrath of man thus to work out certain features of His Plan which will prove later on to be for the blessing of the whole world, those now in their graves as well as those yet living.

Not being able to see behind the veil into all the gracious purposes of our Heavenly Father, and not being wise enough to know how these purposes could be carried out, the peoples of the earth are groping on in darkness, thinking they are managing their own affairs, not knowing that a Mighty Hand is so directing the affairs of nations that His own glorious designs shall be outworked in all things, not knowing that nothing can thwart His purposes. The Lord's people occupy largely the position of spectators in respect to the course of this world—its policies, politics, conquests, its frantic efforts to carry out its selfish projects.—John 17:16.

Were we to take a hand in the affairs of the world, on either side of the great questions with which they are grappling, we would surely be working contrary to the Divine Program. The Lord does not purpose to give the victory now to either party in the strife. We are to be separate from the world and to give our thought and attention, our sympathy and interest, to the affairs of the Heavenly Kingdom; and while our voices, if ever raised at all on such questions, should be raised on behalf of justice, mercy and peace, yet we can view with great composure whatever events and changes may take place in the world, knowing that our Heavenly Father has all power to overrule these matters to His own praise and to the ultimate good of mankind.

A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW

But the world tells us that we are too peaceable. They say that mankind could not get along without a certain amount of warfare. We answer that no one can understand God's methods except as he is guided by His Word, by the Spirit of the Truth. God's dealings are different in different ages and for different purposes. These seemingly conflicting presentations of God's will are perfectly reasonable and harmonizable from the proper viewpoint.

Let us see. Back in Eden, the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die," was pronounced upon Adam because of wilful disobedience to the Divine instruction that a violation of God's command would bring death. After the fall, mankind gradually became more and more estranged from the Lord. Many of the angels, who then had access to earth with powers of materialization, fell from their holy estate. Mankind became a prey to these angels who "lusted after strange flesh." (Genesis 6:1-4; Jude 6, 7; 2 Peter 2:4, Diaglott.) This condition of things was finally overthrown by the great Deluge of Noah's day.

But in time the world again became very sinful. Then God made selection of one man from amongst mankind; namely, Abraham. He promised that if Abraham would walk in His ways, He would guide Abraham's affairs to his good and make of him a great nation and would bless his seed. And so we have Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God's special servants. The descendants of Jacob, God took into covenant relationship with Himself during the days of Moses. Under Moses as their mediator, God promised to be their God and to recognize them as His people. If they would be loyal to Him, He would bless them. If they should be disloyal to Him and go over to the idolatry of the neighboring nations, then He would punish them for their sins and give them chastisements; but He would not forsake them.

The peoples of Canaan were in a very degraded condition morally. They had progressed so far in sin that it was no longer advantageous that they should continue in possession of Canaan. The Israelites were to drive out these peoples—and they were to be destroyed when necessary. There were certain nations which God especially commanded Israel to utterly destroy.—Deuteronomy 20:10-18.

When thinking of this command of God, we are to rid our minds of the superstitions of the past. These people who were to be slain did not go into eternal torment, but into death, into Sheol, Hades, the tomb. This would be an unconscious sleep. Those who perished by the sword are still asleep; they are not in pain, not in anguish of any kind. They are merely cut off from life until the general awakening time; for God has made a provision whereby those people may return to life, may be called forth from their sleep. All the blessings of everlasting life God has made provision for through Messiah. Messiah is to have a Kingdom; and this Kingdom is to rule the world in righteousness (see Psalms 96, 97, and 72), blessing not only the living, but also those who have fallen asleep in death. (Isaiah 25:6-9; Hosea 13:14; Romans 14:9; 8:20, 21, Diaglott.) Many Scriptures declare this in unmistakable terms. Indeed this is the tenor of the entire Word of God. The Divine Plan runs like a golden chain through the whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments.

This great Messiah, who is yet to bless all the race of Adam, must needs be their Redeemer, and thus the Owner and Deliverer of the people, as the Scriptures declare. Through His sacrifice for man He has obtained the "keys of Hades and of death," as He tells us. (Revelation 1:18.) He gave His life as the offset to Father Adam's life. This purchase price has not as yet been applied for the world in general, but will be applied, we believe, in the very near future. The Millennial Kingdom of Christ is for the very purpose of giving all of Adam's children, not previously enlightened, as well as Adam himself, a full opportunity for everlasting life, after having had experience in the nature and results of sin.

From this broad viewpoint, we see that with these peoples of ancient Palestine—the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, etc.—it was a blessing that they died at the time they did. Vile and debased in morals, they were no benefit to themselves or to others. It was all the same whether they died by some kind of disease—consumption, pneumonia, cholera—or in some other manner.

Should any one ask, Why did God choose to have these ancient peoples die in battle instead of by disease? The answer is that the peoples inhabiting the land would be a constant menace to the morals of the people of Israel. They were not only idolatrous, but practised licentious rites, divination, etc. Furthermore, God purposed that the land should be put to a far different use. He had a great Plan, in which it was His design that Canaan should play an important part. The land and its inhabitants were to be typical of God's dealings with Spiritual Israel in the Gospel Age. The type in which the land of Canaan was designed of God to figure could not be carried out without the expulsion of these heathen, or their destruction.

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL EXPELLING THE CANAANITES

Is it asked what type was here shown? We believe that the expulsion and destruction of these sinful nations by Israel was a type of how the people of God today, Spiritual Israel, are to take possession of their human bodies. We are, as New Creatures, to conquer, to destroy, these tendencies of the flesh which would enslave us. If we do not overcome and destroy them, they will overcome and destroy us. We are to vanquish the evil propensities, evil habits, vices, thoughts, desires, which have inhabited our minds, and are by our new wills to take entire control and fill the place of the former occupants with holy, pure thoughts, desires, ambitions, purposes, habits.

These human bodies are now the property and possession of the Spiritual Israelites, the New Creatures in Christ. There is to be no peace between the New Creature and his flesh. We are to take warning from Natural Israel in this respect. Failure on their part to drive out and destroy their enemies completely, as God commanded, was a source of constant trouble and ensnarement, and a cause of much idolatry and sin to Israel. And their experiences "were written for our admonition." Our warfare against spiritual foes must result in the utter destruction of the fleshly mind, and will also mean the death of the human body.

This warfare of Israel against their enemies may also be a picture of conditions in the Millennium. During the Millennial Age the world, under the guidance of Christ and the Church, will be brought into a condition which will fit them to have possession of the whole earth. Satan will be bound for a thousand years. Sin and the curse of Adamic death now resting on the world will be destroyed, together with everything contrary to righteousness. All these things belong to the reign of that "strong man" who has so long oppressed the world. Christ, the Antitype of Joshua, will then be in control, and will show man how to exterminate these things of sin and thus eventually come into possession of the earth, the Eden of God, and each man be a king, a sovereign.

While the Natural Israelite was to be a man of battle and to take possession of the land of the enemy, we are not to see in this fact anything that was not in it. For instance, it was not the Israelites who were to say that they would go up and possess the land of Canaan. It was God Himself who was to give them possession. Nor are we to think that God was negligent of the real interests of these Gentile peoples. He declares that their iniquity had come to the full. It was no longer profitable at that time that their lives should be prolonged. Thus we see that justice was not infringed upon in giving the Israelites that land for an everlasting possession. This had been previously foretold by the Lord; but the testimony of the Lord, at the time the promise was made, was that it would not then be an appropriate time for its fulfilment, but that there should first be a dark time, until the iniquity of those nations had come to the full.

BATTLE OF SPIRITUAL ISRAEL TODAY

Coming down to the Gospel Age, we see that the Spiritual Israelites have had a great conflict. It is a warfare against the whole world—no warfare so mighty and so momentous has ever been waged. Yet the conflict fought by the Lord Jesus and His followers has not been a fight with guns or other carnal weapons. We have today millions of people in great camps intent upon destroying one another. They are being goaded on by their rulers. There may be here and there a Christian among them, one who has truly given his heart to God; but these are the exceptions. The great mass of the world acknowledge that they have taken no such step as consecration to the Lord. Yet they are instructed by their rulers that they are God's people and are fighting His battles.

According to the Bible, only the saintly, only those who have taken the specific steps laid down by the Master for His disciples, are Christians at all. All others professing to be Christians are merely imitations—"tares." Through a study of the lives of saints of olden time true Christians are enabled to see more clearly the mind of God, the will of God, for themselves. They gain from the lives of Moses, Joshua, the Prophets, and other faithful ones of past ages lessons of faith, of courage, of zeal. They are instructed that all these Scriptural records are meant as types and as admonitions for the Gospel Church; and they are thereby warned, strengthened and encouraged.

The Lord's people should not feel strong in themselves nor boastful, but, on the contrary, very humble and very insufficient—just as Joshua did. All of God's children are to realize their insufficiency in their own strength. They should feel that God has called

them to a great work, and that they would make an utter failure unless the Lord gives His blessing. They are to look to the Lord and to receive His promises into good and honest hearts, believing that these promises are theirs, so long as they are loyal and true to Him. Thus doing, they may be strong, very strong; they may be very courageous.

SHINING EXAMPLES OF THE PAST

We have noted the courage of our Lord Jesus Himself, with a whole nation against Him! It has been thus with all His faithful followers—most of them the poor of this world, who have had very little wealth or influence or honor of men. The true people of God throughout the Gospel Age have been a humble class, yet they have been very strong and courageous. The people in the days of the Apostles "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus" and had learned of Him. Those disciples of Jesus had seen His readiness to lay down His life in the Father's service. They had seen His courage when He was facing death of the most cruel kind, when He said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" And so we who have followed the Master since then have taken note of the spirit which our dear Lord manifested at all times, under the most trying and crucial experiences; and it has proven a wonderful inspiration to us.

The faithful ones have all along as a rule been little known in the world. They have not usually been of the great, the learned, the rich. In the past there may have been some prominent ones, some of noble birth, who were saints of God, living up to what light they had in their time; but they were the exceptions. We know that there have been many true saints who have lived quiet, uneventful lives, yet who have seemed to live up to all the light they possessed and to walk with God until they fell asleep in death. The world has generally ignored these saints of God, even when they were not actively persecuted. We cannot surely know who are entirely loyal and sincere at heart; but we may be sure that "the Lord knoweth them that are His."—2 Timothy 2:19.

COURAGE IN THIS "HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

Coming down to our own day, there never was a time when more strength of character and more courage were needed than just now. The iniquities of the whole world, and especially of so-called Christendom, have now about come to the full; and all present governments are about to be swept away, to make room for the glorious Kingdom of God under the whole heavens—the glorious Reign of the King of kings. All the ecclesiastical systems of today, calling themselves the Church of Christ, are arrayed on the side of error and are battling against the Truth and its advocates. So we need to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Whoever starts out to battle in his own strength against this stronghold of error will be sure to be defeated. But if he goes in the strength of the Lord of Hosts, and has Divine direction as to what he shall do or say, he may well be of good courage. Many earnest hearts are now asking for the Bread of Life, they are captives in Babylon or are famishing out in the "field," the world. These need our assistance.

Our strength will be tried—our hold upon God and upon the Truth, and our courage in defending the Truth. These will surely be put to the test; for Babylon is opposing our way. God will not have any in the Kingdom who have not faithfully endured. Yet in meekness let us seek to instruct those who oppose themselves to the Word of the Lord; and let us look for the hungry and thirsty ones.

We do not know in what form some of our trials and tribulations will come. But we who are living in this "evil day," yea, in the very close of this day—in the final "hour of temptation"—surely need to have on the whole armor of God. We need to have our loins girt about with *Truth*; we need the helmet to protect our minds, our intellects, from the shafts of error; we need the breastplate of righteousness; we need the Sword of the Spirit—the broad two-edged Sword; we need the sandals of "preparation of the Gospel of Peace." We need all these to overcome the Canaanites in our own breast, and to overcome all the surrounding obstacles.

Thus armored and furnished, we may indeed come off "more than conquerors" in the great conflict, which is daily increasing. We shall conquer "through Him who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood." Let the promise of the Master be our daily inspiration: "To him that *overcometh* will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."

"Arise, then, O Army of Gideon!
Let him that is fearful return;
Jehovah wants only the zealous,
Whose hearts with the love of Truth burn!

"Your sword is the 'Sword of the Spirit';
Your lamp is the light from His Word;
Your pitcher, this poor earthen vessel
You break at the voice of your Lord.

"Is your light burning bright in your pitcher?
Doth your trumpet give forth certain sound?
Soon the Sword of the Lord and of Gideon
The enemy's host will confound.

"For sure is the victory promised,
And great is the peace He awards;
Then 'stand' in your place, all ye faithful—
The battle's not yours, but the Lord's!"

NOVEMBER 12

Be not faithless, but believing—John 20:27.

It is impossible for us to come near to the Lord except as we shall exercise faith and trust in Him, in His goodness, in His power, in His wisdom, in His love. Faith is a matter of cultivation, of development. The same Apostles who cried out in terror when the storm was upon the Sea of Galilee gradually grew stronger and stronger in faith until, as the records show, they could and did trust the Lord in His absence and where they could not trace Him. Similarly it should be a part of our daily lesson to cultivate trust in the Lord, and to think of the experiences in the past in our lives and all these lessons in His Word, that thus our faith in Him may become rooted and grounded—Z '04, 89 (R 3337).

To be faithless implies that one does not exercise a mental appreciation of, and heart's reliance upon, God and Christ with respect to Their persons, characters, words and works, while to be believing implies that one exercises a mental appreciation of, and heart's reliance upon, God and Christ in respect to Their persons, characters, words and works. They do not deserve unbelief, and no child of God should insult Them therewith; for unbelief in act tells God and Christ that They are unreliable. On the contrary, we should be very zealous to prove to Them in acts that we rely implicitly upon Them as dependable in Their persons, characters, words and works. Thus we will be pleasing to Them—P '36, 165, 166.

Parallel passages: Ex. 4:1; Num. 20:12; Psa. 78:19, 21, 22, 32; 95:8-11; 106:7, 24; Isa. 7:9; 53:1-3; Matt. 17:17, 19, 20; Mark 6:2-6; 9:24; Mark 16:14, 16; Luke 8:12, 18; 24:11, 21, 25, 26; John 16:8, 9; Rom. 3:3; 10:6, 7, 14.

Hymns: 174, 12, 56, 63, 93, 124, 251.

Poems of Dawn, 83: *Assurance*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 40 (R 5624).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

ASSURANCE

IT may not come to us as we have thought,
The blessed consciousness of sins forgiven;
We may not hear a voice that shall proclaim
Our title clear to the sweet rest of heaven.

We may not see a light upon the path
Above the brightness of the noonday sun,
Whose radiance shall reveal our names enrolled
As ransomed by the Lord's Anointed One.

Not thus may the sweet knowledge come to us,
That all is well with us forevermore;
Not with a flash of glory on the soul
Do all pass into life through Christ the door.

But like the winter merging into spring,
Or gently as the trees put forth their leaves,
May come to us the impulse of that life
Which God bestows on those sin truly grieves.

If we are conscious of a firm resolve
To follow Jesus as our constant guide;
If, in prosperity or in distress,
Our hearts cling closely to the Crucified;

If we are not ashamed to have it known
That in His service is our chief delight;
Though we may never feel the ecstasy
Which those attain who reach the mountain height;

Yet, if the hour of secret prayer be sweet,
When we hold converse with the Friend Divine,
And dear the time when with His "own" we meet,
For us the promise stands, "They shall be Mine."

R5624: MORE CONVINCING EVIDENCE DEMANDED

"Be not faithless, but believing."—John 20:27.

THE words of our text are found in connection with our Lord's appearance to the eleven disciples in the upper room, St. Thomas being of the number. From the narrative we learn that just a week before this Jesus had appeared to His disciples, but St. Thomas was absent at the time. The ten who had witnessed our Lord's manifestation related to St. Thomas the things which they had seen; but their accounts seemed idle tales to him and he could not believe them. He said he thought they were too easily convinced, and that it would require stronger evidence than *they* had had to convince *him*. Unless he could see the print of the nails in our Lord's hands, and put his fingers into the print of the nails, and could be able to thrust his hand into the spear-wound in His side, he would not believe.

To some this might seem to be an example of extreme unbelief, an unwillingness to receive the testimony of the Ten as to the experiences through which they had passed. Yet to other minds it would not seem so strange. Some of us would find it difficult to believe from any lips that a person whom we had three days before seen dead and laid in the tomb had manifested by His presence to others that He was again alive; and

especially hard would it be to believe that He had appeared when the doors were shut, and had disappeared, the doors still being shut. We rather fear that had we been in St. Thomas' place we would have been inclined to say, "Show us how that could be." We would have experienced the same difficulty, and would likely have said, "You *think* you saw something; you *believe* you are telling the *truth*, but we think that you have been *deceived*." We are born with differences of mental qualities, and it is easier for some to believe than it is for others.

ST. THOMAS NOT REPROVED

However, on this occasion Jesus gave the desired demonstration. His first appearance to them as a group was, we believe, on the first day of the week, and the second manifestation was given again on the first day of the week; eight days later, under similar circumstances, St. Thomas being present, Jesus said to him, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing." (John 20:27.) These were the very things St. Thomas had demanded, the very proof he had required. The words of Jesus do not convey the thought of any special reproof to St. Thomas. It would seem that the fact that the Lord gave to him the desired evidence to convince him, was an indication that He did not disapprove of his demand for more convincing demonstration than the others had had before believing a statement so marvelous as that of the other ten disciples; for if it had been a thing of which He disapproved He would not have complied with St. Thomas' wish.

Our Lord did, however, say (though speaking of those of us who would live subsequently, and not of the disciples), "Blessed are they who do not see, and do yet believe." This is our position. The Lord indicates a special blessing upon those who, not seeing, would be able to believe. But we are to remember that we have testimonies and evidences that St. Thomas did not have. If we had heard that ten men had seen certain things one night, we might have wondered if they had not been in a vision, just as the transfiguration on the Mount was a vision. We might have imagined some dream or some hallucination coming upon them. Here, however, was St. Thomas, a man like a great many of us, hard-headed and practical; but when the proof was given to him, when demonstration was made, he recognized that it was not a phantom, but that the Lord stood there before him in a body of flesh. This incident has proved a strengthener to the faith of many of us.

It is quite probable that St. Thomas was not permitted to be present at that first interview for the very purpose that there might be that demonstration, to the intent that it might be easier for some of us to believe. We can readily see that an established faith was all-important to the disciples. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Hebrews 11:6.) If the disciples had been in doubt about our Lord's resurrection, they would not have been able to give us clear testimony on the subject, and how would we otherwise have known the facts? Some would have believed that He ascended to Heaven, and others of us would have thought differently, if we had not the positive testimony, the proof. So the Lord purposed that these eleven disciples should be thoroughly convinced. Unless they had had absolute faith in Him as the ascended Redeemer and Advocate they

would not have been prepared to receive the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. And unless they had received the Holy Spirit, they would not have been fitted for the ministry.

These forty days, then, seem to be the most important part of our Lord's ministry; for on them depended all the success of the Gospel Message, which was to be launched, not by angels, but by men—these very men to whom He appeared—it was for them to tell what they *saw* and *believed*. For them to have lost faith and to have gone back into the ordinary affairs of life would have been contrary to the Divine arrangement.

Jesus appeared four times—once to the women on the morning of His resurrection, once later on the same day to two of His disciples who were going to Emmaus; later the same evening to the ten in the upper room; then after a week, this appearance to St. Thomas and the other ten disciples. Some two or three weeks then elapsed, in which they neither saw Him nor heard of Him. Jesus was giving them some time in which to develop faith. They had these proofs, that He had spirit power to go and come like the wind. But He had not told them what to do, so in spite of all they had seen they thought it best to go back into the fishing business.

This was the moment for which Jesus was waiting. He knew they would have doubts and wonderments, and was on the alert to be invisibly with them to teach them a necessary lesson just as soon as they returned to the fishing business. As a result they did not catch even one fish. None were allowed to go into their net. All night long the disciples toiled in vain.

In the morning Jesus was standing on the shore. They had not seen Him for about three weeks, and at first did not recognize Him. He told them to cast their net on the other side of the boat. If there were no fish on one side, there would probably not be any on the other side; for a little distance would not make much difference. But they had had such a trying experience during the night that they were willing to do almost anything. While it did not seem reasonable that it would do any good to cast the net just a few feet further away, yet having lost all confidence, they were ready to follow the suggestion of the stranger. So they put the net down, and enclosed a great haul of fish. It was a great miracle; for the net was *full*. But it was nothing remarkable for a spirit being to make this exhibition, this manifestation, of Divine power.

By this experience the disciples were taught two great lessons—that without the Divine blessing they could not succeed even in the fishing business, the occupation in which they had been engaged all their lives. The second great lesson was that He who had been a Fisher of men had the Divine power to supply all their needs; that as He had the power to supply the fish, so He had power to supply all other needs. Furthermore, when they got to the shore, He had fish there and had cooked them—He was not dependent upon the fish in the net. Of course we do not understand the power—it was Divine Power, unlimited power. This experience became to the disciples almost a final demonstration of Divine power. They knew that it was Jesus, although they did not ask Him. He showed them that He had all the while known just what they were doing, and that He had absolute power to give or to withhold blessings from them. It must have been

a great strengthener of their faith to realize that He was as able to provide for them in one place as in another, and that they did not need to go back into the world and its pursuits; for He would be with them always, even to the end of the Age.—Matthew 28:20.

TWO GREAT FACTS ESTABLISHED

Subsequently our Lord appeared to His disciples twice more—seven times altogether. Then He ascended up on High. Later He appeared to St. Paul. By these different demonstrations Jesus thoroughly convinced His disciples of two great things; first, that He was no longer dead, that He was alive; secondly, that He had supreme power. "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28:18.) This great Being was their Master. He had not lost anything, but had gained much in passing into death and then out of it. So they might have great confidence in Him, and might go forth to speak of His death, of the fact of His resurrection and of His ascension into God's presence, as manifested by the giving of the Holy Spirit. But they would not have been ready to declare any of these things had they not been thoroughly convinced.

We do not think that Jesus reproved St. Thomas for His doubts. It is a great satisfaction to one whose mind happens to be of that particular kind as was St. Thomas'. Some minds require more proof than do others. Undoubtedly the whole Church has been blessed by St. Thomas' action at this time. If we had been one of the disciples and had been absent when Jesus first appeared, and had been told of it by the others we would have said, "You are dreaming, gentlemen. In your perplexity and excitement you are telling us a fairy tale." We would wish to be satisfied and to have the sense of touch to prove the matter. Now the Lord gave us this evidence, and it is a great blessing to us.

A POWER POSSESSED BY SPIRIT BEINGS

The evidence of the resurrection of Jesus lay in the fact that there was a Person there in that upper room who had the power to come and go like the wind and to demonstrate that He was not dead by any means. That body which St. Thomas and the other disciples saw was not the body crucified and buried in Joseph's tomb, but a materialized body—with the same facial expression, the same hands, the same feet, that the human body of Jesus had. Jesus said that it was *flesh*, that "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." He had both the flesh and the bones there.—John 24:39.

St. Thomas and the others could not appreciate how a spirit could materialize a body. In fact, with all that *we* know, more than eighteen centuries later, we do not understand how it could be. We know, however, that angels appeared like men and could talk, eat and walk. We know that various evil spirit beings appeared in the days of Noah, and sought to dwell on earth as men. The disciples knew this, but they had not thought to apply this to the Lord. They were learning how to apply these things to the Lord—how a spirit being could materialize and dematerialize in their presence. This was a matter of education. Subsequently they would come to a more particular understanding of this—when they received the Holy Spirit; just as with us. When we come to a better knowledge, in this proportion the Holy Spirit has guided our understanding.

We have come to a full ability to believe these matters, although we do not understand them yet; for to understand would be to enter into the matter in a philosophical way and to know how the thing is done. We do not think that the Apostles saw the body of our Lord in the resurrection. But what they saw was proof that He was no longer a human being, but a spirit being. To make a body suitable for the occasion was no more of a miracle than were any of the other things connected with the resurrection.

NOVEMBER 13

Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of—Matt. 6:8.

Our petitions, our requests, our cries to the Lord, therefore, should be for the holiness of heart, for the filling of His Spirit, for the spiritual food, refreshment, strength; and as for the natural things, He knows the way we take and what would be to our best interests as Christians. We are to leave this to Him; He would not be pleased to see us importuning Him for things which He did not give us, for to do so would not be an exemplification of faith in Him, but the reverse—an exemplification of doubt, a manifestation of fear that He was forgetting or neglecting His promise to give us the things needful—Z '04, 90 (R 3337).

We stand in need of earthly and heavenly things, but we do not understand the details respecting them. Nor do we know in what order, time, place and manner these needs may best be supplied. Therefore we should refrain from giving the Lord specific directions respecting the supply of them. It is enough for us to know that God knows their every detail, and just how, when and where to supply them. Nor need we doubt His willingness to supply them, because as our Father He pities us more than earthly fathers pity their children. Therefore let us wait on Him, grateful and content in His provision for us—P '30, 183.

Parallel passages: Psa. 38:9; 69:17-19; 139:2; Matt. 6:32-34; Luke 11:13; John 16:23, 24; Phil. 4:6, 19; 1 John 5:14, 15.

Hymns: 121, 301, 67, 99, 293, 63, 333.

Poems of Dawn, 109: *I Know Not the Way That's Before Me.*

Tower Reading: Z '15, 38 (R 5623).

Questions: What events of the week indicate the Lord's providence over me? Have I trusted or worried during the week? What helped or hindered? What lessons did I learn from the experiences?

I KNOW NOT THE WAY THAT'S BEFORE ME

I KNOW not the way that's before me,
The joys or the griefs it may bring;
What clouds are o'erhanging the future,
What flowers by the wayside may spring.
But there's One who will journey beside me,
Nor in weal nor in woe will forsake;
And this is my solace and comfort,
"He knoweth the way that I take."

R5623: "YOUR FATHER KNOWETH"

"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of."—Matthew 6:8.

SHORTLY after the beginning of our Lord's ministry, He gave the discourse commonly known as the Sermon on the Mount. The disciples had not yet become sons of God in the full, proper sense of the word; indeed, they could not be received into sonship until Pentecost. They were members of the fallen race, under the same condemnation as other men. The very highest claim that they could make was that which the Jews made—that of being servants of God. But now, as recorded in John 1:12, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power [privilege] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; who were begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

This spirit-begetting was not possible in its full, proper sense until Jesus had made reconciliation for the sins of the world, or, at least, had prepared the way for reconciliation by His own death. In one sense of the word, however, His death had already occurred; namely, in that He had presented Himself a living sacrifice, and that the Father had accepted that sacrifice. But that death must be finished, and Jesus must ascend into the presence of God and present the merit of His sacrifice, before the Divine blessing would descend upon any, permitting them to be the sons of God.

THE FATHER OF THE CHURCH

We see, therefore, that Jesus spoke in an anticipatory, or prophetic, sense as to their relationship to God. Because they believed in Him and were seeking to do His will, they were in full line with God's arrangement for their becoming sons. Just as after a person has adopted a child and while the papers are in process of being drawn up in legal form, the child might be spoken of as a son, or he might address the one adopting him as Father or Mother; so these would have the privilege of addressing God as their Father and their privilege would depend on their faith. The majority of the Jews did not have this faith, and when Jesus said that He was the Son of God, they were about to take up stones to stone Him for blasphemy. But Jesus said that not only was He the Son of God, but that He would bring many sons to God; and He quoted from the Psalms in support of this assertion.—John 10:31-40; Psalm 82:6.

Thus our Lord spoke to His disciples as if they were already New Creatures, had already become sons of God and had already received the Holy Spirit, even though both He and they knew that this was not to be completely accomplished, until, as He told them, "not many days hence" they should actually and personally have received it—at Pentecost. Addressing the disciples from this standpoint the Master said, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." These words are part of His Sermon on the Mount. As we read, "When He was set, His disciples came unto Him; and He opened His mouth and taught them." The multitude were not to call God Father, but they were to understand that those who had become the followers of the Lord Jesus could call Him Father.

The word Father implies a great deal when taken in conjunction with other Scriptures. God was the Father of Adam in the sense that He gave Adam his life. Jesus was not Adam's Father, although, as the Logos, He was the One particularly active in giving Adam life. By Adam's disobedience, this life was lost for himself and for all of his children. Not only life was lost, but the Spirit of the Lord was lost, and that included the relationship of sons.

THE EVERLASTING FATHER OF HUMANITY

After Adam, we find none called sons of God down to the time of Jesus. Jesus was the first Son of God after Adam; and since our Lord's time the Church have been called sons of God. (1 John 3:2.) The fact that we are called sons of God implies the begetting of a new life; for the old life which we inherited from Father Adam is gone. This new life which we have received is not from Jesus, but from the Father, Jesus being the channel through which this life comes to us. "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... hath begotten us." (1 Peter 1:3.) We see that the arrangement for the world is somewhat different. God does not purpose to beget the world of the Holy Spirit, as He has the Church. On the contrary, we see that Jesus is to become the Everlasting Father of the world, in due time. (Isaiah 9:6.) That due time will be the great thousand-year Day of the Messianic Kingdom.

In that thousand-year Day Christ, as the great King, Mediator between God and men, will give life to humanity. We see that the life He will give will be human life. He will be the Father of humanity, because that human life which He will give them will be something that is His own. By His obedience to God's Plan He bought the right to give human life. Hence, in giving that life at His own cost, He is styled the Father of the human family. This will not mean that the world will not be considered sons of God, any more than a grandson would not be a son of the father and of the grandfather. Mankind will not receive their life directly from God, but indirectly through Christ—Christ is the Father and God the Grandfather. God does not speak in random terms, but with great exactness. This being true, we have great confidence in His Word.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL

When Adam and his family became sinners, some of them went further than merely neglecting God. It was no fault of theirs that they were cut off from Him. But they did not retain God in their minds, and so God gave them over to a reprobate mind. They became children of Satan in the sense that they became obedient to him. He adopted them into his family, they willingly accepting him and becoming obedient to him. Of course, Satan did not give life actually to the world, but they adopted him as their father by accepting his terms and becoming members of his family. To some of the human family our Lord said, "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."—John 8:44.

When Adam was rejected, he came under the sentence of death. He was left to shift for himself. The statement, You are under a curse of death, would mean, You cannot

avoid dying—"Dying thou shalt die." There will be pestilences, earthquakes and famines. You will be subject to these because you are sinners. Mankind could not expect God to do anything for them when they were under death sentence; yet God has done much for them, even though they are sinners. He causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall upon the just and upon the unjust.—Matthew 5:45.

When the Jews were called of God under the Law Covenant, it brought them under a special relationship to Him as servants. "Moses was faithful over his own House," a servant over the House of Israel. These servants were subject to some care, even as a caretaker in a great house would look after all the servants as well as the sons. While the son would have the more particular care, yet the servant would be cared for also.

Thus the Jews were invited to have a share in God's care. They were promised that everything would work together for their good. God would bless their flocks and herds, and would do them good if they would obey His statutes. They did not do so, and thus brought upon themselves chastisements. As we read the record of the people of Israel, we find that they were the most chastened people of history, passing through the most wonderful experiences and disciplines, through which they were brought to a high religious attitude. So when our Lord came into the world, they were of the highest religious sentiment, of the most devoted sentiment, of all mankind. Many of them were prepared to have the special favor that Jesus came to give; namely, the privilege of becoming sons of God.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH THE CHURCH

The sons of God during this Gospel Age are similarly under special favor of God and under special Covenant with Him. He has engaged to treat them as sons, not as servants; not as opposers or enemies, but as children. "God dealeth with you as with sons." (Hebrews 12:7.) With this assurance that God will deal with His people as with sons, we might be surprised that the saintly people have not been blessed, as those who are unsaintly, with money, health, temporal prosperity. We inquire how this is. Is God neglecting His part when He has promised that He will deal with these as with sons? We are not sons of God according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. Having been begotten of the Spirit, we are sons of God according to the New Creation, the interests of which are often best served by experiences which are not favorable to the flesh.

With these sons of God, the New Creature is the special thing in God's sight. The flesh matters little. And God wishes these sons to have the proper experiences that will bring them to the required development as sons of God on the spirit plane. This means that they must ultimately die according to the flesh. There is no other way of entering into the spirit nature than by dying according to the flesh. We must all follow in the footsteps of the Master.

The trials of the narrow way are special tests of the New Creature. How will the New Creature act under these trials and difficulties? Will he prove loyal to God when things seem unfavorable to him according to the flesh? If so, the New Creature will grow strong;

and the warfare between the two, the spirit and the flesh, will finally result in the victory of the New Creature, and in his birth in the First Resurrection, or Chief Resurrection, to the spirit nature, the Divine nature.

PROPER MENTAL ATTITUDE FOR PRAYER

The words of our text apply only to the New Creatures. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." It is not necessary for us to use vain repetitions as the heathen do, asking God over and over again for blessings of a temporal kind. He knoweth what things we have need of; that is to say, whether we as New Creatures will be most profited in the abundance of wealth or in the absence of wealth; whether we as New Creatures will be most profited in the possession of health or otherwise. We are not to tell God what we wish. We are to give up our will in order that His will may be done. We are to pray, therefore, as Jesus prayed, "Not My will, but Thine be done"; for "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." The heathen do not have God as their Father, and He is not supervising their affairs. They get certain common blessings that God is providing for all—sunshine and rain.

The prayer of God's people should not be for temporal things. We know of no Scriptural illustration where the spiritual sons of God asked definitely for temporal things and received an answer. We remember that St. Paul prayed three times very earnestly for the restoration of his eyesight. God would not give him the thing he asked for, but would give him that which would be better for him as a New Creature. And this affliction of poor eyesight, watery eyes, would help to keep him in remembrance of the fact that he was once a persecutor of the Lord's people. The Lord would not take away his affliction, but would give him the grace necessary. Presumably, when the Apostle learned that lesson, he did not pray for such things again; but doubtless it was to our benefit that he did not find this out until he had prayed those three improper prayers. We learn from this that we should be in the attitude to say, "Lord, Thou knowest what I have need of. Give what is best."

THE MODEL PRAYER

Some might declare that this would not be the proper way to offer a petition—that we should ask God for something definite; for instance, if one needed a coat, he should ask for a coat. But our Father has said that we need not go into particulars. God knows that we have need of bread. Our petition, therefore, when we say, "Give us this day our daily bread," is not that we think that God would forget about it, but rather as an acknowledgement on our part that all we have—our food and everything else—comes from God. He knows what we have need of, and provides these things aside from our asking. Nevertheless, it is the Father's good pleasure that we should go to Him, asking forgiveness for our sins, realizing that He has made provision in advance for that forgiveness, and that only as we are merciful to others will He deal mercifully with us in respect to our trespasses. With regard to our food, we thank our Father as the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

We hallow His name—honor His name—put it first in our petitions, in our thoughts. The idea is not as to how much glory we can get; but, first of all, we mention our Father and His glorious name—we hallow His name, make it holy. It should be hallowed and revered everywhere in the whole world. Then we follow with the petition desiring that His Kingdom would come; for we realize that His Kingdom is the very thing that the whole world needs, and that He has promised that it shall come. This is merely to tell Him of our dependence upon Him, and our waiting for Him and for those things which He has promised and arranged for in His Kingdom. We are not merely *saying*, "Thy Kingdom come"—we are *waiting* for it, *expecting* it. Then comes in the mention of our necessities. He knoweth what things we have need of—whether it be a full loaf, a half loaf or a quarter loaf, a small ration or a large one. Then we ask for protection from the Evil One.

There is no such request as, "My shoes are needing to be replaced with new shoes," or "My coat is getting glossy." The heathen, the world might pray for these things; but we are children of God, and are to conform our prayers to what He has said. We are to take for examples the prayers of Jesus and such prayers as the Apostles offered. These prayers are not so much requirements made of God, but telling Him we are depending upon Him, seeking to have no will of our own—merely sinking into His will, asking that His will be done in all our affairs. Then we are to live and act according to that will and according to those prayers.

NOVEMBER 14

Take heed therefore unto yourselves ... for grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them—Acts 20:28-30.

It is necessary for the discipline, trial and final proving of the Church of God that they should be subjected to these adverse influences; for to him that *overcomes* them is the promise of the great reward. If we would share in the Kingdom with Christ, we must prove our worthiness by the same tests of loyalty to God, of faith in His Word, of zeal for the Truth, of patient endurance of reproach and persecution, even unto death, and of unwavering trust in the power and purpose of God to deliver and exalt His Church in due time. To such faithful ones are the blessed consolations of Psalm 91—Z '04, 74 (R 3331).

Wolves are not God's, but Satan's servants, who come among God's people with evil and destructive intent. They, therefore, seek not the welfare but rather the life-blood of God's flock. They pursue and terrify; they bite and devour His sheep. They spare neither the old nor the young among the flock. Those who arise from among the brethren, taking teaching positions, and using them to falsify the teachings of the Word, have been of two classes: Great Company and Second Death sifters. Both have taught doctrines that are perversions of the Truth, though the latter class does worse than the former class in this respect. They do so to win a following. God's elect take heed of all three classes, and do so by studying, practicing and spreading the Truth—P '35, 171.

Parallel passages: Jer. 23:1; Ezek. 34:1-10; John 10:12; Matt. 7:15; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29; 2 Pet. 2:1, 22; Jude 3-19; 2 Tim. 1:15; 3:1-9; 1 Tim. 1:19, 20.

Hymns: 130, 1, 13, 44, 71, 120, 315.

Poems of Dawn, 304: *'Twas a Sheep*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 29 (R 5388).

Questions: What have been the week's experiences in line with this text? Under what circumstances did they occur? How were they met? In what did they result?

'T WAS A SHEEP

'T WAS a sheep, not a lamb, that went astray
In the parable Jesus told;
'T was a grown-up sheep that wandered away
From the ninety and nine in the fold.
And out on the hilltops and out in the cold
'T was a sheep that the Good Shepherd sought,
And back to the flock, and back to the fold,
'T was a sheep that the Good Shepherd brought.

Now, why should the sheep be so carefully fed
And cared for still today?
One reason is that if they go wrong
They will lead the lambs astray;
For lambs often follow the sheep, you know,
Wherever they wander, wherever they go.

And if sheep go wrong, it will not be long
Till some lambs are as wrong as they;
So, still with the sheep we must earnestly plead,
For the sake of the lambs today.
If the lambs are lost, what a terrible cost
Some sheep will have to pay!

R5388: ST. PAUL'S EXHORTATION TO ELDERS

"Take heed to yourselves, ... for grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."—Acts 20:29, 30.

THESE words were addressed to the Elders of the Church at Ephesus. St. Paul, going toward Jerusalem, had found himself not far from Ephesus, and had sent word to the Elders that he would remain there a little while, and would be glad to meet them once more. They came and held a lengthy conference with him. This text is part of his message to them. He told them that he would not see them again, and exhorted them to take heed to themselves. It behooves every one to take heed to *himself* more than to *others*. And unless a man learns to rule his *own* spirit, he could not be in a proper condition to rule *others*.

This is particularly true of all Elders. They should watch *themselves*. Because of the honor which the Church gives them, they are in danger of being carried away by a feeling of self-importance—self-conceit. They are in danger of becoming arrogant. But the message is to take heed to *themselves*, and to *the flock of God*, over whom they are made overseers. They are to recognize their position as representatives, not only of the Congregation, but also of the Lord. This position being given them in the appointed way—an election by the stretching forth of the hand—they are not only to take this as the word of the Church, but also to realize that they are chosen of the Holy Spirit. They are to recognize this care of the Church as their great mission, an important service to be rendered in the name of the Lord.

WOLVES AND APOSTATE SHEEP

There are two particular reasons why Elders need to be on guard. The first reason, as given by the Apostle, was that grievous wolves would enter in among them, who would not spare the flock. The intimation seems to be that the wolves are not *part of the flock* at

any time. They would not represent themselves as *wolves*, however. The Apostle's warning would seem to imply that a certain class of people of a wolfish nature would seek to associate themselves with the Church. Our Lord warned, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." (Matt. 7:15.) This seems to imply the thought of deception—walking like sheep, going about amongst the sheep and representing themselves to be sheep, wearing sheep's clothing, but never being real sheep. Their object in coming into the flock is selfish, their influence is that of a wolf amongst sheep. A wolf worries the sheep—his intention is to kill them, to suck their blood.

So there seems to be a class who, for no reason that we can imagine, pervert the truth, injuring the flock, stirring up arguments that confuse the flock, destroying them as New Creatures, and dragging them down to death. Presumably there has been such a class all the way down through the Age. While our text does not imply that sheep could ever become wolves, perhaps some of us have known persons who at one time were sheep, but who after a while manifested a wolfish disposition, and took pleasure in doing all that they could to injure the flock. The Lord and the Apostle warn us that we should beware of those who come in amongst the sheep, palming themselves off as sheep.

In addition to this danger from wolves, there will be dangers among themselves. The Apostle points this out as a *very subtle* danger. In addition to those of the wolfish nature, some in a class will engage in service as teachers, and by speaking perverse things will seek to draw away disciples unto themselves. They seek to draw them away as *their own*. Their sentiment seems to be, This is *my* class, *my* flock—not recognizing that the Church is the *Lord's Flock*, that they are the *Lord's* sheep. In this there is a selfish attitude quite contrary to the Spirit of the Lord and to the Scriptures. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" is a principle of the Divine Government. If any one would be a true Elder, a real servant of the Lord, he is to remember these things, and to avoid everything that would be of a self-seeking spirit. Otherwise, he may be sure that he will do injury, not only to himself, but to others also, by such a course.

RESPONSIBILITY PROPORTIONATE TO ABILITY

Sheep are very timid animals and need some kind of leading. In the absence of a shepherd, they need some one of their own number to be, as it were, leader for them. In flocks of sheep there are wise sheep—rams of the flock, leaders—that the sheep learn to follow, in the absence of the shepherd. These old rams of the flock would represent Elders in the Church of Christ. The ram's horns constitute a means of defense, with which he could drive off adversaries in a time of attack, and the sheep would be able to get behind him.

But the Scriptures speak of danger as respects some of the rams of the flock—certain leaders of the Lord's people. (Ezek. 34:17-23.) These rams got into the stream and made it muddy, defiling the water. He-goats are also mentioned; this is an illustration of the disposition of some Elders of the Church of Christ, and should not be lost upon us. We

are told that owners of sheep sometimes use a *goat* as a leader of the flock, because a goat is more combative than a sheep, and thus supply the sheep courage, etc. We do not know how many of the Lord's Flock are being led by a goat. But whenever any one manifests the goat disposition, the Ecclesia should strictly avoid making him a leader.

The proper leaders are those who show the proper disposition. The Church is very much at the mercy of the leaders; hence the latter have the greater responsibility. So the Apostle says, Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that a man who is a teacher has the severer trial, the severer test. (Paraphrase of James 3:1, R.V.) He has the greater responsibility in proportion to his ability. It would seem, then, that all who accept the position of Elders are, to some extent, representing the Lord, who is the great Shepherd of the Flock.

NOVEMBER 15

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked—1 John 2:6.

He is to walk as our Lord walked, in his general deportment and relationship to everything that is good and correspondingly to avoid everything that is evil. He is to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of Jesus. This, however, does not mean that he either should or could, in an imperfect body, walk up to all the perfection of his Lord, who even in His flesh was perfect. It means just what it says, that we should walk as He walked—in the same way, in the same direction, toward the same mark and standard that He recognized and established—Z '03, 345 (R 3235).

To abide in Christ implies not only consecration and Spirit-infilling but also continuity in the consecrated attitude, deadness to self and the world, and aliveness unto God. Jesus fulfilled His consecration vows: He remained dead to self and the world and alive unto God. Therefore, He studied the Word, watched and prayed in harmony with the Word, spread and practiced the Word, and suffered in holiness for faithfulness to the Word. Whoever abides in Christ not only ought so to conduct himself, but surely in spirit will perfectly so do, and in flesh as nearly perfectly as his fallen earthen vessel will permit. A blessed walk indeed is the walk like Christ's. Who so does possesses all things—P '34, 159.

Parallel passages: John 15:1-9; 13:15, 34; Phil. 2:5-8; 1 Pet. 2:21-24; Matt. 11:29; 20:28; Mark 10:43-45; Luke 22:26, 27; Rom. 8:29; 15:2, 3, 5, 7; Eph. 5:2; 1 Cor. 3:13; Heb. 12:2-4; 1 John 3:16; 4:17; 2 John 9; Rev. 3:21; 14:4.

Hymns: 196, 28, 325, 326, 323, 167, 198.

Poems of Dawn, 28: *Christ, Our Teacher*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 126 (R 5446).

Questions: Have I imitated Jesus this week? Under what circumstances? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

CHRIST, OUR TEACHER

LET Him teach thee, weary soul; (Psa. 27:11.)
Let His hands now make thee whole; (Job 5:18.)
Let His peace thy heart control,—(Col. 3:15.)
Let Him teach thee.

Into paths of righteousness (Psa. 23:3.)
Let Him lead and let Him bless; (Psa. 67:7.)
Let Him save thee from distress,—(Psa. 107:13.)
Let Him teach thee.

Let Him guide thee with His eye; (Psa. 32:8.)
Let His hand thy need supply; (Phil. 4:19.)
Let His goodness satisfy,—(Psa. 65:4.)
Let Him teach thee.

Let His good Word sanctify; (Jno. 17:17.)
Let the furnace purify; (1 Peter 1:7.)
Let Him say, "Fear not; 'tis I,"—(Mark 6:50.)
Let Him teach thee.

Let Him probe thy heart within; (Psa. 66:10.)
Let Him search out every sin; (Psa. 139:23.)
Let the glorious light shine in,—(2 Cor. 4:6.)
Let Him teach thee.

Let the Shepherd kindly feed;
Let Him firmly, truly lead; (Isa. 40:11.)
(He'll not break the bruised reed,) (Isa. 42:3.)
Let Him teach thee.

Let Him give thee songs at night; (Job 35:10.)
Let Him make the darkness light; (Isa. 42:16.)
Let Him set thy spirit right,—(Psa. 51:10.)
Let Him teach thee.

In the tumult let Him hide, (Psa. 27:5; 31:20.)
Let Him keep thee at His side; (Ex. 33:21.)
Let His name be glorified—(Isa. 61:3.)
Let Him teach thee.

R5446: CHRISTLIKENESS THE EVIDENCE OF SONSHIP

"He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked."—1 John 2:6.

TO ABIDE in Christ implies that one has first come into Him. This gives us the thought of a Body. The Scriptures everywhere represent the Church as being this Body, with Jesus as the Head. "God gave Him to be Head over the Church, which is His Body." During the Gospel Age an invitation has been given to certain persons to be of this Body of Christ. There is only one door by which these may come into the Body. It is the door of sacrifice, baptism into Christ's death. We are accepted only by giving up our own will, and taking instead the will of God. We pledge ourselves to walk in Jesus' steps, to become His followers, His disciples. We are buried with Him and rise to walk in newness of life.—Romans 6:4.

But it is not sufficient that we take these steps, not sufficient that we have received the Holy Spirit, and have been accepted of the Father. We should be sure that we continue to abide in Christ. Let us ask ourselves, Are we having the experiences common to all who are associated with Jesus? One of the ways to be sure that we are abiding in Him is to realize that we still love Him. Another is to know that we are still in harmony with God's Word. A third way is that we have no will but the Lord's will. Still another is to have His peace in our hearts and lives as the ruling and controlling influence.

PROFESSION ALONE INSUFFICIENT

Many have made a profession of being members of the Body of Christ who do not give evidence of being His. Our text says that any one who professes to be in Christ ought so to walk even as the Master walked. And how did the Master walk? He lived daily in harmony with the will of the Heavenly Father. He was fully submissive to the Father's will. And this meant sacrifice unto death—the cruel death of the cross.

Whoever has our Lord's spirit, and is controlled by the same will, is a member of the Body of Christ, and will seek to walk after this fashion, to do the will of God in all things. This will mean a walk of holiness, of full devotion to God, and of opposition to sin. Whoever is consecrated to God is opposed to every sinful thing; for God and sin are in antagonism. God stands for His own righteousness, and sin is a violation of that righteousness. (1 John 3:4.) Whoever walks as Jesus walked is in harmony with the Divine Word and will. We are not to trust to our impressions, our own conceptions of what is right and advantageous, as many others do; but the Word of the Lord is to abide in us, and to govern our lives. Jesus said, "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me"—"everything written in the Book." And so it is to be with us. We must abide in Him, walk in Him, and be willing to do "everything written in the Book"—not merely forcing ourselves to it, saying, I *will* take this course; but saying, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O my God; Thy law is written in my heart."—Psa. 40:7, 8.

PROOFS OF SONSHIP

All who have accepted Christ claim, in a general way at least, to be sons of God, that Christ is their Elder Brother, and that they belong to this great family that God is selecting from the sons of men. They consider themselves heirs with Christ to the great Kingdom to come. But not all who claim to be sons of God are such. A great many are making this claim. Statistics tell us that there are four hundred millions of professed Christians; but we cannot think that many of these four hundred millions are sons of God. The Apostle Paul calls our attention to the fact that since we cannot read the hearts we must go by the professions which others make by mouth and by conduct. But professions of the mouth are not to be taken as final. We know that those who are sons of God will be led by His Spirit. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

But what is the Spirit of God? Primarily it is the spirit of Truth, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of justice, the spirit of love. And as many as are God's children, begotten of His Holy Spirit, will make some manifestation of their harmony with this general Spirit of

God. If they are, therefore, walking in unrighteousness, making no endeavor to stem the tendencies of sin in themselves, if they prefer error rather than Truth, their fruits condemn them; for God stands for Truth, and was exemplified in our Lord Jesus.

Whoever, therefore, has the Spirit of God, is willing to sacrifice himself that he may serve the Truth. He loves the Truth, and will manifest this fact by the spirit of love and zeal. Satan is the personification of sin, envy, hatred, malice, strife. Righteousness, love, joy, peace, are fruits of the Holy Spirit. Wherever we see the works of the Devil manifested we have reason to question that such a one is a child of God. The spirit of envy, the spirit of hatred, the spirit of malice, the spirit of opposition to the Truth, the spirit of unrighteousness—these are to be repudiated and overcome by all who would be sons of God.

Yet despite one's best efforts, he might still find in his flesh tendencies to sin which would give him a great deal of trouble. He may take courage from the assurances of the Scriptures that the Lord looketh on the *heart*. Likewise in regard to others, we should judge according to the endeavor, the intention. Wherever the Spirit of God is, there is the spirit of love. And this spirit will make one wish to make reparation, if he has done wrong or been in error. To do so shows that it was not his spirit, his will to do wrong, but that he was merely entrapped for a time. But one who continues to do according to his natural tendencies, with no evidence of going in the right direction and of serving the Truth, has reason to doubt that he is a child of God.

HOW WE CAN WALK AS HE WALKED

The Apostle's thought seems to be that those who profess to be the Lord's followers, profess to be Christians, should see to it that their walk in life is in harmony with their profession. The word *disciple* signifies one who follows—as a pupil follows his teacher. We recognize Christ as our Redeemer and also as our Pattern, our Instructor, in the glorious things which the Father has invited us to share with our Savior. If, therefore, we say that we are in Him, this profession should be borne out by our walk in life. We should walk as He walked.

But we are not perfect—how can this be done? The answer is that we "are not in the *flesh*, but in the *spirit*." God does not look upon our imperfect flesh. As New Creatures we are not fleshly beings, but spiritual. The Apostle is in our text speaking of that walk that the Master had after He made consecration. He walked in this way three and a half years. It was a walk, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. And so with us. We are walking, not according to the flesh, but according to the New Creature. We reckon ourselves dead according to the flesh, and the Lord so reckons us. If, then, we are dead to the flesh, we are not to walk according to the desires of the flesh.

We are to walk as our Lord walked, in our general deportment. We are to love everything that is good and to avoid everything that is evil. We are to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of our Lord and Exemplar. We cannot in an imperfect body walk up to all the perfection of Jesus, who was perfect in His flesh as well as in His spirit. But

we are to walk *as* He walked—in the same path, in the same direction, toward the same glorious goal toward which He walked. And so doing, faithful day by day, we shall by His grace attain the same exceeding great reward.

NOVEMBER 16

She hath done what she could—Mark 14:8.

It is not our privilege to come into personal contact with our dear Redeemer, but it is our privilege to anoint the Lord's "brethren" with the sweet perfume of love, sympathy, joy and peace, and the more costly this may be as respects our self-denials, the more precious it will be in the estimation of our Elder Brother, who declared that in proportion as we do or do not unto His brethren, we do or do not unto Him. ... Our alabaster boxes are our hearts, which should be full of the richest and sweetest perfumes of good wishes, kindness and love toward all, but especially toward ... our Lord Jesus, and toward all His disciples ... on whom we now have the privilege of pouring out the sweet odors of love and devotion in the name of the Lord, because we are His—Z '99, 78; '00, 378 (R 2447, 2743).

It was not because Jesus was without knowledge of Mary's human weaknesses that He was appreciative of her good deed wrought on Him; but despite that knowledge He had the nobility of character that could look upon both her ability and intention, and this made Him so appreciative of Mary, whom He knew to have intended the best she had for Him, and to have done it to the best of her ability. Therefore as a memorial to her, He gladly praised her. And doubtless He purposed that this praise should be a lesson and an encouragement for us, that we may learn to appreciate the good deeds, the loving deeds, of others, and be encouraged to do good. If with our best intentions and ability we break our alabaster boxes on His consecrated ones, He will appreciate our deed and mention it as a memorial of our having done what we could. Than this God asks no more of us; nor should we yield less—P '33, 162.

Parallel passages: Ezek. 9:11; Matt. 25:14-17; Luke 21:1-4; Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 4:7; 6:8; 1 Tim. 6:20; 1 Cor. 3:8, 12-15; 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:11-24; Rev. 2:23.

Hymns: 200, 8, 14, 177, 224, 259, 114.

Poems of Dawn, 220: *She Hath Done What She Could*.

Tower Reading: Z '05, 103 (R 3534).

Questions: What have I done this week for the Lord? How? Why? With what results?

"SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD"

THE Feast was spread at Simon's house, and as
they sat at meat,
A woman came and silent stood within the open
door—
Close pressed against her throbbing heart an alabaster
box
Of purest spikenard, costly, rare, she held. With modest fear,
She dreaded to attract the curious gaze of those

within,
And yet her well-beloved Friend was there, her
Master, Lord.
With wondrous intuition she divined that this might
be
Her last, her only opportunity to show her love;
She thought of all that He had done for her, the
holy hours
She spent enraptured at His feet, unmindful of all
else,
If only she might hear those words of Truth, those
words of *Life*.
She thought of that dark hour when Lazarus lay
within the tomb
And how He turned her night to day, her weeping
into joy.
Her fair face flushed, with deepening gratitude her
pure eyes shone;
With swift, light step she crossed the crowded room.
She bravely met
Those questioning eyes (for Love will find its way
through paths where lions
Fear to tread); with trembling hands she broke the
seal and poured
The precious contents of the box upon her Savior's
feet,
And all the house was filled with fragrance wonderful
and sweet.
She could not speak, her heart's devotion was too
deep, her tears
Fell softly, while she took her chiefest ornament, her
long
And silken hair and wiped His sacred feet,—when
suddenly
A rude voice broke the golden silence with, "What
waste! this might
Have sold for much, *to feed the poor!*" She lower
bent her head—
*To her it seemed so mean a gift for love so great to
make!*
Again a voice re-echoed through the room, her
blessed Lord's,
(He half arose and gently laid His hand upon her
hair)—
And how it thrilled her fainting heart to hear Him
sweetly say,

"Rebuke her not, for she hath wrought a good work,
what she could;
Aforehand, to anoint Me for my burying, she hath
come,
and this her deed of love throughout the ages shall
be told!"

* * *

How oft since first I read the story of this saint of old,
My own poor heart hath burned with fervent, longing,
deep desire,
That *I* might thus have ministered unto my Lord and
King—
"The chiefest of ten thousand, altogether lovely One."
And now, to learn—oh! precious thought, 'tis *not*
too late, I still
May pour Love's priceless ointment on "the members"
of His Feet!
Dear Lord, I pray, oh! help me break with sacrificial
hand
The seal of Self, and pour the pent-up odors of my
heart
Upon Thy "Feet!" Oh! Let me spend my days and
nights in toil,
That I, perchance, may save from needless wandering,
and help
To keep them in the narrow way that leads to light
and life.
Oh! let me lay within their trembling hands a rose of
love,
A lily's pure and holy inspiration on their breast!
Dear Master, let me kneel with them in dark
Gethsemane;
Oh! help me boldly stand and meekly bear the scoffs
and jeers
Of cruel, mocking tongues! Oh! may I count no
cost, e'en life
Itself, too great *to serve, to bless, to comfort Thy*
dear "Feet,"
And when the last drop of my heart's devotion hath
been shed,
Oh, may I hear Thy sweet voice say, "*She hath done*
what she could!"

R3534: PERFUME VERY PRECIOUS.

John 12:1-11.

Golden Text:—"She hath done what she could."—Mark 14:8.

IT WAS Saturday night, as we reckon it, the evening following the Jewish Sabbath day—after six P.M.—that Jesus and his disciples and Lazarus, whom he had previously awakened from the sleep of death, with some other friends of the family, sat down to a feast prepared in special honor of Jesus at the home of his friends, where he was always welcome and where he stopped more frequently than at any other house during the period of his ministry, so far as the records show. It was at Bethany, the home of Lazarus and Martha and Mary. It was called the house of Simon the leper, one supposition being that Simon was the father of the family, and another that he was the husband of Martha, who at this time was a widow.

Our Lord and his disciples were en route for Jerusalem, and Bethany was on the way, in the suburbs. They probably arrived on what would correspond to our Friday, or the Jewish sixth day of the week. Expecting them, Martha and Mary had provided quite a sumptuous feast, and, in harmony with the Jewish rules governing in such cases, the dishes were evidently prepared in advance, as Sabbath labor was prohibited. No account is given us of that Sabbath day at Bethany, but we can well imagine the delightful social intercourse between the dear members of that family and the Lord and his chosen apostles.

JESUS IN SOCIAL LIFE.

The Master's words of wisdom and love are not recorded, but we know on the best of authority that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Hence we may know that the day was not given over to frivolity of word or conduct, but to rest, spiritual enjoyment, which minister to the refreshment of all in the right attitude of heart. The same rule applies to all of the Lord's followers wherever they may be, whatever may be their vocation or surroundings. Out of the good treasure of their hearts they can bring forth nothing else but good things, and if any be otherwise minded let him beware, and correct the difficulty of the heart and not merely of the head.

We can imagine better than we can portray the loving sentiments of Lazarus and his sisters toward Jesus, the one they esteemed so highly, the one who, by calling Lazarus forth from the tomb, had demonstrated his Messiahship and that in him was the resurrection and the life power. This was probably the first visit the Lord had made to the Bethany home since that great event.

Apparently our Lord had friends in various walks of life; a few were rich, some were poor, some in moderate circumstances. The Bethany household was apparently of a comfortable class, as was evidenced by the fact that they had their own home, that they

had their own tomb, and that on this occasion Mary was able as well as willing to spend a considerable sum of money in doing honor to the Lord by anointing him with the very precious spikenard. This reminds us of the prayer of one of old, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." Riches are a great snare to the many, and the Lord's word assures us that not many rich will enter the Kingdom. The attractions of the present life to them will prove too powerful and hinder their fulfilment of their consecration vows—to sacrifice their all, to lay all at Jesus' feet, to become merely his stewards in the use of their temporal opportunities and blessings, and to use these wisely in his service and in such a manner as to demonstrate the love and loyalty they have professed.

In many respects to have a moderate competency in life is very desirable, permitting a more generous treatment of others, greater hospitality, etc.; yet even moderate prosperity seems to be more than the majority can stand and yet be faithful. Consequently we find in fact what our Lord declared, namely, that the heirs of the Kingdom are chiefly of the poor of this world—chiefly of those who have little and who have little hope for getting more, and whose minds consequently are more readily turned to the heavenly things which the Lord has promised to those who love him supremely.

To whatever extent, therefore, we have comfortable surroundings, such as were possessed by the Bethany household—to whatever extent we have the good things of this present life—in that same proportion we need to be specially on guard against the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches and the ambitions and hopes and aims of the world, lest these should lead our hearts away from the loyalty and devotion to the Lord and his cause which full faith and trust should inspire and sustain. Evidently it is possible to be poor in spirit without being actually in poverty, but the more there is of earthly prosperity apparently more grace is needed to keep us in the narrow way.

"OINTMENT OF SPIKENARD VERY COSTLY."

The two sisters evidently had the matter planned between them: Martha served at the table and Mary served in an especial manner with the ointment. Oriental tables were a combination of couch and table, and the guests were properly described as reclining at a feast. It was customary to rest the forepart of the body upon one elbow while using the other hand to convey the food to the mouth, etc. Our Lord thus reclining, both his head and his feet were very conveniently accessible to Mary, who proceeded to anoint first his head and afterward his feet with the ointment.

The word ointment gives rather a misimpression; the word perfume would more nearly describe the liquid used. Its value is incidentally mentioned as more than three hundred pence (v. 5). These silver pence represent about sixteen cents each, and thus estimated the alabaster flask of perfume was worth about forty-eight dollars; but counting each penny or *denarius* as a day's wages at that time (Matt. 20:2), the three hundred pence would be equivalent to a year's wages of a working man, or about three hundred dollars to six hundred dollars as compared with our day.

This was very precious ointment indeed by whichever calculation we reckon it, yet that the statement is not overdrawn is attested by ancient literature. For instance, we are told that Horace offered to give a cask of wine for a very small box of spikenard—Odes, Ovid, IV, XII, XVII. A perfume even in our day has been rated as high as \$100.00 per ounce, namely, attar of roses. At this price, Mary's "pound" would have been worth \$1,200.00.

"SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD."

The use of such expensive perfumes was very rare: indeed, even the emperors used it sparingly, but when used it was generally poured upon the head. Mary followed this custom in pouring it upon the Lord's head, as Matthew and Mark recount; but having done this, she proceeded to his feet and anointed them with the perfume, and then wiped his feet with the long tresses of her hair. What a picture of loving devotion is here given us! The feet, always recognized as the humblest and lowest members of the human frame—the hair of the head, especially of woman, always recognized as a special treasure and glory to her—here thus brought together in a way which signified that Mary esteemed her Lord and Master as infinitely above and beyond her. She had recognized him first as the most wonderful of men, speaking as never man spake; she had come afterwards to understand that he was a great teacher, especially sent at a special time; and finally, through the awakening of Lazarus from the sleep of death, she had evidence that the power of the Almighty was in him, that he was none other than the Son of God, and she appropriately did him the reverence due to his exalted station.

She could not put him on the throne of earth, but she would show that she was his devoted servant forever; she could not glorify him before all the people of Israel, but she could glorify and honor him in her own home; she could not tell his praises and sing his worth, but she could sing and make melody in her own heart, and pour upon him a perfume which not only filled her home with its sweet savor, but which has yielded a tender fragrance to the honor of womankind in general from her day to the present time. "She hath done what she could," said the Lord—she has shown her devotion to the best of her ability. How true the remainder of our Lord's prophecy on the subject, "Wherever this Gospel is preached, this thing shall be told as a memorial of her." A sweet memorial of a sweet character and loving heart. Considered in the light of the odor and blessing and refreshment which it has shed upon all of the Lord's people throughout this Gospel age, Mary's alabaster jar of precious perfume, very costly, has proven to be extremely cheap.

"MIGHT HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO THE POOR."

Our lesson says that Judas protested against such a waste of money, and explains that it was not because he cared so much for the poor, as that he was a thief and regretted that the amount spent for the perfume had not been handed to him as the treasurer for the group of disciples, so that he might have misappropriated it to himself. This thought is more particularly shown in the revised version, which renders it, "He was a thief, and having the bag took away what was put therein." Matthew says "the disciples"—Mark says, "There were some"—but John mentions Judas only as doing this murmuring against

the expense involved in Mary's service to her Lord. Quite probably all the accounts are correct. Judas, no doubt, was the instigator of the murmuring, some more quickly and more thoroughly shared his sentiments, and the remainder of the apostles, probably influenced by the majority, were inclined to yield and to agree that the extravagance was wrong. But Jesus set the whole matter at rest in a few words, saying, "Let her alone; against the day of my burying hath she kept this. The poor ye have always with you, but me ye have not always."

Many of the Lord's disciples to-day need to reconstruct their ideas on the subject of economy. True, it is necessary for us to be provident not wasteful, and economical not extravagant. Our Lord frequently inculcated this lesson, as, for instance, when he directed the gathering up of the fragments of broken food after feeding the multitude. But there is a proper place to draw the line. The person who is economical and penurious in his dealings with the Lord is sure to be the loser thereby, as the Scriptures declare, "The liberal soul shall be made fat;" and again, "There is he that scattereth yet increaseth, and there is he that withholdeth more than is meet [proper] and it tendeth to poverty."

It is a different matter for us to learn to be economical in respect to our own affairs and to be liberal to the extent of extravagance in matters which pertain to the Lord and his service. We sometimes sing, "Thou art coming to a King, large petitions with thee bring," but he who brings large petitions to the throne of grace should be sure also that he bring with him a large alabaster box of perfume for the Lord—not hoping thereby to merit the Lord's favor nor to perfume his requests, but as a mark of his appreciation of blessings already received. Those who bring the alabaster boxes of perfume of praise and thankfulness very generally have little to ask. Rather they realize that they are already debtors to such an extent that they can never show properly their appreciation of divine favor. Properly they recognize that day by day they are receiving at the Lord's hands exceedingly and abundantly more than they could ask or wish, and that in the spiritual blessings alone they have what satisfies their longings as nothing else can do. Such more nearly follow the course of Mary and bring alabaster boxes of perfume to the Lord—their prayers and thanksgiving of heart; and asking nothing, but giving thanks for all things, they receive from the Master such an outpour of blessing that they are not able to contain it.

Those who view the matter rightly must certainly feel that none of us have anything worthy to present to our Lord—that our very best, our most costly gifts or sacrifices, are not worthy of him and but feebly express the real sentiments of our hearts. How glad we are if our humble efforts are accepted of the Lord, and how we hope that ultimately we shall hear the same sweet voice saying of us, "He hath done what he could," "She hath done what she could."

The poet Tennyson beautifully pictures the scene we have been considering in the following lines:—

"Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits

But, he was dead, and there he sits,
And He that brought him back is there.

"Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.

"All subtle thought, all curious fears,
Borne down by gladness so complete,
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
With costly spikenard and with tears."

THE POOR EVER WITH US.

Our Lord's prophecy that poverty would continue throughout this Gospel age has been amply fulfilled. Looking forward into the future, we rejoice to know that then, under the reign of the Kingdom, there will be no more poor, no more sorrow, no more want. "Every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree, with none to molest or make him afraid." Those changed conditions will not be the result of human evolution, human theories, co-operative societies, unions, trusts, etc. All these various panaceas for making everybody rich and comfortable and happy have failed in the past and will continue to be failures in the future. Because of sin warping and twisting the very fibers of humanity, and through selfishness and ambition and desire working upon the warped and twisted elements of humanity, pain, suffering and want are sure to continue as long as sin continues. And sin is sure to continue until the great Messiah takes to himself his great power and reigns, and subdues sin and all that is contrary to righteousness and truth and establishes the latter upon the earth.

Until that glorious day shall come, all through the night of weeping, for now more than eighteen hundred centuries, the poor have been with us and many of them have been the Lord's precious ones. Poverty has proven itself a blessing in many ways in many senses of the word under present conditions. Not only does the fact of poverty and the fear of poverty help to keep many in line and make them active in the battle of life, and thus develop in them overcoming qualities, but, on the other hand, the fact that there is poverty, the fact that we have friends and neighbors who need our care and need assistance, is a blessing to those who are more comfortably situated themselves, in that it develops their sympathy, patience, love, their desire to do good, their desire to help. He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord and the Lord will repay him. This promise is so rich and so plainly stated that the wonder is that there are not more willing to make investments in harmony with it, and to realize that the Lord not only repays, but gives large interest.

"ME YE HAVE NOT ALWAYS."

The opportunity for honoring the Lord was limited—a little while and his sufferings would be ended and he would be glorified, beyond the evil, beyond the power of human attention. It was appropriate then, when viewed from the right standpoint, that Mary should spend a great price upon her Lord—that the head upon which fell the slanders and anathemas of the chief priests and doctors of divinity of that day, and upon which shortly the crown of thorns would be placed, should now be honored by one amongst a few of those who realized his true worth, his true grandeur, his Kingship, that he was indeed the Son of God. It was appropriate, too, that those feet which had trodden the valleys and hillsides of Palestine, and that were so weary at times, and that symbolized the feet of consecration treading the narrow, rugged way, and that so soon would be pierced with the nails on the cross, should now be highly honored by one who appreciated and trusted them, who loved them and who was seeking to walk in the Master's steps.

When we get the right view of the matter, we can indeed sympathize with our Lord's expression, "Let her alone," Trouble her not, Take it not from her—as though when the first motion was made to use the spikenard the apostles had wished to have it spared that they might sell it, and as though our Lord hindered them from using persuasion to that end, saying, Let her alone, do not hinder her.

Spikenard Mary represents one of the most beautiful elements of Christian character amongst the Lord's people from that day until the present. For be it remembered that the entire Church of Christ in the largest sense is the "body of Christ," as expressed by Jesus and also by the apostles. The Mary class, who would rather purchase perfume at a great cost whereby to serve the anointed Church, the body of Christ, than to spend the same upon themselves, is still with us, and has been of the Church for these eighteen centuries. Not only was the Head of the body anointed, perfumed, honored, comforted, cheered, but all of the members since have likewise received a blessing from this class, this spikenard Mary class. It is composed not always of the orators, the wealthy or the wise—its ministry is unostentatious and to many, especially of the world, it seems foolishness and waste—but the Lord appreciates it, and so do the members of his body who are comforted and refreshed thereby. Blessing be upon this Mary class!

HONOR TO MEMBERS—HONOR TO HEAD.

But if there have been members all the way down who have been comforted in this way, should we not expect some particular blessing of the kind in the end of this age, upon the "feet" members? According to our understanding we are now in the closing of this age—the Head has been glorified, many of the members of the body have passed beyond the veil, and only the feet are here. Perhaps this very picture of Mary's anointing the feet of our Lord as well as his head constitutes a type or picture of what we may expect in this present time. And here comes in a beautiful feature of the divine arrangement—we may all be of the Mary class as well as of the feet class. In other words, each member of the body of Christ may to some extent serve the fellow-members of the body, the fellow-members of the feet, as Mary served the feet of Jesus.

Let each one of the Lord's true people as he studies this matter conclude that by the grace of God he will join the Mary class, and purchase spikenard very costly and lavish it upon the feet of the body of Christ—the Church—the true members. This will mean love, sympathy, kindness, gentleness, patience and assistance and comfort. It will mean large and growing development in all the fruits and graces of the Spirit, whose combined name is Love.

Dear readers, let us each remember that while it is impossible for us to do as Mary did in this lesson, it is the privilege of each to do still more important things for each other, for the brethren of Christ now in the world, the feet members of his body. Hers was a literal perfume and in time lost its virtue; but the little acts of kindnesses and helpfulness which we may render one to another will never lose their merit in the estimation of our Lord, and never lose their fragrance to all eternity in the estimation of each other. The little things of life, the little words, the little tokens, the kind looks, the little assistances by the way, these and not great things are our possibilities, our perfumes, the one for the other.

"WASH ONE ANOTHER'S FEET."

The washing of the feet in olden times in oriental lands was very necessary to the comfort, and hence to wash one another's feet would signify to comfort and refresh one another even in the most menial services. This is the essence of our Lord's lesson to us, that we should be glad for any opportunity for serving one another, for comforting and helping one another, however menial the service. Apply this now to the expression of our lesson. Mary washed our Lord's feet with perfume, and the Mary class, the most loving and devoted class in the Church, are to help one another, to wash one another's feet; and they are to do so not in the rudest and clumsiest manner imaginable, but, inspired by love and devotion one to another, they are to wash one another's feet with the kindness and sympathy and love and appreciation symbolized by Mary's spikenard; and their comforting of one another is to be with that love and solicitation which was represented by Mary's using the very locks of her head for her Master's feet.

We see some evidence that this love, this spikenard-Mary love and sympathy, is growing amongst the members of the Lord's body; that as they perceive the animosity of the world and the flesh and the Adversary against the Lord's anointed they are all the more devoted one to another, and all the more disposed to honor one another with care and love and sympathy, and to speak and act generously and kindly one toward another. We are glad of this—we know of no better evidence of growth in grace on the part of the consecrated. Let the good work go on until we shall have filled the house with the perfume of love, until the whole world shall take knowledge of how Christians love one another—not in a narrow or partisan sense, but in the broad sense that Christ loved all who love the Father and all who sought to walk in the Father's ways.

LET US DO IT NOW.

If Mary had waited another week she might have used the perfume upon herself but not upon the Lord—within a week from the time of this incident our Lord was buried, the tomb was sealed, the Roman Guard stood before it and there would have been no opportunity even to have poured it upon his dead body. How much better that she improved the opportunity, that she showed the Lord her devotion while he was still her guest. The parallel is here: it will not be long until all the members of the body of Christ will have filled their share of the sufferings and have passed beyond the veil "changed."

Wisdom tells us that we should not delay in bringing our alabaster boxes of ointment and pouring their contents upon our dear ones of the body of Christ, the feet of Christ. No matter if they do not notice us, or think of us, or pour any upon us as members of the feet; let us do our part, let us be of the Mary class, let us pour out the sweet perfume upon others, and the house, the Church of the Lord, will be filled with the sweet odor, even though some disciples might mistakingly charge us with being extravagant with our love and with our devotion, not understanding that the Master by and by will say again, "Let her alone, she hath done what she could." Our Lord's estimate of this spikenard and anointing is that it is all that we can do—nothing could be more or better. It indicates love, great love—and "love is the fulfilling of the law."

"Let us consider one another," said the Apostle—consider one another's weaknesses, consider one another's trials, consider one another's temptations, consider one another's efforts to war a good warfare against the world, the flesh and the Adversary—consider one another's troubles in the narrow way against opposition from within and without, and as we do so it will bring to our hearts sympathy, a sympathy which will take pleasure in pouring out the spikenard perfume, very costly, purest and best, upon all who are fellow-members of the one body.

Some one has spoken of the great "Society of Encouragers" who do so much to help encourage and uplift the footsore and weary in the pathway of life. It is not a great society so far as members are concerned, but it is a great society from the Lord's standpoint and from the standpoint of all who have been helped and encouraged by it. Spikenard Mary might have been said to have been a prominent member in this society of encouragers. We may well imagine that as our dear Redeemer was thinking of the severe trials, including the cross, of the week already begun, Mary's manifestation of love and devotion would come to him as a special encouragement and refreshment of spirit. So few seemed to understand him! even his disciples did not appreciate the situation. Here was one who at least loved him, had confidence in him. No doubt it gave him courage for the remaining days of his journey.

THE TRUTH TERSELY STATED.

Respecting the propriety of using present opportunities for the comfort and encouragement one of another, a writer has pointedly said:

"Don't keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up till your friends are dead. Fill their lives with gladness. Speak approving, cheering words while they can

hear them ... If my friends have alabaster boxes full of the fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away, which they intend to break over my body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them while I need them. ...I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. ...Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward on the weary road."

Mrs. Preston's poem, "Ante Mortem," expresses the same thought thus:—

... "Had I but heard
One breath of applause, one cheering word—
One cry of 'Courage!' amid the strife,
So weighted for me with death or life—
How would it have nerved my soul to strain
Thro' the whirl of the coming surge again."

SACRIFICE OF SWEET ODOR.

The Apostle, speaking of the ministries of the Church one for another, says that ours is a sacrifice of sweet odor unto God, but again he adds that the Gospel referred to is of life unto life to some and of death unto death to others. That is to say, good deeds, kind words and efforts will be appreciated by those who are in the right attitude of heart to appreciate them, while on the contrary the same good deeds will arouse offence and constitute a bad odor to those who are in a wrong condition of heart. How often have we seen it so, that with our best endeavors to serve the feet of Christ some have been comforted and refreshed, others have been angered—to one the effort was a sweet odor, to the others it was an offensive odor, because of their wrong attitude of heart toward the Lord and toward the body of Christ—because, perhaps, of their ambitions or whatnot that were interfered with.

It was just so at Bethany: the sweet odors that filled the house, and the blessing and refreshment that came to Mary in connection with the ministration, had a very different effect upon Judas. He was angry; his selfishness hindered his appreciation of the honor done to the Lord; he could think only of himself and what he had hoped to get out of the transaction, and how, so far as he was concerned, the whole matter was a waste. The sourness that came to his heart because of its wrong attitude is indicated by the testimony that he straightway went to the chief priests to bargain with them for the betrayal of Jesus. Let us, then, dear brethren, see to it that our hearts are in a loving attitude toward the Lord and not in a selfish attitude—that we appreciate everything done in his name and for his body, and that we be not self-seeking. Otherwise the result will be with us the savor of death unto death, as it was with Judas.

This concludes our lesson. It was the next day probably that the Jews began to gather in considerable numbers to see Jesus and Lazarus, and to take counsel respecting the putting of them to death—"for the good of the cause." And, by the way, let us remember that the "good of the cause" has nearly always been the basis for every mean and

despicable act against the Truth from first to last. Let us beware of such a sectarian spirit; let us see to it that our love for the Lord and all of his brethren is sincere, and not a personal and selfish one for ourselves or some denomination, otherwise we know not into what evils we might be led.

NOVEMBER 17

He shall give his angels [messengers] a charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways—Psa. 91:11.

That is, God will raise up some faithful pastors and teachers who will "watch for your souls as they that must give an account." True, there shall arise false teachers, perverting the Word of the Lord and seeking by cunning sophistries to subvert your souls; but if in simplicity of heart God's children require a "Thus saith the Lord" for every element of their faith, and carefully prove all things by the Word, they will be able to distinguish readily the true from the false. And having done so, the Apostle Paul (Heb. 13:17) counsels us to have confidence. The Lord, our Shepherd, will care for the true sheep—Z '04, 75 (R 3331).

God's angels, messengers, are varifold; some are animate, some are inanimate. His animate messengers are sometimes human, sometimes spiritual. Of both His animate and inanimate messengers it can be said that they have been charged with the ministry of protecting God's saints; particularly, however, does this apply to His animate angels. While God's spiritual angels have been given a providential oversight over God's people to protect them in ways other than those of the Spirit and the Word, His human angels have been given the special ministry of guarding them by the Spirit and Word in the paths of the Truth and its Spirit. This is the especial charge of the teachers in the Church, though all God's people are charged with the ministry of one another as they are able—P '32, 167.

Parallel passages: Gen. 19:16; 32:1, 2; 1 Kings 19:5; 2 Kings 6:17; Psa. 34:7; 68:17; 63:9; 103:20, 21; Dan. 3:28; 6:22; Matt. 4:11; 18:10; Luke 1:19; 2:9-14; 22:43; Acts 12:7; 27:23; Heb. 1:14.

Hymns: 120, 121, 286, 288, 216, 293, 301.

Poems of Dawn, 84: *His Veiled Angels Guard Thee*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 182 (R 5257).

Questions: What experiences of the week show the Lord's care? How did they affect me?

HIS VEILED ANGELS GUARD THEE

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."—Psa. 34:7. "He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways."—Psa. 91:11. "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them that shall be heirs of salvation?"—Heb. 1:14.

OFTEN when thou'rt faint and weary in the struggle and
the strife,

And thy heart nigh sinks within thee, 'neath the strain
and stress of life:

When thou'rt tempted, tried and fearful, and thou
canst not see the way,
And each night looms black with shadows from thy
sorrows in the day;
I would ask thee still to trust Him, He who sees all
in the light,
For He guards thee by His angels, though they're
veiled from thy sight—
Yea, He guards thee by His angels, though they're
veiled from thy sight.

Oh, be watchful, oh, be sober, for the Adversary
tries
To allure us to destruction by his subtly fashioned
lies.
He would sift us, he would tempt us, he would claim
us for his prey,
And his legions ever watch us as we tread the Nar-
row Way:
But we know of his devices, and we trust Jehovah's
might,
For He guards us by His angels, though they're veiled
from our sight—
Yea, He guards us by His angels, though they're
veiled from our sight.

There is One who knows thy weakness, and thy
failings, and thy tears,
Thy burdens and thy sorrows, and thy tremblings and
thy fears;
And thy heart-cries always reach Him, and are
answered in His way,
Though thou canst not see His workings as they shape
thy path each day.
Sad disaster had o'erwhelmed thee, had He not put
forth His might,
Through His angels that surround thee, but are veiled
from thy sight—
Guardian angels that surround thee, but are veiled
from thy sight.

Ah, believe me, when the Day breaks, and we know
as we are known,
In the sunlight of the glory that surrounds our Father's

Throne,
He will tell us how He led us: we shall see the path-
way clear,
The way we trod that led to God through failing,
fault and fear.
And we'll see those guardian angels who were veiled
from our sight,
We shall understand the workings of the Power put
forth in might:
Yea, and with those guardian angels who were veiled
from our sight,
We shall see our Savior, and our God, in Heaven's
Eternal Light.

R5257: THE MESSENGERS OF GOD IN "THE LAST DAYS"

"He shall give His angels [messengers] a charge concerning thee, to guard thee in all thy ways."—Psalm 91:11.

IN THE MIDST of the "perilous times" of this "evil day," and of the warning voices of the Holy Prophets and Apostles pointing out snares and pestilences and subtle dangers on every hand—and in the midst, too, of a realizing sense of the actual existence of such evil besetments and perils—how precious to the saints are the assurances of Divine protection and care and personal love!

Evidently the person referred to in our text as giving a charge, or message, is Jehovah, the Heavenly Father. The Prophet David is prophesying in respect to some person, then future. That person was primarily, we believe, the Lord Jesus Christ; and secondarily, all those whom He has accepted as members of His Body throughout this Gospel Age—the Messiah class, Head and members. The words imply a special care of God over this class. All through the Scriptures they are referred to as those whom God specially loves and specially cares for. Our Lord Jesus is the Only Begotten, the Well-beloved Son, and all those who are His members are peculiarly loved. Jesus said to some of His faithful disciples, "The Father Himself loveth you."

The charge given to the angels we would understand to have a very broad application. The Apostle Paul assures us that the angels of God are ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto and to serve those who shall be heirs of salvation, the saved ones of this Gospel Age. Yes, all of these, because believers in Christ, because at heart faithful, because fully consecrated to the Lord and begotten of His Spirit, are the special and happy objects of His grace, ministered to and served by the invisible messengers. Our Lord Jesus sets forth practically the same thought in His declaration, "Their angels do always behold [have access to] the face of My Father." The Master's words seem to imply that one or more of these angels have charge over the consecrated ones, the Very Elect.

Our Lord uses a different figure of speech from that of the Apostle, as though He would assure us that these messengers would not be delayed in caring for our interests. They would not be hindered by more important Heavenly business, but would at once have direct access to the Divine presence and attention, so that our interests would have all needed consideration. Our Lord would have us realize that we are of the House of Sons, under Himself the chief Son, hence no time is lost in bringing our interests to the Father. Our interests have first place, our angels have *always* access to the Father. Before we speak, He knows our minds. Before we realize our own necessities, He has made provision for them. A wonderful watch-care has been arranged. It is hard for us to understand how the Almighty God can give such particular care and attention to our needs. Instead of being puffed up that God has manifested such loving consideration towards us, it should make us feel how little we are, how unworthy of such blessings.

Although the Father makes such use of Heavenly messengers, this by no means invalidates the thought that the Lord's earthly children are frequently used of Him as ministers, servants, the one of another. Indeed, we may be assured that the invisible messengers are required generally to act through human instrumentalities. Of this we have illustrations in the Harvest work, supervised by our present Lord and His Heavenly hosts, yet in the main carried on by members of His Body in the flesh.

The Apostle Paul has stated that the Lord makes His ministers, or servants, a flaming fire, and intimates to us that any and every agency and power that Divine providence uses is a part of that care over His people. (Heb. 1:7.) In other words, every agency used of God—whether it be fire or electricity or man, or whatever—would be a messenger of God. And whatever would not be to His praise and work out what He chooses, He is able to restrain—as He tells us.—Psalm 76:10.

OVERCOMERS DEVELOPED BY TRIAL

These angels are to "keep thee in all thy ways"—not only in all the affairs of the Church, both individually and collectively, but also in all times; it was kept during the Dark Ages as well as at other times. But this care will not keep us from temptation. None can be of this elect Church unless they have trials. In order to have the overcoming qualities of heart they must have the tests. But the Lord's promised grace is to be with them for their assistance—not to overcome for them, but to sustain them. His grace is sufficient for us. He does not make up for a poor will; but He does make up for imperfect bodies. If the will is poor, He does not want such in His elect Church. He wants His people to be strong in will—nothing doubting—overcomers.

The next verse of the Psalm from which our text is taken proceeds to say that these messengers which have a charge over the affairs of the Church, Head and Body, will keep the feet from stumbling. In a general way we might apply the term *feet* to some members of the Body all down, in all times of the Age; as we might say, for instance, one member is a hand, and one a foot, etc. The Church, resting on those feet members all the way down, throughout the Gospel Age, will be guided aright; they will not be allowed to

stumble; for, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway." Thus they would be enabled to surmount the difficulties in their path.

So all down through the Gospel Age the messengers of the Lord have helped His people over all of their trials. But this reference to the feet seems especially applicable to the last members of the Body of Christ. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace ... that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Isa. 52:7.) This would seem to apply to the last members of the Church. This could not have been said all the way down the Age. It is only for us who are living at the present time to say.

These various manifestations of progress that we see, are just beginning. The new regime is only opening. After our Lord shall have delivered and glorified the Church, then He will begin the work with the world. None had the right to say, "Thy God reigneth," in the past; but since 1878, we are making this proclamation.

CHRIST'S PRESENCE A STUMBLING-STONE

The text seems to imply that the feet members at this time would be in a position of special trial, and be as a stumbling-stone. And this calls to our remembrance that the Lord foretold this, saying, "He shall be ... for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel." (Isa. 8:14.) This stone was stumbled over in the end of the Jewish Age. (I Peter 2:8.) The Scriptures set forth that Jesus is the Way. The Lord is a Stumbling-Stone in the pathway of many. These passages do not refer to the world. It was not the Gentile nations that stumbled over Jesus at His First Advent, but it was some of the true Israelites who were there stumbled. And the text implies the stumbling of some true Spiritual Israelites because of the coming of the Lord in a way totally different from what they had imagined. So we believe that there are very many good Christian people today who are stumbling over Christ's Presence. They thought so and so; they imagined so and so. And all is so different from what they had imagined and expected that it is just as it was in the end of the Jewish Age, when the rabbis stumbled.

The question is, why should not the angels have charge over all good people, so that they would not stumble? Is not this the promise? We answer that the promise is made to all who are of the elect class. But in order to remain members of this Body, they must all stand the trial. It will be a test. Are they willing to have the assistance of the angels—messengers? Are they willing to surmount these difficulties and to remain in the way?

One class will be in a condition to receive the trials in the proper manner; another class will be so self-confident, so overcharged with the cares of this life, and so lacking in spiritual development, that they will not be ready to avail themselves of the services of the angels. This is because God uses as His messengers some whom the world will not be ready to receive.

PARALLELISM BETWEEN JEWISH AND GOSPEL AGES

In the Jewish Age the Lord used some whom the scribes, the doctors of the Law and the chief priests could not accept at all. If He wanted to use agents, or channels, or messengers, to teach the people, why did He not choose the learned scribes or the pompous Pharisees of that day? Why did the Lord use as His messengers men who had been fishermen, tax-gatherers—persons whom the learned would think entirely unfit as instructors, or teachers? We recall that in the end of the Jewish Age it was written of two of them (and perhaps of them all) that the people perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men. (Acts 4:13.) How could it be that God would pass by some of the most learned of that day? "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight."—Matt. 11:25, 26.

So today the Lord is using channels, agencies, messengers, that are not acceptable to many whom they approach. And while these are making up their minds to believe, slow in this because overcharged with the cares of this life, the elect company will be made up. Then the others will say, "Lord, Lord, open unto us." But the Lord will declare that He cannot recognize them as members of His Body, the Elect. They will not have shown the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, love, necessary to give them a place in this Body. So it will be only the Body members who will be lifted up by the messengers and carried safely through the trials and difficulties which will be permitted to test the love, loyalty and obedience to the will of God, of all who have made with Him a Covenant of Sacrifice—even unto death.

HOPE

"O Father, just to see Thee face to face,
E'er endless death
Should claim me for its own—
To hear Thy voice, behold Thy Throne!
And for one moment
Hear Thee call me Thine, and Thine alone!
Ah! that were worth
Long years of suffering and pain.

"But what, O God, must be the joy of this—
To see Thy face,
To feel Thy touch, and folded to Thy breast
To hear Thee say, "We ne'er shall part!"
Break not, O heart!
Though thou hast naught of worth,
Be this thy plea
God's own Almighty love, and Christ's sufficiency."
—A Friend.

NOVEMBER 18

The Angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them—Psa. 34:7.

How it enlarges the confidence of a Christian to realize that while earthly powers may be in opposition, and while he may be really of himself powerless to resist adversaries, and while in addition to the flesh and blood adversaries he may realize that he battles also with spiritual wickedness in exalted places—against Satan and his minions of darkness—yet, that, on the other hand, "greater is he that is on our part than all that be against us," and that all the heavenly hosts are subject to the Divine will and may be employed for the advancement of the Divine cause according to Divine wisdom!—Z '97, 120 (R 2139).

Our Lord Jesus is the special Messenger of the Lord and is here meant by the Angel of the Lord. Those that fear the Lord are His saints, whose fear of Jehovah is one of reverence. They are the especial targets of Satan, who seeks through their flesh and the world to entice them into sin, error, selfishness and worldliness. They would be helpless against his wiles, if the Lord Jesus would not Himself form a camp, an armed defense, about them, repelling the Adversary's attacks by His Power, Word and providences, whereby He delivers them. To experience such deliverance, it is necessary for them to avail themselves of His protection, and to co-operate with Him against Satan's onslaughts. Thus they share with Jesus in victory after victory in this holy war for God—P '26, 157.

Parallel passages: Gen. 19:16; 32:1, 2; 1 Kings 19:5; 2 Kings 6:17; Psa. 34:7; 68:17; 63:9; 103:20, 21; Dan. 3:28; 6:22; Matt. 4:11; 18:10; Luke 1:19; 2:9-14; 22:43; Acts 12:7; 27:23; Heb. 1:14.

Hymns: 330, 63, 121, 293, 294, 301, 328.

Poems of Dawn, 183: *"Your Father Knoweth What Things Ye Have Need Of."*

Tower Reading: Z '15, 55 (R 5633).

Questions: What deliverances did I experience this week? What conditions did I fulfill to experience them? How did I feel about it?

"YOUR FATHER KNOWETH WHAT THINGS YE HAVE NEED OF"

MATT. 6:8.

OUR Father knows what things we need
Each step along the way,
His eye of love doth never sleep,—
He watches night and day.

He knows sometimes, like ripening grain,
We need the sunshine bright,
Again He sends the peace that comes
With shadows of the night.

Sometimes our pride would fain unfurl
Ambition's flaunting sail,—
Ah! then He knows we need to walk
Humiliation's vale.

Sometimes He takes our eager hands
And folds them on our breast,
He gently lays our work aside,—
He knows we need to rest.

Sometimes we need companionship,
Sometimes, "the wilderness,"—
How sweet to feel He'll know and give
The state that most will bless!

Then let us leave it all with Him.
Assured that, come what may,
Our father knows *just what we need*.
Upon our pilgrim-way.

R5633: THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."—Psalm 34:7.

THERE is more or less difficulty associated with all attempts to think about the great Jehovah, His character and His power. The Scriptures seem to indicate that God has used various ways of manifesting His power to His people—to the Jews during the Jewish Age and to the Christian Church during the Gospel Age. We think it would not be an improper thought that the word *angel* may stand for any agency or power, whether animate or inanimate, that God would be pleased to use in connection with service. God could make the wind or the flaming fire His messenger. He could make the great Archangel or an inferior angel His messenger. He could use as His messenger whatever or whomsoever He might choose to invest with the requisite power; just as a representative of these United States, going to another country, would be recognized, regardless of his own personal ability or standing.

The details of how the Almighty has knowledge of our prayers, our thoughts, our words, our needs, are not furnished us in the Scriptures; and evidently it is not necessary, therefore, that we should understand these in every particular. We do not think that any

finite mind could comprehend God. He is too great for our comprehension, far too mighty for us to understand fully all His powers, His ability. Nevertheless we can apprehend some things respecting God, and are therefore invited in the Scriptures to study Him along the lines of His Revelation. To assume that God is in every place, in every niche of space throughout the Universe, seems to us an absurdity, not taught in the Bible; and to assume that God knows about every little tadpole, pollywog, microbe, or that He even takes knowledge of every act of each one of the human family, when there are millions upon millions of these, is beyond our understanding.

If we should limit God's attention to the Church, still there are thousands of these; and the capacity to understand and deal with ten or twenty thousand people in an instant seems to us to be an impossibility. Nor would such an arrangement be what we would expect God to have. Any human being who would attempt to deal with even a hundred people and to know everything going on would be thought to be very unwise. Rather he would have various agencies through which his will would be done by those hundred people by which he would know what was being done, and by which they would know his purpose respecting the work. His general knowledge of matters would not imply that he would be in every room in the house at one instant nor take notice of every person at the same instant.

In our present text, however, we are inclined to think that the word "angel" used by the Psalmist refers to spirit beings. Our reason for thinking so is that the revelations of the Lord in olden times previous to Pentecost were nearly all by spirit beings. These materialized and then dematerialized, vanishing from sight. In general the Scriptures seem to indicate that God's dealing with His people in those earlier times was through angels. As respects this Gospel Age, just closing, we have confidence that God has shown as great care in His dealings with Spiritual Israel as He did with Natural Israel; for Spiritual Israel comes nearer to Him as His House of Sons than did Natural Israel as a House of Servants. But God expects the House of Sons to walk by faith and not by sight, a much higher walk. Hence His manifestations to these are not such as appeal to the natural senses. They are, nevertheless, just as real.

THE EYES OF THE LORD

We read that "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him"; also, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." But this does not give us the thought that God personally beholds every individual act of every person on earth, but that He takes cognizance of matters throughout the world by means of His power, His agencies. These "eyes" referred to are the Lord's influence, His power of *knowing*, whatever the means. Whether His power is exercised and His will executed through angels or through other forces and agencies, it makes no difference—no more than it would with us in carrying out our wishes. If we wished to know about certain matters in Philadelphia, there would be various methods by which we could learn. One effective method would be to telephone and get into direct communication with the individual, provided he is supplied with a telephone. Or through the telegraph we could send a

message; or we could send a messenger directly to the party, by foot or by train or some other conveyance.

Now if mankind have these various ways of accomplishing their designs, we can appreciate our Heavenly Father more by thinking of Him as having full ability to come into communication with His children, and as having various agents of communication. God has means, no doubt, far superior to any of ours. He has not revealed the matter clearly to us except to tell us that He is informed respecting all that concerns us, as well as respecting all the affairs of the world. He does tell us that angels are His ministers, and that these have a charge over His people. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" They do not minister in the sense of directly providing bread for us, nor in the sense of cooking our food, nor of building our houses—in none of these ways do they minister. How, then, do they serve us? We have no way of knowing positively how they serve except from the words of our Lord Jesus, that the angels of God's "little ones" always behold the face of the Father, always have access to Him.

The fact that these angels represent the Lord's "little ones" would imply that they would have immediate access to God and have immediate attention. What would be the use of the Father's receiving the angels into His presence unless there was something to be communicated? Our understanding is that God's knowledge of our affairs and interests is gained by methods with which we are not acquainted. We may assume, however, that the mediums used are largely the angelic messengers. The head of every business house and banking institution has certain laws, certain regulations, governing all the operations of the business. Just so God has certain laws governing nature. It is not necessary that we pray to God that the earth may turn around upon its axis and that tomorrow may come. We may be sure that the Almighty, the One who represents exact Justice and infinite Wisdom, has laws that govern His entire Universe; that the angels have insight into these laws; and that they are Jehovah's deputies, just as an earthly court might deputize some one to sit in chancery and to take information.

OUR LORD JESUS THE CHIEF MESSENGER

If in connection with our text we also have in mind our Lord's words before His ascension, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the Age," we shall understand that the Lord Jesus is the Chief Messenger, or Angel, of Jehovah. He has surely been the Chief Messenger to the Gospel Church. Our thought, then, is that through the angels and other agencies God is governing the world, and especially caring for His people, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of all the Divine spiritual powers and has charge of all Jehovah's affairs. We have been brought into the School of Christ. He is our Teacher. When we go to the Father in prayer, we do not ignore this Teacher, but we go in His name; and we are not to suppose that the Father would ignore Him. He would be the Father's Representative in dealing with us. But we are not to suppose that the Lord Jesus has every detail of the affairs of the world under His personal supervision; but rather that those angels report to Him whatever is necessary, and that thus there are certain principles operating. This seems to us to be the reasonable and logical arrangement of

Divine operations. We are not insisting upon this for other minds, but merely saying that this appeals to our own mind.

In view of the fact that the Church has been put under the special guidance of the Lord Jesus, it would not be a far-fetched thought that Jehovah encampeth round about His people through Jesus, and that the angels are under His direction. If Satan is the chief of his band of angels, so our Lord would have angels under His control, and He would be their Prince. We read of what Alexander the Great accomplished, and of what Napoleon Bonaparte did, regardless of the fact that they had many thousands under them to carry out their will. So we think of all the spirit beings as under the direction and guidance of Jesus Christ. Into His hands God has committed all power in Heaven and on earth. All the angels of God were made subject to Him; and through these, under the control of our Lord, all the interests of God's people are supervised. This is our thought, and we like to think so.

DELIVERANCE IN VARIOUS WAYS

Our text proceeds to say that the angel that encamps around the people of the Lord "delivereth them." In olden times the Lord's children were sometimes delivered miraculously. Some were delivered from prison; others were not. Some were delivered from the sword; others were not. We should accept the will of God, whatever it may be. But in order to be able to do this, for our spiritual good, our ultimate good, we must realize that the terms and conditions under which we accepted of Him were that we would give ourselves unreservedly into His hands. A proper fear, or reverence, for the Lord, would surely lead us to place ourselves fully in His keeping and under His guidance and control. Our experiences in life have shown us how unable we are to direct ourselves aright. The Lord will deliver each of us in the way that will bring us the largest measure of blessing.

In the days of the Apostles, St. Peter was delivered from prison by an angel of the Lord, who appeared to him as a man. This was in the interest, not only of the Apostle, but of the entire Church, showing them that the Lord was able to fully care for His people, giving them valuable lessons. And although these outward manifestations are not given to us of the present time, we have other blessings that more than compensate for these outward tokens that are not at present for the good of the Church. We are able to say with the Apostle that all things are working together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to His purpose. We should be full of confidence in Him—that we are subjects of His choicest care at all times.

EACH SAINT HAS HIS MINISTERING ANGEL

While we may not be too positive in our interpretation on this subject, we understand that each one of the Lord's people, in proportion as he is one of God's true children, has a ministering spirit, a person, an angel, who has charge of his affairs. This angel makes his report to the Lord, whether monthly, weekly or hourly we do not know. If God sees this to be the wise, proper course, we have every confidence in His Wisdom. Whatever God

has arranged is fully satisfactory to us in this matter, and we are sure that it is quite right and fully in harmony with the Divine character.

We think that this principle is illustrated in the Book of the Prophet Daniel. Daniel had been praying and after some little time his prayer was answered. The angel Gabriel, who was the Lord's messenger to Daniel, explained to him certain things. At the beginning of his supplications the Lord had purposed to send him an answer. Gabriel had been sent especially to inform him, but had been detained by certain other duties. The fact of his detention should not give us the thought that Daniel or any of the Lord's people would ever be neglected; but that while minor affairs of Daniel were under the guidance of some lower angel, there were important matters that were entrusted to Gabriel as the plenipotentiary, as it were, in regard to Daniel's interest and other matters. There was a delay, and Gabriel mentioned what the delay was; the prince of Persia had withstood him for twenty-one days.

We have heretofore pointed out that this Gospel Age has been different from the Jewish Age and preceding ages; that after the Gospel Dispensation was ushered in, outward demonstrations, such as the gifts of the Holy Spirit—the gift of healing, the gift of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and discerning of spirits—and angelic visitations passed away; and that during the Gospel Age it has been God's will that the Spiritual House of Israel should walk by faith and not by sight, and that therefore it would be inappropriate after the Church was fully established to expect angels to appear, to manifest themselves outwardly.

But the angels of the Lord, nevertheless, have a charge more particularly over us of the Gospel Church than over any other of the Lord's people at any previous time in the world's history. The Lord is especially interested in Spiritual Israel. These angels, then, care for us, supervise our affairs, and are God's agencies or channels of communication to us as to His will; that is, communication in the sense of providences for us, causing *this* providence or the *other* providence.

HOLY ANGELS NOT MANIFEST TO OUR SENSES

We would not give the thought of the angels whispering into our ears. We think that the angels which now whisper in the ear are the same ones that give table-tippings, planchette communications, communications through the hand by writing, and various other communications to the ear and the eye of spirit-mediums; namely, evil spirits, fallen angels. Our understanding is that the holy angels do nothing of the kind. The Lord's people of the present Age are to find their instruction in His Word. There is no need of a book on Mormonism or Spiritism or New Thought or of clairvoyant or clairaudient power for the Lord's children. These are all snares of the Adversary and his demons.

The followers of Christ have the Bible and the invisible ministries of the holy angels to provide for their interests and to providentially guard and guide their affairs. This, to us, is very real and of great comfort. If we had the thought that God was doing all this personally, we would think that He had certainly forgotten *us*. But having the assurance

of His Word that not a hair of our heads can fall to the ground without our Father's attention, our mind can rest in the fact that He accomplishes His purposes in Christ for His children through the ministrations of the holy angels.

NOVEMBER 19

Let us watch and be sober—1 Thes. 5:6.

Let us watch in the sense of taking careful notice of all the directions which the Lord our God has given us, respecting what would be acceptable service to Him. Let us watch ourselves, striving to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of the great High Priest. Let us be sober in the sense that we will not be frivolous; that while happy, joyous in the Lord, free from the anxious cares that are upon many others through misapprehension of our Father's character and Plan, we may, nevertheless, be sober in the sense of earnest appreciation of present opportunities and privileges in connection with the Lord's service—not thoughtlessly negligent, letting opportunities and privileges slip through our hands to be afterwards regretted—Z '02, 239 (R 3054).

The word *watch* implies sentinelship. It suggests that we be armed, remain awake, survey our dispositions, thoughts, motives, words, acts, surroundings and influences operating on and from us, challenge all things that would enter or leave the camp of our minds and hearts, be incredulous to their claims of friendliness, require proof of such claims, capture those unable to furnish such proof, permit egress or ingress on such proof, survey the whole sphere of our duties and privileges, and remain on guard until relieved. To be sober implies balance of disposition and judgment, not over or under estimating the participants of our warfare, recognizing our infirmities, needs, purposes and attainments, those of our enemies, the powers, purposes and helps of our Leader, the hardships, duration and purpose of our warfare and the certainty of defeat to the unfaithful and of victory to the faithful, and from such consideration exercise great and continual carefulness—P '36, 166.

Parallel passages: Ex. 23:13; 34:12; Deut. 4:9, 23; Josh. 22:5; 1 Kings 8:25; Psa. 39:1; 141:3; Prov. 4:23; Mal. 2:15; Matt. 16:6; 24:4; 26:40, 41; Luke 11:35; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Cor. 10:12; 16:13; Eph. 5:15; 6:18; 1 Tim. 4:16; Heb. 2:1; 3:12; 1 Pet. 1:13; 4:7; 5:8.

Hymns: 13, 145, 1, 20, 44, 130, 183.

Poems of Dawn, 239: *Courage! Morning Dawns*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 181 (R 5256).

Questions: Have I this week heeded this text? How? Why? What did it effect?

COURAGE! MORNING DAWNS

THOUGH the night be dark and dreary,
Though the way be long and weary,
Morn shall bring thee light and cheer;
Child, look up, the morn is near.

Though thine eyes be sad with weeping,

Through the night thy vigils keeping,
God shall wipe thy tears away,
Turn thy darkness into day.

Though thy spirit faint with fasting
Through the hours so slowly wasting,
Morn shall bring a glorious feast.
Thou shalt sit an honored guest.

R5256: A WORD TO THE WATCHERS

"Let us watch and be sober."—1 Thess. 5:6.

THE APOSTLE PAUL is addressing the Church, himself included, when he says, "Let us watch and be sober." He indicates in the context that we are to watch for the Day, for Messiah's Kingdom, which will produce that Day. We know to expect the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. The Church is to be delivered from sin and death early in the morning of that wonderful Day. Their part is to be in the First Resurrection, to glory, honor and immortality with their Lord.

St. Paul tells us that God has so arranged His Program that the Day will come as a thief in the night—stealthily: and that those who are asleep will not be aware that the Day has come, and might therefore not be expected to be in a waiting attitude. Our Master's words are, "Take heed to yourselves, lest ... that Day come upon you unawares. ... Watch ye therefore." (Luke 21:34, 36.) We believe that He leaves the matter in obscurity, because it will be better for us as a whole not to know the exact time. For instance, in the long period of the Dark Ages it was better that Christians did not know just when the time of Christ's return would come. There were wonderful events transpiring in their day, and have been, in fact, in every day, but so much the more, we read, as the Day approaches.

While the Adversary is ever active in his efforts to do harm to the Lord's cause, he will be still more seductive in his evil influences during the last days. We must therefore, as the Day draws near, be more and more alert in guarding every point of attack. The Lord allows us to do this watching, and He will reward the faithful ones, for He takes pleasure in the watchers. These will not be careless. Any who are careless will not be of the Kingdom class, for they are not of the kind that He wishes to glorify.

God wishes those who are awake to be learning more and more of His Plan. These will grow in grace and in knowledge as they watch. They will not be like the world. The world will be in a stupor—they will be unworthy of the Day. Darkness covers the whole earth at the present time. But God's people are granted a special light. They love the light. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psa. 119:105.) It is not a light like that of the moon, which reaches far out, but merely a little light at the feet of

those who are watching for it. Those who are going to sleep will find their light going out.

EVIDENCES OF THE NEW DAY

The way that the Lord has been marking out for His people all down through the Age has been a narrow way—a very narrow way. His light is given only to those who are seeking—those who are waiting—those who are watching. These will discern the dawning of the morning.

Others will not see. They have not watched to catch the foregleams of the New Day. While things transpire that are evidences of the New Day, they are quite unconscious. For instance, the wonderful blessings of our day are manifestations of the New Dispensation. The dawn is here. We are astonished that the people do not see. But they attribute these wonderful things to different causes. They think that these are merely the results of man's taking another step forward in progress from the monkey-stage. He has become more intelligent, goes to concerts, churches, etc. He is getting farther away from the monkey! The power to use steam and electricity proves to these that we are entering the *Brain Age!* They forget that the few are talented inventors, etc.

We can see that all these great blessings belong to the New Dispensation. God is bringing it about. We can see that it is not the educated people, but those less educated, who have discovered the wonderful inventions most useful to man. The inventions which have proved the greatest blessings the world has ever known have been discovered by unlearned men. These things are not due to the "brain age," as they tell us. Perhaps none of the present generation will compare with Shakespeare; perhaps none will compare with St. Paul; none perhaps will compare with Solomon, or David, or Moses.

WATCHMEN FOR A PURPOSE

The Apostle says, "Let us watch and be sober." We cannot say that he here refers to abstinence from the use of liquors, tobacco and other things which have a stupefying effect on the nerves. The thought is that we should be watchful and sober in mind. We find a great many people who are excitable—carried about by every wind of doctrine. They cannot give the reason for what they accept. They do not know that the Truth is intended for only the one class of people—for those who are *watching*.

How carefully we should watch all the increasing signs of the New Day! But the watchman who stands at the post of duty, and sees things going on, but keeps his mouth shut, is of no use at all. We want a watchman for a purpose! Those who are on the alert should call the attention of others to these wonderful things. They should seek to arouse the Household of Faith.

There are people who are as fully consecrated as ourselves, perhaps, only they are not awake. We should give them a kindly shake to arouse them to see the wonderful things. And since we are to be called away soon to the marriage, we are to remember that a part

of our watching should be to keep our garments white. We are to watch to some purpose. If we realized how near the Bridegroom is, how careful we would be of our robes! Others do not know, but the Bride-elect knows how near the Bridegroom is. She will watch and be sober.

In one sense of the word, there might be many things to lead to excitability. We might merely jump up and down as we see the wonderful things, and clap our hands, etc. But not so! We are to be sober. Yet we are not to be stupid—stolid. We should remember that the Lord is giving us this knowledge to be used, and we should use it more and more. As we more clearly see our imperfections, we should watch and be sober, and we shall accordingly be circumspect, we shall be helpful to others, and will put on more and more the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit—patience, meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love. And as we watch, we shall be putting off anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. Thus we shall be pleasing and acceptable to the Bridegroom, and we shall thus be making ourselves ready to enter in with Him into the joys and blessings that are now so near—at the door.

NOVEMBER 20

If ye do these things, ye shall never fall—2 Pet. 1:10.

The contingency is not in the doing of these things *perfectly*, and regardless of the righteousness of Christ to cover our transgressions and compensate for our daily shortcomings; but if, *added to our faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ*, we have cultivated all these graces *to the extent of our ability*, we shall not fall. When we have done all that we can do, we are still unprofitable servants, not daring to trust in our own righteousness, but in the ample robe which is ours by faith in Christ, while, with consistent "diligence," we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that the righteousness of Christ is only applied to such as desire to forsake sin and pursue that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord"—Z '97, 148 (R 2154).

Doing these things implies three distinct activities: first, *adding—i.e.*, developing the graces mentioned above; second, *being in you—i.e.*, exercising these graces after they are developed; and third, *abounding—i.e.*, using these graces, so that they act properly toward one another, and in such action control all our other graces and our affections, thoughts, words and acts. These three activities faithfully performed develop perfection of character in Christlikeness. Through these three modes of character activity and development one is kept from falling from God's special favor, and is enabled ultimately to come off more than conqueror through our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us make a most faithful use of this, the most important of all character development instructions—P '30, 183.

Parallel passages: Ex. 19:5; 2 Pet. 3:18; Jude 24; Mal. 3:2; Matt. 10:22; Mark 13:13; 1 Cor. 15:2, 58; Gal. 6:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Rev. 2:10; 16:15; Jas. 1:22-25; Psa. 24:3, 4.

Hymns: 136, 197, 95, 267, 346, 145, 1.

Poems of Dawn, 130: *Keep Striving*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 133 (R 5677).

Questions: Have I been doing "these things" this week? Why? How? What were the results?

KEEP STRIVING

KEEP striving: The winners are those who have striven
And fought for the prize that no idler hath won;
To the hands of the steadfast alone it is given,
And before it is gained, there is work to be done.

Keep climbing: The earnest and steadfast have scaled
The height where the pathway was rough to the feet;
But the faint-hearted faltered, and faltering, failed,

And sank down by the wayside in helpless defeat.

Keep hoping: The clouds hide the sun for a time,
But sooner or later they scatter and flee,
And the path glows like gold to the toilers who climb
To the heights where men look over landscape and sea.

Keep onward—right on, till the prize is attained;
Front the future with courage, and obstacles fall.
By those, and those only, the victory's gained
Who look not to self, but to God above all.

R5677: "THESE THINGS" THAT WE MUST DO

"If ye do these things, ye shall never fall."—2 Peter 1:10.

THE CONTEXT preceding the words of the above text shows us that the Apostle has been urging the development of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in the heart, and so far as possible in the life—in the words, the deeds, the thoughts. He sums up his argument by saying that those who, following his advice in this matter, add one after another of these qualities and so build up their Christian character, will *"never fall."* The implication is that there would be some tendency to fall, some testings; and that this development of character would be necessary in order that the individual might be able to stand these tests. So the Apostle's assurance is that those who do not fall, who stand all the tests, will be granted an *abundant* entrance "into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"—the very thing that all of the Lord's people are invited to share.

We whose eyes of understanding have been enlightened can realize the strength and reasonableness of the Apostle's argument; yet these things have not been much taught in a logical way. Errors of the Dark Ages have hindered and made void the teachings of the Apostles. The thought given out by the creeds of the past is that only a mere handful would be saved, and that the rest of the world would be banished to an eternity of torture and woe unspeakable. Many of the world have taken this in a light way, have been incredulous—declaring that they would stand their chance, etc. Others, who were of the Lord's people, have been frantic in their efforts to save as many as possible from the threatened eternal torture. Some had it that unless they belonged to a certain class, or cult, or had a certain kind of baptism, or turned away from sin and joined some church, they were sure of never-ending and unspeakable suffering beyond this life.

With these ideas in their minds, it is not strange that they were too busy to study the Word of God with sufficient care to see what it really teaches, and that therefore they adopted plans of their own for saving the world. These deluded ones seem to be quite active in what they term soul-saving work. We cannot but admire their courage and zeal, even though it be not according to knowledge. If their premise were correct, then every

Christian should be rushing around as though demented, in his endeavors to save the world.

Suppose that a great fire broke out but a few doors from us, that there were no fire department accessible and that hundreds were in imminent danger of being burned to death, though we were ourselves safe from the fire. Suppose that then some one would say to us, "Come, let us have a Bible Study." We would be sure to answer quickly, "No indeed! There are many people in that building who will be burned to death unless they are quickly rescued!" We would be in such haste and such eagerness to save the lives of the endangered ones that we would stop for nothing else.

DOCTRINAL CONFUSION OF MANY CHRISTIANS

So the great Adversary has filled the minds of many Christian people with the vagary that the world is in imminent danger, not of being burned to *death*, but of being precipitated into a lake of burning brimstone or into an abyss of unimaginable horror and woe, there to be preserved in torture throughout unending ages! He has thus engaged Christians in an imaginary assault upon the Devil, to rescue souls from this eternity of torment. Not until our eyes are opened and we see that there is no such provision for the heathen, or for anybody, can we begin to exercise the spirit of a sound mind. When we come to understand God's arrangement, everything changes before our mind's eye. We then see that God has made full provision for the heathen and for all men, and we realize that

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

We see that our work as Christians is to co-operate with God in the salvation of the *Church* class—not a salvation from eternal torture, but from *death*, and to a glorious inheritance with Christ in His coming Kingdom. We see that this great work has been progressing during the Gospel Age, and in an orderly manner.

This blessed union with Christ which God has arranged for the Church is to be soon consummated by a marriage feast; and then, in the Kingdom to be established under the whole heavens, she as His Bride will with Him have the blessed opportunity of uplifting and delivering fallen humanity, the entire race of Adam, of restoring men, "whosoever will," to the glorious estate which was lost by Adam and redeemed by Christ Jesus the Lord through the blood of His cross. How wonderful it is to realize how all-embracing is God's marvelous Plan of salvation—that it includes in its gracious provision not only those now living, but also all who have gone down into the tomb! With the eyes of our understanding thus enlightened, the delusions are taken away from our minds, and we begin to use our reason and to see the beautiful, wonderful things which God planned from before the foundation of the world.

DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION LOST TO MAJORITY

As we reason, we see that the primary consideration with *us* is our *sanctification*. "This is the will of God [concerning *you*], even *your* sanctification." When we thought that the salvation of the world was dependent upon our feeble efforts here in the flesh, we had little time to study the Bible or to think particularly about our sanctification. Indeed, the thought of sanctification faded away from the minds of the majority of professing Christians; and for a Christian to press the importance of this doctrine was to brand himself as a religious fanatic. The general thought has seemed to be that those who were really thus set apart were surely so small a number that sanctification could not be God's Plan for the Church. So the many drifted apart from the Scriptures, and thought that only those guilty of most heinous crimes would be punished with eternal torment, and that all others would be some means get into Heaven. People have thought, and this thought seems to prevail today to an increasing extent, that unless one dies a murderer or a lawless, disreputable character, he will somehow be saved.

"If a person can squeeze into Heaven without any sanctification, so much the better," is the thought. "Do not try to get up too high. Do not try to get one of the chief seats in Heaven. Take a lowly place"—crawl in under the gates, perhaps! And thus many have tried to believe that they and their friends would go to Heaven. Our Catholic friends have been taught that they must go to Purgatory for awhile. But nearly all others have hoped that they would get to Heaven at once. This idea of sanctification, of being holy as our Lord was holy, of walking in the footsteps of Jesus, is not the Bible view at all, according to their thought. They did not consider it the Bible view because they did not know the Bible teachings, and because they did not wish to conform themselves to so narrow a way—the broader, easier way was much more pleasant to the flesh. They could not believe that God would be intent upon roasting nearly everybody—surely He would be content to roast the most degraded heathen and the worst characters of Christendom.

OUR "REASONABLE SERVICE"

So these have accepted what seemed to them to be a reasonable moral standard, instead of endeavoring to find out what the Bible calls our "reasonable service." The great Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Church at Rome (Romans 12:1), says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." When we get rid of these erroneous thoughts and ideas and get the spirit of a sound mind, we begin to see more of God's wonderful Plan—of His Justice, Wisdom, Love, Power, of His purpose for His children now, and His arrangement for the world by and by.

When light begins to break in upon the mind, and a glimpse is seen of God's gracious Plan of salvation, there is a danger that those whose hearts are selfish and lacking in gratitude will lapse into even greater worldliness, that they will pay very little attention to Bible study for the development of the fruits of the Spirit, feeling that it will be well with them in the future in any event, and they will delve into business, money-making, pleasure, etc. Others, on the contrary, feel an earnest desire to render thanks to the Lord for His great mercy and love as manifested in His glorious Plan of the Ages; they seek to know what is the Lord's will for them that they may do it, and say, "The fact that God is

not such a demon as to torture eternally any of His creatures, but has so marvelous and loving a Plan for all, makes me want to serve Him all the more." As the Apostle Paul said, the Truth is "to the one the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life," and reveals the real sentiment of the heart.—2 Cor. 2:16.

THE CHRISTIAN'S NEED IN THIS "EVIL DAY"

Thus those who receive the Truth in the love of it become students of the Bible. As they study, they learn more and more how each one of the true Church is to be sanctified by the Truth, that each may be "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." They realize that the Church is now being called out to be saints of God, to be separated from the world, and to have a share with the Lord Jesus in blessing and uplifting the whole world in the Age to follow this, the Millennial Age—now so near at hand. To such the exhortation of the Apostle is, "Add to your faith virtue [fortitude]; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance [self-control, self-restraint]; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love [a broad, generous love, taking in the whole world, even our enemies].—2 Peter 1:5-7.

The Apostle then adds, "If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall be neither barren [inactive, idle] nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." At this juncture the Apostle shows the contrary effect of the spirit of the world upon those who profess to be children of God—the result of a neglect to study and to assimilate the Word. He says, "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." Then he counsels all, "Wherefore, the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—Vs. 8-11.

NEED OF "THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD"

By seeking to know God's will in order to do it, the Lord's people are preparing themselves for the glorious inheritance of the faithful. Fortified by development of character, these will not fall, no matter what the trial that the Lord may permit to come upon them. The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Church at Ephesus, speaks of some who will be able to stand in the "evil day," and implies that a great many at that time will not be able to stand. He declares that those who hope to stand will need to put on "the whole armor of God." The various pieces of the Christian's armor will then be indispensable, and he intimates that only those fully armored would be ready for the onslaughts of that Day.

The Lord did not reveal to the Apostles when the "evil day" would come. They knew that it was then future, but how far into the future they did not know. They did not expect it before their death; for some of them said that they expected to put off the present body, to die, and to awake in the First Resurrection, and that they believed the Second Coming

of Christ to be some little time distant. Evidently it was a part of God's Plan to keep His people uninformed concerning the exact time of the Day of the Lord, until due; but He provided for them that they would be able to stand when the "evil day" arrived, if they would diligently put on the armor.

And now we have come to this "evil day"; and the urgent message to us is: "Put on the whole armor of God!"—prepare yourselves for the great testing that will come, that you may be able to stand! Get ready! Each piece of the armor, each fruit of the Spirit, is a part of the necessary preparation for this "evil day," this "hour of temptation," now present. So these should all be added with great care. Read Ephesians 6:13-18; 2 Peter 1:4-11; Galatians 5:19-26.

WHY THOUSANDS ARE FALLING

This is the time long foretold, when "a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand." Why will all these fall? Because they have neglected this necessary development of character; because they have failed to put on the whole armor of God; because under the delusions of the Adversary and the spirit of the world and of Babylon they have become twisted in their minds. They have tried to raise money for the heathen or for building fine church edifices; they have gotten up church fairs and entertainments, etc.; not appreciating the fact that it is necessary to build up their own characters, that character, built up after the instruction of the Word of God, is absolutely necessary to an entrance into the Kingdom of Christ. And so these are falling all around us.

If the whole armor of God was important in the Apostle's day, it is still more important today. We need all that is represented in the breastplate of righteousness, in the shield of faith, in the helmet of salvation, the covering of protection for the intellect, in the sandals of Gospel preparation, in the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. We need that our loins be girt up with Truth. Thus shall we be enabled to preserve our vital relationship with the Lord and His House and to daily grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"In the last days," said the Apostle, "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Therefore we need to be *fully* established in the faith, and able to *fully trust the Lord*. Let us keep the Sword of the Spirit sharpened and well in hand, that we may be ready for service in the protection of others and in the defense of ourselves. We need to be continually on the alert respecting our own fleshly weaknesses and besetments, that we may war a successful warfare, and prove faithful to the end of our course, and thus share with our Lord His Kingdom and crown.

"As I near the Time of Trouble,
Bid my faith in Thee increase;
While the thousands round are falling,
Keep me, keep in perfect peace.
Refuge! Fortress! Thou hast set Thy love on me!"

NOVEMBER 21

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations—Jas. 1:2.

All wish frequently, no doubt, that the testings were all over and that we were accepted to a place among the overcomers; but patience and faith and trust are to do a refining work in our hearts, making us mellow, willing and obedient to the Lord. Let the good work go on. Let us rejoice if our trials have brought us lessons of any kind that are profitable to us—that have tended to make us stronger in character, more firm for truth and righteousness, more aware of our own weaknesses, and more on guard against the same. Even those conflicts which have resulted in only partial victories have possibly been to our advantage. Even on points in which there may have been absolute failure, the result may be a strengthening of character, a crystallization of determination for greater zeal in that direction again, and a humility of heart before the Lord in prayer—Z '02, 133 (R 3000).

The temptations here meant are the Christian's trials along the lines of losses, disappointments, delays, restraints, shelvings, faults, lacks, weaknesses, mistakes, failures, chastisements, hardships, necessities, calamities, misunderstandings, disagreements, divisions, misrepresentations, oppositions, sickness, pains, sorrows, dangers and persecutions. The natural tendency of such trials is to distress us, but we should rejoice in them as evidence of God's favor and as opportunities for our development. Amid such trials at first it is impossible to rejoice; the best we can do is to count them joy, *i.e.*, reckoned, not actual joy. By and by such reckoning will become a habit, and this habit will gradually produce such joy as will enable us to exult and glory, if not at, yet amid our tribulations. Hallelujah!—P '35, 171.

Parallel passages: Ex. 34:12; Deut. 13:3; Psa. 119:165; Prov. 2:10-12; 14:27; 19:27; Isa. 33:15, 16; Matt. 4:1-11; 13:22; Rom. 5:3-5; 8:35-39; 12:21; 1 Cor. 10:13, 14; 2 Cor. 7:4; Eph. 6:11-17; Heb. 2:18; 4:15.

Hymns: 78, 56, 57, 91, 119, 137, 266.

Poems of Dawn, 294: *Two Frogs*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 149 (R 5459).

Questions: What have been this week's trials? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? In what did they result?

TWO FROGS

TWO frogs fell into a deep cream bowl.
One was an optimistic soul.
The other took the gloomy view:
"We'll drown," he cried, without more ado;
So, with a last despairing cry

He flung up his legs and said "Good-by."

Said the other frog with a plucky grin,
"I can't get out, but I won't give in;
I'll just swim around till my strength is spent,
Then I can die with more content."
Bravely he swam till it would seem
His struggles began to churn the cream.
At last on top of the butter he stopped
And out of the bowl he gladly hopped.

What of the moral? 'Tis easily found—
When you can't get out keep swimming around.

R5459: TRIALS ESSENTIAL TO CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations."—James 1:2.

ALL those who have been called of the Lord during this Gospel Age are called with what the Apostle Paul styles the High Calling (Philippians 3:14), the Heavenly Calling (Hebrews 3:1), which is a call to share with Jesus in His glory, honor and immortality. But the call is not the *decision* in the matter; it is merely an *invitation* with certain definite conditions. We are called, not only to righteousness, but to walk in the Master's footsteps of suffering and self-sacrifice. These are the only terms on which any are received as disciples of Christ. We understand the Scriptures to teach that during the Millennial Age there will be other terms of acceptance with God, offered the world. But there are no conditions offered now other than those of becoming followers and disciples of Jesus, to walk as He walked.

The Apostle James intimates that temptations may overtake these followers of Christ, into which they will fall as into a snare. As for an army, traps are set by the enemy, so the great Adversary sets traps and snares for us. He endeavors to misguide our minds and to lead us away from proper conceptions of truth and righteousness. We should be very careful to avoid his snares. Nevertheless, in spite of diligence, we may fall into a trap.

The Apostle says we are to rejoice when we fall into various temptations—not that we are to rejoice if we fall into *sin* when tempted, but that we may rejoice if we find ourselves suddenly precipitated into temptation. Temptation is not sin. If we could but keep in mind the fact that every temptation, every trial, every persecution, every difficulty in life, permitted to come upon us who have made the covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, is intended to *prove us*, to test our love, to see whether or not our characters are *fixed*, rooted and grounded in righteousness and being built up in love, it would put all these trials, difficulties and temptations in a new light before us, and greatly assist us in fighting a good fight and overcoming. When we find ourselves suddenly in temptation, trial, we should say, If by these temptations, or trials, the Lord is proving my

love and devotion to Him, then, however trifling they may be or however important, I will diligently use them as favorable opportunities to demonstrate to my Lord the fulness of my love and devotion to Him and His cause. I must fight a good fight against this thing—the world, the flesh or the Adversary—whatever it might be that had brought the snare.

Thus viewed and thus met we can rejoice in every such experience; every trial and every difficulty will prove a blessing; for we shall, first of all, have an opportunity to show the Lord that we will endure, and not compromise His cause or our own position as His servants. We can rejoice also because we know that under such trials our characters will make advancement toward crystallization, if we overcome; and because we know that the Lord would not let us fall into any temptation which He would not cause to work out for us a blessing if we are wholly loyal. Let us dwell often upon the words of the Apostles: "Beloved, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." "Greatly rejoice, though now for a season ye are in manifold temptation, that the trial of your faith, being more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." "Blessed is the man that endureth [faithfully under] temptation; for after his trials he will receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." "These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, *work out* for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"—if rightly utilized; if we are rightly exercised by them.—1 Peter 1:7; James 1:2, 12.

"HE THAT ENDURETH"

We are assured that those who love the Lord, and who because of this will receive the Kingdom, will be those whose love will have been tested by trials and temptations on the way. Those who do not love the Lord with *all* their hearts—in whom self or some other idol has first place—will be seduced by the world, the flesh or the Adversary, into some form of rebellion against the Divine Word or Divine providences. They will have schemes and theories which they will prefer to the Lord's Plan. These when analyzed will usually be found to be based either upon selfishness or upon ambition or an evil spirit of envy, hatred, etc. The Lord's leading and the Lord's words lose their attraction to such, and they lose their interest correspondingly. Like those who turned away from the Lord at the First Advent, declaring, "This is a hard saying," they walk no more with Him.

As there are some substances which are short and brittle, so are there some which have fibre, strength, endurance. The Lord chooses for Himself such characters as have the strong, enduring qualities—fortitude, patience, long-suffering, etc. Some there are who walk close to the Lord, who will not be driven from Him by any of the arts and wiles of the Adversary. They are such as are at heart fully the Lord's—not their own; they follow wherever the Lord may lead, because they have no will except the will of God. These will follow the Lord in the narrow way of trial, discipline and testings during the present life, and by and by, as He has declared, "They shall walk with Me in white; for they are worthy."—Revelation 3:4.

He who escapes all trials and temptations and difficulties has every reason to doubt that he is really in relationship to God as a son. If he were a son, the Lord would surely find it necessary to give him trials and difficulties. If he does not have these he should go to the Father and make sure that there is no impediment on his part—make sure that he has put himself in the proper place where he can be prepared for the Kingdom. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."—Hebrews 12:6.

FAILURES AS "STEPPING-STONES"

All will rejoice when the testings are over and we are accepted as overcomers, to share with the Lord in His Throne. But patience, trust and love must first do a refining work in our hearts, making us mellow, submissive and obedient to God. Let the good work go on! Let us rejoice if our trials have made us stronger in character, more humble and Christlike, more aware of our blemishes and imperfections, more watchful and earnest in our endeavors to correct them so far as possible.

Even the conflicts in which we have had only partial victory may have resulted in blessings to us. Even in those experiences where we have suffered absolute failure, there may be, through the humiliation and the pain of defeat, a strengthening of our character, a firm determination for greater watchfulness in that direction, and a more fervent prayer for the Lord's sustaining grace, the need of which has been more deeply impressed upon our hearts. Thus even failures may become "stepping-stones" by which we rise toward God and Heaven. Only through much tribulation shall we enter the Kingdom of Heaven at all. If, therefore, the Lord's people find themselves involved in temptations, tribulations, instead of feeling downcast they are to rejoice and say, These are evidences that the Lord is preparing me for a place in the Kingdom. This should give one courage to fight the good fight against the world, the flesh and the Adversary. The flesh is suffering; but the new mind, the new will, has this joy; and the New Creature can rejoice, knowing that these trials are not for his harm, but for his good.—1 Peter 4:13.

A WAY OF ESCAPE PROVIDED

The Heavenly Father will with every temptation provide a way of escape. Hence when we find ourselves in difficulty we are to say, The Heavenly Father is permitting this trial—the Lord Jesus will help me, and so I will rejoice in the fact that the Lord will not allow me to be overthrown; for He has promised that all things shall work out for my good.

As our text expressly says: We are to count it all joy when we *fall* into temptations—not when we *walk* into them. We are not to seek temptation. In our own fallen condition and that of those around us, with the Adversary alert to harm us, we know that there will be plenty of temptations without our walking into them. But if we fall into temptation we are to say, I have been striving against this thing, but the Lord has permitted it; and there must, therefore, come some blessing out of it for me. Even temptations that come through

negligence are not to be disesteemed. Some of our greatest lessons in *carefulness* have resulted from the effect of our own *carelessness*.

Our joy is largely dependent upon our study of the Word and our knowledge of the precious promises contained therein for those who overcome. The Lord wants those who will endure a great fight of afflictions, who will endure patiently, though the temptations continue long and the tribulations become more and more severe. But if they should lose faith, all their previous good resolutions and standing for what is right would not make them overcomers.

These trials are intended to develop in us patience—that this quality may be deeply ingrained. We are building character for all eternity; and patience could not be thus developed and maintained except by repeated difficulties, tests—by our resolving again and again to be stronger and firmer in building the character-likeness of our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

A WORD OF WARNING

To those who are of this anointed company and who are striving to attain the glory promised to the faithful followers of Christ, the Apostle Peter issues a word of warning. In the first chapter of his second Epistle, he urges the Church to add quality after quality of character-preparation, that thus they may be fitted for the glorious things that God has promised to the faithful. He specifies *faith* as the primary qualification. To this he says that we are to add fortitude, knowledge, patience, self-control, godliness, brotherly kindness and a broad, generous love for all mankind. The reason why the Scriptures declare that our judgment will be according to our *faith* is that while in the flesh we shall never be able to perform *works* such as God could approve.

What God approves is the New Creature. By exercising faith and by demonstrating loyalty these New Creatures will be able to please Him, and to work out the proper character as enjoined in His Word, developing the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. "*If ye do these things,*" says the Apostle, "ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

Faith is necessary *all along the line*. Without faith we could not have courage to go on. If we did not have faith what would be our source of encouragement? The fall mentioned in the text above quoted (2 Peter 1:10), is evidently a fall from the position to which we have been invited and to which invitation we respond. We were called to be joint-heirs with our Lord. If we are obedient to the Word of the Lord and are properly exercised by the experiences which are given us in the School of Christ, we shall gain His approval; for "Faithful is He that hath called us." If there is a fall in our case, it will be due to failure to do our part. If we fail to cultivate character, we shall fail to gain the Kingdom.

CAUSES INDUCING A FALL

Among those who fall some will fall more seriously than others. Those who fail to go on will receive certain tests which will determine whether they will turn back to the world or will continue in the narrow way. Some will fail in that they will not manifest sufficient zeal. These will come through great tribulations. If by these experiences they are brought to a full loyalty to the Lord, they will be granted everlasting life, but not on so high a plane as if they had not failed in their manifestation of zeal for the Lord, and of faith, energy and perseverance in doing the Lord's will.

Again, from lack of zeal in the Lord's service or from cultivating a spirit of bitterness, one may deteriorate until he becomes an enemy of the Lord, loving sin rather than righteousness. As an opponent of God such a one would suffer a complete fall. But those who have a temporary fall, but who afterwards overcome in the trials which the Lord will allow to come upon them, thus showing their loyalty to Him, will be fully recovered. Those who fall utterly can never be recovered. Such will lose *everything*. They had sacrificed their *human* hopes before they could be accepted at first; therefore their falling away from this condition of a New Creature will be a hopeless fall.

The fall of such will be far worse than the fall of Adam, whose fall resulted from having only limited knowledge and from lack of experience in the results of evil, for these have come to a clear knowledge of the Truth and have experienced a share in the redemption. The falling away of such would mean a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation—of destruction as enemies of God. Adam had only a small knowledge of the grace of God, and therefore is to be redeemed and ultimately restored, if he shall come into harmony with God.

Dear brethren, let us take heed to our ways. Let us earnestly cultivate the fruits of the Spirit, that we may indeed be presented "*faultless* before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

"From glory unto glory' that ever lies before,
Still wondering, adoring, rejoicing more and more;
Still following where He leadeth, from shining field to field,
Himself the goal of glory, Revealer and revealed!

"Then let our hearts be surely fixed where truest joys are found,
And let our burning, loving praise yet more and more abound;
And gazing on the 'things not seen' eternal in the skies,
'From glory unto glory,' O Savior, let us rise!"

NOVEMBER 22

The zeal of thine house hath consumed me—Psa. 69:9.

Cold, calculating people may have other good qualities, but there is no room for coldness or even luke-warmness on the part of those who have once tasted that the Lord is gracious. With such, the love enkindled should lead to a consuming zeal. It was thus with our Lord Jesus, and this was one of the reasons why He was beloved of the Father. Let all who desire to be pleasing in the Lord's sight become so filled with the same spirit of zeal for righteousness and truth that it will consume them as sacrifices upon the Lord's altar. Thus they will be most pleasing and acceptable to Him through Jesus our Lord—Z '98, 112 (R 2288).

Zeal is an energetic devotion to, and lively activity in, a cause. Properly developed in a child of God, it is a combination of a number of qualities, prominent among which are faith, hope, love, activity, enthusiasm and obedience. In God's children, zeal is directed to the furtherance of God's Plan, and it acts toward principles and persons, varying as their attitude and relation to God's Plan varies. Accordingly, it acts favorably toward some principles and persons and unfavorably toward other principles and persons. The zeal of God's house, *i.e.*, both the zeal that is *for* and *peculiar* to the Lord's house, implies an energetic devotion to, and activity for the Church according to the Word. As with Jesus, so with us, such a zeal is self-sacrificial, consuming us and all that we have and hope to be and to have as human beings—P '34, 160.

Parallel passages: Josh. 24:15, 16; 1 Chron. 29:17; 2 Chron. 15:15; Ezra 7:23; Psa. 119:139; Eccles. 9:10; Isa. 62:6, 7; Matt. 5:13-16; John 9:4; Rom. 12:11; 1 Cor. 13:3; 15:58; 2 Cor. 4:8-10, 13, 16-18; Gal. 4:18; 6:9; Titus 2:14; 2 Pet. 3:14; Jude 3; Rev. 3:19.

Hymns: 8, 95, 134, 192, 259, 44, 78.

Poems of Dawn, 164: *My Heart's Desire*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 168 (R 5250).

Questions: Have I been zealous for the Lord this week? Wherein? How? Why? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

MY HEART'S DESIRE

DEAR Master, long I've sought
A grain of "wheat" to find,
My heart's desire has been,
Just one with truth to bind!

Perhaps Thou canst not trust
Thy servant with this work,
Because some earth-born pride
Within my breast doth lurk.

If thou dost find this, Lord,
Oh, send affliction's fire,
Burn out the dross, the gold refine,
And grant my heart's desire!

Perhaps I've sought a path,
Thou hast not marked for me,—
Forgive, I only thought
Some work to do for Thee!

I own no will of mine,
The place I would not choose,
But simply give mine all
To Thee as Thou canst use.

My thoughts, my words, my deeds,
Dear Lord, make pure by fire,—
Ah, *then*, I know that Thou
Canst grant my heart's desire!

R5250: SERVICE OF THE BRETHERN A PROPER ZEAL

"The zeal of Thine House hath consumed Me."—Psa. 69:9.

THESE WORDS must have seemed extremely poetical, hyperbolic, to those of David's time. David indeed had a zeal for the House of God—for the Tabernacle first, and subsequently for the Temple, which he desired to build, but which the Lord would not permit him to build. David had a real zeal for that House.

We get the key to this prophecy from its application in the New Testament to our Lord. When Jesus had made a scourge of small cords, He drove the money-changers out of the Temple. Then His disciples remembered and probably quoted the passage: "The zeal of Thine House hath eaten Me up." (John 2:17.) The Lord's House in that case was the Temple; and our Lord's zeal in cleansing the Temple of all merchandise would be considered by some as very appropriate, and by others as very extreme.

But the still deeper meaning is indicated by the declaration that the Church is His House—the House of God. The Apostles, speaking of the Church, say that we are the Temple of the Holy Spirit. (I Cor. 6:19.) Again, it is said that we are builded together as living stones. (I Pet. 2:4, 5.) So we see that the real House of God for which Jesus had zeal was the House of Sons. The Jews had been a House of Servants under Moses; but Christ was a Son over His own House—the House of Sons—"whose House are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end;" for "Faithful is He that calleth you."—Heb. 3:5, 6; I Thess. 5:24.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE

Having this view of the House before our minds, we can see in what way Jesus' zeal for the House of God consumed Him—burned Him up. We use the word *burn, consume*, in the same way that we use the word *rust*, in the case of *iron*. And so zeal is that which is warm, aglow, hot. With this view of the Master and His House before our minds—the House that He was interested in—we perceive that His zeal, His energy for them, prompted Him, led Him, to lay down His life—for as many as would become God's House, God's sons, God's people. This zeal for the Lord's House, for the Lord's people, consumed His time and strength in helping them.

During this Gospel Age the Lord invites the Church to be similarly consumed with Him. But the only ones who are yet members of the House of God, or sons of God, are those who are begotten of the Holy Spirit, as the Apostle distinctly tells us. If we then have this Spirit of Christ, it will be the spirit of service. It will be a zeal, a warmth, an energy, prompting us to serve in the Church. It will mean that we will be consumed as the Master was consumed—in the service of His Church, which is His Body.—Matthew 20:28; I John 3:16.

THE PREPARATION FOR THE DIVINE NATURE

There are sons of God on the Heavenly plane who were never given an opportunity to manifest such a zeal as this. There was no offer made to them to be associated in the reclamation of mankind. This privilege was given to the Logos, the Only Begotten. To Him was given the opportunity to lay down His life—"Who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name."—Phil. 2:7-9.

Our Lord's zeal has not cost Him His Heavenly home, His Heavenly estate; but, on the contrary, God has highly exalted Him—to a higher position. The statement that He was consumed refers to His earthly life, which He laid down for the world. The Father has given Him a still higher nature than He had before—the Divine nature. And this zeal in being consumed prepared Him for the high reward of the Divine nature.

St. Peter says that the Lord hath "given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these [working in us] we might become partakers of the Divine nature." (2 Pet. 1:4.) The Apostle Paul says that if we suffer with Christ, we shall reign with Him; if we be dead with Him, we shall live with Him. (2 Tim. 2:11, 12.) If we have our earthly natures consumed, then we shall get the Divine nature. "We shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."—1 Cor. 15:51, 52.

This opportunity, then, of manifesting a fulness of zeal for the service of God, was granted, not to Adam, or to any of the human family, until this Gospel Age. This

opportunity will *not* come to the sons of God in the next Age. The sacrificing then will be at an end; and there will be no more sin, sorrow, pain, sighing, crying or dying!—Isaiah 35:10; 51:11; Revelation 21:4.

"One more day's work for Jesus,
One less of life for me!
But Heaven is nearer, and Christ is dearer,
Than yesterday to me;
His love and light fill all my soul tonight!

"One more day's work for Jesus!
How glorious is my King! 'Tis joy, not duty, to show His beauty;
My soul mounts on the wing,
At the mere thought how Christ my life has bought!

"One more day's work for Jesus!
How sweet the work has been,
To tell the story, to show the glory,
Where Christ's flock enter in!
How it did shine in this poor heart of mine!

"O blessed work for Jesus!
O rest at Jesus' feet!
There toil seems pleasure, my wants are treasure,
And pain for Him is sweet.
Lord, if I may, I'll serve another day!"

NOVEMBER 23

Ye have need of patience [cheerful endurance, constancy] that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise—Heb. 10:36.

Here we see that it is not merely to do the will of God that is the test, but that after having attained to that point, that mark of character in our hearts, in our wills (if only partially in the flesh), we should, by *patient endurance*, establish God's righteous will as the law of our hearts, the rule of life under all circumstances and conditions. Then, and not until then, will we be in the heart condition of fitness for the Kingdom. The Apostle James says, "The trying of your faith worketh patience [*patient endurance*]"; that is to say, if our faith stands the trial, it will work this character of patient endurance. Of course, on the other hand, if we do not attain to patient endurance, it will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactorily, that we are not fit for the Kingdom—Z '01, 117 (R 2790).

By patience the Bible does not mean merely long-suffering, but that perseverance, steadfastness, constancy, which cheerfully endures obstacles in the way of pressing on in well-doing. By *doing the will of God* the Apostle seems to mean, developing love until we attain the mark; for the sum of God's will for us, the end of the commandment, is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience and from a faith unfeigned. After we have attained such a degree of love, the one thing necessary is to press on therein perseveringly, in cheerful endurance of every obstacle in the way of our acting out its dictates. This will ultimately make us conquerors, and thus insure our inheriting all the blessings in the Oath-bound promise to the seed of Abraham—P '33, 162.

Parallel passages: Luke 8:15; 21:19; Gal. 6:9; Heb. 12:1; Jas. 1:3, 4; 5:7, 8; Rom. 2:7; 5:3, 4; 8:25, 35-39; 15:4, 5; Eph. 6:8; Col. 3:24; Heb. 6:12, 15; 1 Pet. 2:19-23; Rev. 1:9; 13:10.

Hymns: 93, 47, 34, 1, 13, 91, 208.

Poems of Dawn, 240: *The Sweet-Brier Rose*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 312 (R 5332).

Questions: Have I this week been patient in doing God's will? How? Why? With what results?

THE SWEET-BRIER ROSE

BESIDE my cottage door it grows,
The loveliest, daintiest flower that blows,
A sweet-brier rose.

At dewy morn or twilight's close,
The rarest perfume from it flows,—
This strange, wild rose.

But when the raindrops on it beat,
Ah, then its odors grow more sweet
About my feet!

Ofttimes with loving tenderness
Its soft green leaves I gently press
In sweet caress,—

A still *more wondrous* fragrance flows,
The more my fingers firmly close,
And *crush* the rose!

* * *

Dear Lord, oh, let my life be so,—
Its perfume when the tempests blow,
The sweeter flow!

And should it be Thy blessed will
With crushing grief my soul to fill,
Press harder still,

And while its dying fragrance flows,
I'll whisper low, "*He loves and knows*
His crushed brier-rose."

R5332: PATIENCE A CARDINAL GRACE OF CHARACTER

"Ye have need of patience [cheerful endurance], that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the [fulfilment of] the promise.—Heb. 10:36.

THE Apostle is addressing the Christian Church—You who have left the world, who have accepted Christ as your Standard-bearer, as well as your Redeemer, and who are seeking to walk in His steps, and have made consecration of your life to the Lord—"Ye have need of patience." To a certain extent you did the will of God when you made your consecration to be dead with Christ. But that will of God was more deeply impressed upon you when you began to realize more than at first what this *sacrifice* would *mean*, and that only those who *suffer* with Christ shall *reign* with Him.

"After you were illuminated" you saw the matter clearly, and "endured a great fight of afflictions." This was well. But St. Paul goes on to show in the context that some, after having demonstrated their zeal for a certain time, become cold. They become weary in well doing. And he tells us that these thus cut themselves off from the favors, privileges and blessings belonging to the Church of Christ. His exhortation is that those who are still

loyal to God at heart continue so and exercise *patience*, remembering that this is one of the cardinal graces of Christian character. Many have naturally a little love, a little gentleness, a little patience, a little meekness, etc. But after we begin to grow in the graces of the Holy Spirit, we need *patience* to control the flesh, the spirit of the world, the spirit of selfishness.

The will of God is in one sense of the word the standard of God—full perfection—that we should be like our Father which is in Heaven. But God remembers that we are fallen creatures, and that we cannot do perfectly. Our text does not mean that we must do the will of God in the perfect and complete sense; but rather, as the Apostle elsewhere says, ours is a *reasonable service*. When we present our bodies living sacrifices to God, it is our reasonable service. God does not expect us to do that which is impossible.

THE PURPOSE OF OUR TESTING

What is this will of God? Stated in concrete form, "This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification." (I Thess. 4:3.) As the Apostle teaches, consecration is a full and complete setting apart. If we do such a setting of *ourselves* apart at the beginning, then the *Father* sanctifies us—begets us as New Creatures, and sets us apart. So we have, first of all, our setting of ourselves apart; and then God's acceptance by our begetting of the Holy Spirit as New Creatures, and His continued work in us.

We are doing the will of God when we fully consecrate ourselves to Him, and attain a place in the New Creation. But He wills to put us to the test. How much do we love God? How sincere are we? A soldier in an army might be loyal in time of quiet, but how would he be in time of stress? Would he desert the flag then, or would he prove himself a good soldier? He would need a great deal of patience. If he says he loves his country, his endurance and faithfulness will be tested in her time of need. He must go on picket duty; he must sometimes do menial work. He must endure wearisome marches, and many privations. All these things are required of a faithful soldier. If he is faithful, he is likely to be promoted, honored, for his faithful service.

So we are tested as to our *loyalty*. What are we willing to *endure* for Christ's sake? How *fully* are we submitted? How *deep* does our submission go? Are we wholly in harmony with the will of the Lord? Is our interest merely superficial, or does it enter fully into our hearts? The question is not merely, Shall we make the consecration?—but after the Christian has taken all of these preliminary steps, to what extent will he manifest patient endurance and obedience and loyalty?

God puts us to these tests because He has great honors to bestow on those who will be overcomers. They are to be a select company, and these will receive the Promise. As the Apostle says, it is after we have *proved* our loyalty to the very last, that we shall receive the Promise; i.e., its fulfilment.

THE ESSENCE OF THE PROMISE

When, where, what is the Promise? Undoubtedly the promise will be received in the resurrection. The promise includes all that God has in reservation for them that love Him—that love Him more than they love houses and lands, or children, or parents, or friends, or husbands or wives, or self, or any other thing.

The particular promise that the Apostle refers to here is *The Promise*. All our hopes and blessings are centered in the original Promise made to Abraham, when God brought him out of the land of Chaldea into the land of Canaan. God promised Abraham that in His Seed should all the families of the earth be blessed. That has been the great Promise for encouragement to the Seed, to give them patience and fortitude. This is the essence of the Promise—that those who receive the Promise shall be the Seed of Abraham to bless the world. The faithful in Christ will be associated with Him in His Kingdom—will have the honor of blessing all the families of the earth under this Kingdom. Every creature of God shall then be brought to a knowledge of His Truth, and shall have the opportunity of being restored, if he will, to perfection, to all that was redeemed on Calvary.

Now the opportunity is *different*. *Now* the selection is being made of those who will inherit the Promise as the Seed of Abraham. "If ye be *Christ's*, then are ye *Abraham's Seed*, and heirs according to the Promise." The Apostle is in our text urging that we continue to be Christ's and to abide in Him. All those who thus remain in Him to the end will be glorified with Him. In order to remain faithful, we must have His spirit of devotion.

NOTABLE EXAMPLES OF PATIENT ENDURANCE

St. James exhorts the Church saying, "Take, my brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." Those whom the Apostle addressed already knew of the sufferings of Jesus. They already knew of the faithfulness of the Apostles. And now he was calling the attention of their minds to something *additional*. He is urging, Look back into the past, and see that patient endurance has been characteristic of all who have lived holy lives. These examples should be lessons of encouragement to us, in addition to those we have in the living brethren around us!

Then there is always something to be gained in casting the mind backward. The things close at hand are too near to be seen in their proper light. It was fitting that the Apostle should call attention to those faithful ones of the past, so that we might be encouraged to note what God desires. In those who are His, He desires a willingness to endure patiently and loyally, thus manifesting true character, that which greatly pleases Him.

As we look back over the Old Testament record of the Prophets, we notice that many of them displayed this very quality referred to by the Apostle as loyalty to the Lord, a willingness to suffer afflictions for *His sake*, and not as experiences brought through chance upon them by the people. We see Moses—how willing he was to suffer affliction because of his faith in the Promise made to Abraham and his conviction that the Promise

would come true. He preferred to suffer with the people of God rather than to live at ease in the royal family of Pharaoh, into which he had been adopted.

We see in Job another example of patient endurance of tribulation and of strong opposition for a considerable time. We see the same in Jeremiah—how much his faithfulness cost him of hardship, and how patient he was. We see the same in Daniel the Prophet—his faithfulness to the Lord, his patient endurance of whatever God permitted to come against him. And so with others of the Prophets. And we read that their experiences were written for *our* admonition, *our* instruction. Although they belong to one Dispensation and we to another, yet their experiences furnish us good lessons.—I Cor. 10:6, 11.

PERSONAL APPLICATION OF THESE LESSONS

Applying these lessons to ourselves, we may say that to whatever extent we may be privileged to speak the Word of God and to suffer persecution therefore, if we take it with patience, it will bring us a corresponding blessing and commendation from the Lord. But we cannot think it would be pleasing to Him if, when we suffer, we think, Oh, how terrible, terrible, terrible! Such an attitude would not be taking His Word for it, that "*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,*" and that all things shall work out for our good.—2 Tim. 3:12; Rom. 8:28.

When Job was rich, prosperous, God tested him by taking from him all his family, all his wealth, his health, and even allowing his wife to turn against him. Yet in all this Job did not turn against God. He did indeed express wonder, but he looked to the Lord in faith and said, "Though worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." I shall yet receive the manifestation of His favor, and learn what He means by these experiences, these afflictions, coming upon me. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."—Job 13:15.

After his testings had been accomplished, God gave him back children, houses, lands, friends. And these coming in abundance shadowed forth the blessings of Restitution—how the tribulations of mankind will eventually work out for good to those who will love God. If those who are now suffering affliction because of their loyalty to the Lord, because of their trust in His arrangements, will take afflictions and trials joyfully, these will surely work out good to them—"a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

NOVEMBER 24

Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man—Acts 24:16.

Our consciences require regulating, as do all the other features of our fallen nature. If our consciences are to be regulated, we must have some standard by which to set and regulate them. The conscience is like a watch whose dial is properly marked with the hours, but whose correctness as a time-keeper depends upon the proper regulating of its mainspring, so that it may point out the hours truthfully; so, our consciences are ready to indicate right and wrong to us, but they can only be relied upon to tell us truly what is right and what is wrong after being regulated in connection with the new mainspring, the new heart, the pure will, brought into full harmony with the law of love, as presented to us in the Word of God—Z '00, 360 (R 2733).

As Justice is the foundation of God's throne, so should it be the foundation of all our acts as children and servants of God. It consists of duty love to God with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, and of love to the neighbor as to self. We may be sure that any service for God or man which is performed contrary to the requirements of justice is unacceptable to God and harmful to others and ourselves; for to obey, *i.e.*, to do justice, is better than to sacrifice, when the sacrifice is performed in violation of justice. Like St. Paul we should exercise constant vigilance to act justly toward God and man; and thus only may we have a conscience free from accusing us of sinning against the Lord and our fellows. Then, based upon such a good conscience, our sacrificial acts will be in order and will be acceptable, if in harmony with the Lord's Spirit, Word and providence—P '32, 167.

Parallel passages: Acts 23:1; Rom. 2:14, 15; 9:1; 14; 1 Cor. 8:7-13; 10:27-31; 2 Cor. 1:12; 4:2; 1 Tim. 1:5, 19; 3:9; Heb. 9:14; 10:22; 13:18; 1 Pet. 2:19; 3:16, 21; Prov. 28:1; Acts 2:37; 1 Tim. 4:2.

Hymns: 198, 13, 130, 136, 145, 190, 244.

Poems of Dawn, 117: *Evening Prayer*.

Tower Reading: Z '11, 424 (R 4919).

Questions: Have I had this week a good or an evil conscience? How? Why? With what results?

EVENING PRAYER

FATHER, now the day is over,
Weary, worn, myself I bring;
My defenseless head, oh, cover
With the shadow of Thy wing.

Pardon all the day's transgressing,
Cleanse from every stain of sin;
Lord, I come, my need confessing,
Make and keep me pure within.

Wipe away my tears of sorrow,
Take me to Thy loving breast,
Make me stronger for the morrow,
Give me peace and holy rest.

R4919: DO NOTHING WHEREBY THY BROTHER STUMBLETH

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."—Rom. 14:21.

VERY EVIDENTLY the Apostle was not in these words endeavoring to put any bounds upon the liberties of God's people. Elsewhere he declares that the liberty of Christ makes us *free*. But he points out that while we have liberty to do things not sinful and not injurious to ourselves, yet it is part of our privilege and of our contract with the Lord to abstain from anything which would be injurious to others; and that we should seek to regulate our lives so as to be a help to others and not use our liberty merely for the flesh, for self-gratification. We are representatives of righteousness and should so deal with others, "Doing good unto all men, especially unto those who are of the household of faith."—Gal. 6:10.

In this text the Apostle is not referring to a matter where there might be merely a difference of opinion as between meat and vegetable diet. Such a question each should decide for himself. If one finds a flesh diet injurious to him, he should abstain. If, on the contrary, he finds that flesh diet is beneficial to him, he should use it. The Apostle's thought in connection with the eating of meat was in reference to religious convictions. In his time it was the custom for people to eat meat which had been offered to idols. No Jew would care to eat such meat. With a Christian it would be different. He would understand that it did not affect the meat to wave it before wooden idols, etc. Yet the Apostle goes on to show that to some it would seem a crime to eat meat that had been offered to an idol.

The Apostle's thought is that our conscience is the most important thing we have to deal with and should always be obeyed. The brother who would violate some one's conscience by eating the meat would be stumbling and harming that person. Thus a stronger brother would injure a weaker brother. And this was what the Apostle meant. In the case of a brother who could not see as clearly as we, not only should we not seek to break down his conscience, but we should not permit even our influence to break it down.

It would be very proper for us in the case of a weak brother to explain the matter from our standpoint. This would not be seeking to break down his conscience, but to educate it. Then, if he should eat such meat with impunity—without the disapprobation of his

conscience—we have thus made him a strong brother rather than a weak one; and this should be to his advantage. The Apostle urges that we should be on the lookout for the interests of the brethren.

SELF-DENIAL IN THE INTEREST OF OTHERS

St. Paul here is evidently laying down a broad principle of self-denial in the interest of others—a principle which applies primarily to the Church, but also to the world. He applies this principle, not merely to religion and to eating meat offered to idols, but he extends the matter, saying, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *anything* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

There might be some weak brother to whom *wine* might be a great temptation, a snare. The Apostle urges that, while there is nothing in the Scriptures to forbid the use of wine, and while he really recommended it to Timothy, whose stomach was weak, nevertheless, *our liberties should be limited by the surroundings*. We know that wine was used much more *then* than *now*, and is much more used in Europe than in this country; nevertheless, we know that the effect of alcohol is much more hurtful to the nerves of people *now*, because the race is so much weaker than in our Lord's day.

When there was no particular danger along this line our Lord and the Apostles seem to have used these things with moderation. They also counseled moderation—"Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31); and we should not use our liberty in any way that would stumble a brother in any sense of the word. God's people are to have *love*, to be willing to *sacrifice self-gratification in the interest of others*.

So far as we are able to discern, intoxication is one of the most terrible evils scourging our race at the present time. Many are so weak through the fall, by heredity, that they are totally unable to resist the influence of intoxicants. Is it too much to ask of those who have consecrated their lives to the Lord, to righteousness and to the blessing of others, that they should deny themselves in this matter, and thus lay down some liberties and privileges in the interest of the brethren, and of the world in general?

Similar arguments might be used respecting the use of tobacco, cards and the various implements which the Adversary uses in luring mankind into sin. The whole, be it noted, is the argument of *Love*. In proportion as we grow in the graces of our Lord, in His Spirit of Love, we shall be glad, not only to put away all filthiness of the flesh for our own sakes, thus to be more like the Lord, but also, at the instance of Love, we shall desire to put away from us everything that might have an evil influence upon *others*, whatever we might consider *our personal liberties* to be in respect to them.

Another illustration of this principle would be in the observance of Sunday. The Jews thought it wrong even to build a fire on the Sabbath; and any one who was found picking up sticks on that day was stoned to death. We do not consider it wrong to do on Sunday whatever might be done on other days. But would it be wise to use this liberty? Our

conduct might have an injurious effect upon others and so discount all that we could say to them along religious lines. They would say: "These people are not good. They do not keep God's holy day." They would not understand.

It would be well for us to keep Sunday more particularly than any other people in the world. In fact, we very likely keep it better than others; and this is right. This error of Christendom has worked good for us. We can have a day full of spiritual enjoyment. If the world understood it as we do there would be no Sunday to keep. On our part we would be very glad if there could be three or four Sundays in a week. In fact, with us, every day should be Sunday. We are seeking to serve God, the main object of life being to preach the Gospel, and to enjoy the "good tidings"—the Message of God's Word.

Our relationship to God is that of the New Creation, a heart relationship; and the blessing which the Lord gives us is as newly begotten children—not along lines of the flesh, but along the lines of the spiritual and of heart development, which shall ultimately be perfected in the resurrection.

True, whom the Son makes free "shall be free indeed" (John 8:36), and we should all seek to "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (Gal. 5:1); but it is also true that we should be on guard lest we use our liberty in such a manner as to stumble others weaker than ourselves, not able to use the liberty of Christ discriminatingly, sometimes through lack of knowledge.

The liberty wherewith Christ makes free may be viewed from two standpoints: if it gives us liberty to *eat* without restraint, in a manner that the Jews were not at liberty to eat, it gives us liberty also to *abstain*; and whoever has the Spirit of Christ and is seeking to follow in His steps has already covenanted with the Lord to use his liberty, not in the promotion of his fleshly desires, ambitions and appetites, but in *self-sacrifice*, following in the footsteps of the Master, seeking to lay down his life, even, on behalf of the brethren—for their assistance. How different are these two uses of liberty! Its selfish use—as well as the selfish use of knowledge—would mean self-gratification, regardless of the interests of others; the *loving use* would prompt to *self-sacrifice* in the interests of others.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR BROTHER

Knowledge does not necessarily mean a great growth in spirituality. A mite of soap will make a very large air bubble; and so a comparatively little knowledge might puff one up greatly, without any solidity of character. There is, therefore, great advantage in measuring one's self by *growth in love* rather than by growth merely in *knowledge*—though, of course, to be great in *both* knowledge and love would be the *ideal condition*. The Apostle inculcates this same lesson, asserting, "Though I have all knowledge and have not love I am nothing."

Knowledge without love would be an *injury*; and to consider it otherwise would imply that *real* knowledge has not yet been secured; but to the contrary of this the same Apostle

says, "If any man love God, the same is known of Him." (I Cor. 13:2; 8:3.) We might have a great deal of knowledge and yet not know God and not be known or recognized by Him; but no one can have a large development of true love in his character without personally knowing the Lord and having obtained the spirit of love through fellowship with Him. Hence the getting of love is sure to build us up substantially (thus avoiding the inflation of pride) in all the various graces of the Spirit, including meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, knowledge, wisdom from above and the spirit of a sound mind.

Love, after securing knowledge and liberty, will look about to see what effect the use of liberty might have upon others; and will perceive that by reason of differing mental conditions—perceptions, reasoning faculties, etc.—all could not have exactly the same standpoint of knowledge and appreciation of principles. Love, therefore, would forbid the use of knowledge and liberty if it perceived that their exercise might work injury to another.

EVERY VIOLATION OF CONSCIENCE WRONG

But why? What principle is involved that would make it incumbent upon one whose conscience is clear to consider the conscience of another? Why not let the person of a weak conscience take care of his own conscience, and eat or abstain from eating as he felt disposed? The Apostle explains that this would be right if it were possible; but that the person of weaker mind, feebler reasoning powers, is likely to be weaker in every respect and, hence, more susceptible to the leadings of others, into paths which his conscience could not approve, because of his weaker reasoning powers or inferior knowledge.

One might, without violation of conscience, eat meat that had been offered to idols, or even sit at a feast in an idol temple, without injury to his conscience; but the other, feeling that such a course was wrong, might endeavor to follow the example of his stronger brother, and thus might violate his conscience, which would make the act a sin to him.

Every violation of conscience, whether the thing itself be right or wrong, is a step in the direction of wilful sin. It is a downward course, leading further and further away from the communion and fellowship of the Lord, and into grosser transgressions of conscience and, hence, possibly leading to the Second Death. Thus the Apostle presents the matter: "And through thy knowledge shall the weak one perish—the brother for whom Christ died?" The question is not, Would it be a sin to eat the meat offered to idols? but, Would it be a sin against the spirit of love, the law of the New Creation, to do *anything* which could *reasonably* prove a cause of stumbling to our brother, not only to the brethren in Christ, the Church, but even to a fellow-creature according to the flesh?—for Christ died for the sins of the whole world.

Let us take our stand with the Lord and determine that, in regard to using our liberties in any manner that might do injury to others, we will *refuse so to use them*; and will rather *sacrifice* them for the benefit of others, even as our Master, our Redeemer, *gave all*

that He had. Let us adopt the words of the Apostle and determine once for all that anything that would injure a brother we will not do—any liberty of ours, however reasonable in itself, that would work our brother's injury, that liberty we will not exercise; we will surrender it in his interest; we will sacrifice it; we will to that extent lay down our life for him.

"Thus sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh forevermore, that I make not my brother to stumble."—I Cor. 8:13, R.V.

NOVEMBER 25

Let no man say when he is tempted I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil: neither tempteth he any man—Jas. 1:13.

There is a difference between temptations which the Father considers proper and the temptations which come from the Adversary. The former are tests of loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness, and are intended to be a blessing and a help to all those who withstand them, and who thus demonstrate their loyalty to righteousness. The temptations of Satan, on the contrary, are in the nature of pitfalls and snares in evil and wrongdoing, temptations to make right appear wrong and wrong appear right, putting light for darkness and darkness for light. In this sense of misrepresentation and ensnarements in evil, God tempts no man—Z '04, 7 (R 3296).

Temptations are appealing suggestions. They may be either to good or evil. The latter come from the devil, the world and our flesh; the former come from the Lord through His Spirit, Word and providence. Temptations to evil, though permitted by the Lord for our trial, never come from the Lord, because as the Source and Promoter of perfect wisdom, power, justice and love, such suggestions are contrary to His character and aims. As temptations to evil do not appeal to God's qualities, so they cannot flow from His qualities as allurements to His creatures. To ascribe to God temptations to evil is blasphemy; to ascribe to Him temptations to good is praise. While thankfully ascribing to Him our temptations to good, let us refrain from ascribing to Him our temptations to evil. Let us rather ascribe them to those to whom they properly belong—the devil, the world and the flesh—P '26, 157.

Parallel passages: Gen. 3:1-13; Deut. 13:3; Psa. 119:165; Prov. 1:10-17; 6:27; 14:27; Isa. 33:15, 16; Matt. 4:1-11; 26:41; Luke 11:4; 2 Cor. 11:3, 14, 15; Jas. 1:14; 2 Pet. 2:9; 1 Cor. 10:13.

Hymns: 56, 120, 145, 197, 130, 136, 313.

Poems of Dawn, 177: *Thou Knowest*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 341 (R 5799).

Questions: What special temptation did I have this week? How did I meet it? What were the results?

THOU KNOWEST

MASTER, I am so glad Thou knowest all
Outspoken joys, and *sorrow's* hidden pain.
I am so glad my path is known to Thee,
And that Thou wilt my wayward steps restrain.
I place my hand in Thine. Oh, hold it fast!
Nor heed my cry whene'er I ask amiss.

Thou knowest what is best, my loving Lord,
From out my heart all willfulness dismiss!

Lord, when the thorns of earth pierce sharp and deep,
And I instead would choose the scented rose,
Let me recall thy tender, watchful love,
And that mine inmost need Thy wisdom knows.
Ah, who can tell how far our feet might stray?
We are so prone to wander from Thy side,
If not hedged in by Thine eternal arms,
And made within Thy sheepfold to abide.

I am so glad Thou knowest all, dear Lord!
My life but poorly proves what lips confess,
And well I know none but a Father could
So frail an offering with such mercy bless.
Thou knowest all! This is my cradle, Lord,—
The shadow of Thy wings, 'neath which I sleep.
Not for my goodness, but Thine own great love,
Thou wilt in peace Thy child securely keep.

R5799: WHY GOD HAS PERMITTED SATAN'S LYING DECEPTIONS

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

GOD'S children realize that this text is to them full of deep significance and import. It can scarcely be considered too often or be too strongly emphasized. The word *prove* has the sense of test, demonstrate. The words were addressed to Israel, God's chosen people who had entered into a special Covenant with Him, agreeing to be His people, set apart from the heathen nations by whom they were surrounded, to be a holy nation, Jehovah's peculiar treasure; and He had agreed to be their God. As they had promised to obey all God's requirements, so it was proper that the Lord should prove them. He did not prove the heathen nations; for they had made no covenant with Him and were not in relationship to Him as His servants. But Israel must be proved. The character of their testing is shown in the context. This proving would be accomplished by permitting false teachers, false prophets, to be amongst them.

We are to remember that the word *prophet*, in its broadest signification, means one who teaches, as well as one who foretells. The Lord permitted some to be among the Israelites who would declare things designed to mislead them into the worship of other gods. This would not be because God could not have stricken down the false teachers, but it was permitted as a test to the people who professed to be consecrated to the service of the true God, Jehovah. These false prophets were able to give signs or demonstrations to convince of their miraculous power. But Israel was warned of God to give heed to no

prophet whose teachings and works would tend to lead them away from Jehovah and His service. Such signs and wonders are still frequent accompaniments of the heathen religions, which are inspired by Satan and his demon hosts.

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

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

GOD'S WORD HIS PEOPLE'S GUIDE

We are not informed regarding the power used by the fallen angels in their miracle working and cures, but we know that it is not from God. It is for the Lord's children to remember that He has given us His Word, and that He reveals Himself through this Word. It is sufficient that He warns us against having anything to do with these occult powers. Examples of such warnings are found in the following Scriptures: Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; 2 Kings 17:17; 23:24; 1 Chronicles 10:13; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Isaiah 8:19; Jeremiah 27:9, 10; 29:8, 9; Luke 8:26-35; Acts 16:16-18.

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

The tendency of all these false teachers is to lead away from the one true God to the worship of demons. There are a great many gods, even in America. When a Brahmin comes to this country to live, he just as truly worships Brahma here as in India. Theosophists also make their images or idols to take the place of the true God. Because

of greater civilization the false gods are not always of clay or bronze or wood. But today the idol images are often made with printer's ink. The gods that the heathen of civilized countries worship are very different from the God of the Bible.

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

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

The Apostle Paul, in referring to the close of this Gospel Age, declares that false doctrines will be multiplied. He tells us why many will be misled and deceived. He says, "They received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe *the lie* [Genesis 3:4]: that they all might be condemned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.) The intimation here seems to be that those who have come into touch with God and with His Truth will be so attracted by the Truth that it will be like the needle attracted to the pole. God is the great Pole. Those really drawn to Him will be difficult to swerve. Although a magnetic needle may be temporarily diverted from the pole, yet it will surely swing back and point in the right direction. And so it is with God's true people. They have an affinity for the Truth, they are influenced by it, magnetized by it, drawn.

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

FALLEN SPIRITS ESPECIALLY ACTIVE TODAY

The fallen spirits have been very successful throughout the entire world in deluding and ensnaring humanity. The Lord advises His people that these spirits will be especially

active and especially seductive in their methods of attack in the Harvest of this present Age. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, [through] giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy." (1 Timothy 4:1, 2.) We are forewarned that this "hypocrisy" on the part of the seducing spirits consists of personating "angels of light" (2 Corinthians 11:13, 14), and pretending to bring in "*new light*."

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

Amongst mankind today the old time necromancy and incantations will not do; their intellects are too alert to be much or long hoodwinked by these things. Even the deceptions of Spiritism in its manifestations of superhuman powers through tipping, writing, spirit-photography, voices, etc., all for the purpose of proving human immortality and the ability of the dead to commune with those on earth, are too gross and foolish to deceive and captivate a large proportion of intelligent people, and especially God's consecrated ones, the very class Satan is most anxious to stumble. Consequently there are changes in progress—new "garments of light" are assumed continually; and every feature of Present Truth sent by God as "meat in due season" for His saints is promptly *counterfeited* to "deceive if possible the Very Elect."

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

DELUSIONS OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THEOSOPHY

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

The name "Christian Science" is a misnomer for the tenets of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy. Her teachings are devoid of scientific elements, and the word "Christian" attached as part of the name given her theories is only calculated by Satan to deceive and destroy God's people. To Christian Scientists Christ is not a Savior, nor was a Savior needed. Christ was only a good man, a Christian Scientist, who but imperfectly understood the new science which He introduced, but which in these latter times has been perfectly and fully set forth by the late Mrs. Eddy, of Boston. It has for its trademark, so to speak, "All is life; *there is no death!*" Thus they declare Satan's old falsehood started in Eden, "Ye shall *not* surely die." Jesus declared that Satan "was a liar from the beginning and abode not in the truth," not from his own beginning, but from man's beginning.

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

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

In harmony with the philosophy of Socrates and Plato (while denying these as the authors or even the burnishers of their doctrine, and claiming that these Greek philosophers got their information, as *they* now get it, direct from God by communion and intuition), Theosophy claims not only that man will live forever future, but that he has lived forever past. It appeals to the weak-minded with the question, "Have you never seen places that seemed strangely familiar the first time you visited them? Those were places you had seen *before* your present existence began." And, as of old, Satan may sometimes assist a sluggish imagination with a dream. Theosophy holds that death is not death, but a new birth; and that each individual will be reborn again and again until he has developed sufficiently the Divine nature; and that then he will be reabsorbed into God for eternity.

MAN'S WISDOM IS FOOLISHNESS WITH GOD

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

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

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

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

SATAN'S LIE THE BASIS OF FALSE DOCTRINES

These foretold "strong delusions" of our day are none of them actually strong or powerful. On the contrary, they are very weak. But they have great power to delude many because a large proportion of professed Christians of our day have never become real disciples of Christ, but are merely "tares," imitation Christians. Among those who are real Christians, few are "weaned from the milk." (Isaiah 28:9; Hebrews 5:12-14.) Few

Christians in the nominal church are mentally or spiritually out of their swaddling clothes. Few have even used the milk of God's Word, and grown thereby to the use and appreciation of the "strong meat" of Present Truth, which is for the developed man in Christ. It is not surprising, therefore, that those whom Spiritism and Swedenborgianism did not affect are now being gathered into Christian Science and Theosophy, the later developments of Satan's cunning and deception.

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

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

ALL BUT "VERY ELECT" TO BE DECEIVED

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

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

From the teachings of Scripture we may expect that all but the "Very Elect" of God will be more or less stumbled by the errors and worldliness of our day. (Matthew 24:24-

27; 2 Peter 2:3-11.) The "angel of light" sophistries of the powers of evil, and their works of healing, will surely delude all whose eyes of understanding are not open through heeding the testimony of the sure Word of God.

The doing of many wonderful works is one of the old tricks of Satan and his evil hosts. If disease and death are to a considerable extent under Satan's control during the reign of evil (Hebrews 2:14), why might he not, in his present emergency, when his fall is so near, reverse his methods of working and do some works of healing, thereby to clinch his errors and deceptions and to re-blind some whose eyes have been gradually opening under the light of the dawning Millennial Day, the Day of Christ?

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

THE FAITHFUL SOON TO SHINE FORTH

These various errors, "doctrines of demons," are gathering out of God's Kingdom "all that offend, and them which do iniquity" (and these constitute the great mass); while the faithful, who are to receive the Kingdom and be joint-heirs with Christ in His great Messianic Reign now about to be inaugurated, alone will stand. (Eph. 6:11-13.) When this separation is complete—and we believe it is now almost accomplished—the fire of the great Time of Trouble will make general havoc of present arrangements—social, financial, political, ecclesiastical. Then all errors and falsehoods in religion will go down forever. Then the Lord's faithful Little Flock, having received immortality and the Divine nature, "shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father," seated with Christ in His Throne. (Revelation 3:21.) For a thousand years they shall reign over the world, for the scattering of all ignorance and blindness and the uplifting of all the families of the earth, the living and the dead.

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

NOVEMBER 26

And the Lord said unto Moses, What is that in thine hand?—Exodus 4:2.

If any man would be more abundantly used of the Lord in His blessed service, let him seek first to be fitted for it more and more. Let him imitate that beloved and honored servant, Moses, in meekness, humility, energy and untiring zeal and self-sacrificing service of the Lord. But the wise steward will seek always to cultivate along the lines of his natural abilities, and not expect the Lord to work a miracle for his advancement, and so waste valuable time seeking to develop that which he does not by nature possess. ... Let us each, therefore, seek by humility, by zeal, by love for the Lord and for His cause, by faith in His power, to be in that condition of heart and mind which will make us ready to be used and useful in any department of the Divine service to which the Lord may be pleased to call us—Z '94, 143; '01, 348 (R 1651, 2902).

In the symbols of the Scriptures, the hand represents power. To have something in our hand, therefore, would in general mean to have in our power things that belong to our new heart, mind and will and to our humanity. In particular it would mean to have in our power: knowledge, grace, character, position, time, talents, influence, means, friends, relatives, citizenship, health, life, *etc.* The Lord desires to have us serve along the lines of what we are and have, and not along the lines of what we are not and do not have. Therefore, in the question of our text, He asks us to consider what we are and have. This question is not for His information but is suggestive, admonishing us to take stock of our stewardship, to the intent that we may be the better enabled to use our stewardship to the glory of the Lord and to the profit of others and ourselves in grace—P '36, 166.

Parallel passages: Psa. 34:10; 68:35; 84:11; Eccles. 2:26; Isa. 42:5; Dan. 2:21-23; Matt. 25:14, 15; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 1:5-7; 7:7; Eph. 4:7; 1 Tim. 6:17; Jas. 1:17; 1 Pet. 4:10; Luke 12:47, 48; 19:12, 13.

Hymns: 134, 14, 160, 8, 191, 208, 277.

Poems of Dawn, 168: *My One Talent*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 78 (R 5418).

Questions: What have I done with my talents and opportunities this week? Why? How? With what results?

MY ONE TALENT

IN a napkin smooth and white,
Hidden from all mortal sight,
My one talent lies tonight.

Mine to hoard, or mine to use,
Mine to keep, or mine to lose;

May I not do what I choose?

Ah! the gift was only lent,
With the Giver's known intent
That it should be wisely spent.

And I know He will demand
Every farthing at my hand,
When I in His presence stand.

What will be my grief and shame
When I hear my humble name,
And cannot repay His claim!

Some will double what they hold;
Others add to it tenfold,
And pay back in shining gold.

Lord, O teach me what to do!
I would faithful be and true;
Still the sacred trust renew.

Help me, ere too late it be,
Something now to do for thee;
Thou who hast done all for me!

R5418: GOD'S USE OF THINGS IN OUR HAND

"And the Lord said unto Moses, What is that in thine hand?"—Exodus 4:2.

MOSES had been called of the Lord to the great and honorable work of delivering His people from the bondage of Egypt. He was now eighty years of age. His long experience in the Egyptian court had given him an insight into the affairs of government. Stephen tells us (Acts 7:22) that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in word and in deed." Tradition says that he was also an able general in the Egyptian army.

Yet he relinquished all these earthly advantages to cast in his lot with the despised people of God. (Heb. 11:24-26.) "Moses...refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward"—he preferred to share with God's chosen people, Israel, in their affliction, and to have part with them in the Promise made to their fathers.

How appropriate it was that the man whom God called to be the leader of Israel out of bondage should be a learned man, and one well equipped to be at the head of such a people and under such circumstances! We cannot doubt that his wandering as a shepherd in the wilderness for forty years, tending the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law, made him thoroughly familiar with every road, every hill, every stream; and that this was subsequently of great advantage to him, when, under the Lord's direction, he became leader of Israel through this wilderness en route to Canaan.

MEEKNESS TAUGHT BY EXPERIENCE

But this forty years' experience in Midian had taught Moses another important lesson—the lesson of *meekness*. And his long isolation had made him reserved. Furthermore, soon after severing his connection with the royal house of Egypt, he had made an attempt to deliver his people; but they had not wished his services, and had rather resented his interference. So now, when the Lord would send him to do this great work, he was distrustful of his ability to lead the people of Israel out of bondage into the land of Canaan, and was fearful and reluctant.

The Lord had appeared to Moses in the burning bush which was not consumed, had given him his commission, and had assured him that He, Jehovah, would certainly be with him. Moses, however, very properly felt the magnitude of the undertaking and his own insufficiency. He urged that he was incompetent, that it would require some one more powerful than he to influence the heart of the king of Egypt. He knew that it would be entirely contrary to the purpose and policy of the Egyptians to let the Israelites go from their service. He said to the Lord, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" But the Lord assured him that He would Himself be responsible; that He would direct in the matter.

"WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND?"

Still Moses wanted some demonstration of God's approval and power. He asked, How shall I make Israel *know* that Thou hast sent me? for they will not believe. Then the Lord asked, "What is that in thine hand?" Moses answered, "A rod." And the Lord said to him, "Cast it upon the ground." Moses did so, and the rod became a serpent, and Moses fled from it. If he had not particularly noticed what he had in his hand, he might have thought that possibly it had been a serpent before. But he had looked, and was sure that it was a staff which had been changed into a serpent. Then God told him to take up the serpent by the tail. He did so, and it again became a rod in his hand.

THE LESSONS FOR US

From this we would take the lesson that if the Lord sends us on any mission, we should not have the feeling that we could conquer the world, but should realize our own littleness and should properly feel wholly insufficient of ourselves. We should realize that without His assisting grace we could accomplish nothing. We should be very sure that He has commissioned us, and that our mission is not some foolish thought of our own. We

should be very sure that the Lord is back of the whole arrangement. Then we should have full confidence in Him.

We should feel like saying with Moses, "I cannot do anything." But if we wish to serve the Lord, we are to look to what we have in our hands, whether it be one talent or another. God is so wise that He can use our humblest talent to His praise. What He wants us to use may be right in our hands, and we may not have noticed it. No matter how ordinary our lives may be, God is able to use us, and to give us also the needed lessons in connection with our experiences.

Another lesson that we could draw from the Lord's dealings with Moses is that the things which we have in our hand, those things closest to us, might become injurious to us, if it were not that the power of God is able to make everything work together for our good. If we have the spirit of *service*, the Lord can and will use things right at our hand—not necessarily things afar from us; and the Divine power over evil can make all things work out good to those who love Him. More and more we are learning these lessons. If, then, we would serve, we should look to see what we have in our possession; what things we can make use of.

FAITHFUL IN LEAST—FAITHFUL IN MUCH

A great many people would like to serve the Lord with a *thousand tongues*. If they had a thousand tongues, they feel *sure* they would sing with them *all*. How do we know that we would use a *thousand* tongues, if we do not faithfully use the *one* we have? "He that is faithful in that which is *least*" will be faithful in the *greater* things.

There are plenty of people who like to address thousands. But if we cannot address *thousands*, it is all the more necessary to address *one*. Some say that if they had a million of dollars they would give it to the Lord. But the Lord is not likely to ever give them the chance of giving large sums if they do not manifest a disposition to give of the small amounts already in their possession. "To him that hath [through use of his talents] shall be given,...and from him that hath not [from neglect of his talent] shall be taken away even that which he hath."

So the lesson to us of Moses' experiences would seem to be—the use of things we have in our hands. The same lesson is taught in another way in the case of the poor widow who cried to the Prophet Elisha for help. She was in poverty, and her creditors were about to take her two sons for debt. "What hast thou in the house?" asked Elisha. The woman replied, "Not anything in the house save a pot of oil." Then the Prophet told her to go and borrow empty vessels from her neighbors—"not a few"—and to then begin to pour out the oil into the vessels. The woman obeyed, and all the vessels were filled with oil, and she had oil to sell and thus pay her debt. The Lord used what she had in her hand.

It was the same way with the Lord's miracle in feeding the thousands. He asked, What have you on hand? He did not say, How far is it to town? And He did not tell the

Apostles to get wagons and go to town for bread and meat. But He said, Use what you have. And He blessed the five loaves of bread and the two small fishes, to the abundant feeding of the five thousand; they all ate "as much as they would," and of what remained the disciples gathered up *twelve baskets full*. (John 6:5-13.) So we should use all our talents and opportunities. The Lord is looking for us to use *what we have*, and we shall receive blessing therefrom; and the more faithful we are in the performance of our privileges, the greater will be our blessings from Him.

MOSES' EXPERIENCES TYPICAL

In addition to the lessons just noted, we believe there is a further significance in the experiences of Moses, and the deliverance of Israel. We are to see something representative of conditions in our day. Moses was acting under Divine instruction. Many things connected with this mission of Moses to the Israelites seem typical of the deliverance of God's people from the power of evil. Pharaoh was typical of Satan. We are living in the corresponding time, when God purposes to deliver all from the power of Satan. Jesus and the Church will be the Agent of Jehovah—the deliverance will be the work of Messiah as God's Representative.

The rod represents *authority*. This was illustrated at the time when the Lord instructed that Aaron should represent Him as the head of the tribe of Levi. There had been murmurings in Israel, and the principal men of the twelve tribes were instructed by the Lord through Moses to take each man his rod, write upon it his name and send it into the Tabernacle. (Num. 17:1-9.) Aaron's rod was to go in with the others, because it was the rod of his father's family. And when they examined the rods in the morning, Aaron's rod had budded, blossomed and brought forth almonds.

This would give us to understand that a rod might generally be considered to represent authority. As the *hand* is *power*, so the *rod* is *authority*. Thus the rod would seem to be a special manifestation of Divine Power and Rule. We may not speak too positively of the antitypical fulfilment of this experience of Moses. But we might think that in some way or other the power of God would *appear* to be evil—the serpent was evil. Evil has seemed to triumph for these six thousand years. When Moses and Aaron went into the presence of Pharaoh, Moses' rod became a serpent there also. Then the magicians cast down their rods, and they became serpents. But Moses' rod swallowed up all the rods of the magicians.

RESUMING THE ROD OF POWER

We would very much like to know just what these things signify—just how God will permit the world under the power of Satan to have an hour of triumph. There is to be permitted a great Time of Trouble, and it will be because of the casting down, for a time, of Divine authority and rule.

We think this condition is present now. People are losing confidence in God. They are feeling, for the time, as though there were no God. The tendency of Higher Criticism and

Evolution is to give humanity the impression that there is no God but Nature. And as mankind get this idea of a Nature-god that is ruthless, relentless, impersonal, it is very likely to efface all thought of a living God of Justice and Love. "There is no fear of God before their eyes," the Scriptures say. So we may expect a great Time of Trouble, when the power of God will seem to be a further manifestation of evil—as the power of evil. The taking up of the rod of power again, a little later, will be the resuming of Divine authority.

NOVEMBER 27

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance—Eph. 6:18.

We are to have the spirit of prayer in all that we say and do; that is to say, our hearts should be going out continually to the Lord for guidance in all life's affairs, that we may do with our might what our hands find to do, in a manner that will be acceptable to Him, and that we may be shielded by Him from temptation that would otherwise be beyond our endurance, and that we may be ultimately delivered from the Evil One and have a place in our Lord's Kingdom. Brethren, let us more and more remember and put into practice these words of our Lord, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation"—Z '01, 80 (R 2773).

Prayer is the uttered or unuttered heart's sincere desire going out to God for good things. It is as essential to our development as the desires of the natural man for human blessings are necessary for his human growth. As without these desires the natural man would soon die, so without true prayer the new heart, mind and will would die. Our prayers are not to be merely formal, they are to be heartfelt; for the things requested should be earnestly desired. Such prayers offered up in harmony with the Lord's Word are sure of an answer. Without watching for the answer, we often fail to note the Lord's response to our petitions. And sometimes, despite our watching for His answers, we fail to note them, because He delays granting our requests. Therefore perseverance in such watching is necessary, and will in due time be rewarded by receiving the long-sought answer—P '30, 183.

Parallel passages: Luke 11:5-13; 21:36; Psa. 5:1-3; 116:1, 2; Dan. 6:10; Acts 6:4; 10:2, 9; Rom. 12:12; Phil. 4:6, 7; Col. 4:2; 1 Thes. 5:17; Matt. 26:39-44; Eph. 1:16; 1 Tim. 5:5.

Hymns: 35, 239, 183, 130, 19, 199, 324.
Poems of Dawn, 118: *A Prayer*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 182 (R 5707).

Questions: Did I pray always this week? How did I pray? For what did I pray? Did I perseveringly watch for God's answers? What was the result?

A PRAYER

HEAVENLY Father, Holy One!
May Thy will in us be done:
Make our hearts submissive, meek,
Let us ne'er our own way seek.
Loving Savior, we would be
Ever more and more like Thee,
Free from pride and self-desire,

Fervent with a holy fire.

Jesus, Master, we would bear
In Thy sufferings a share;
Help us, Lord, to follow Thee,
Heavy though the cross may be.
Fill us with Divinest love,
With Thy spirit from above,
May we patiently endure,
Trusting in Thy promise sure.

Blessed Lord, Thy saints defend,
Watching o'er them to the end;
Day by day their faith increase,
Keep them in Thy perfect peace;
Comfort, strengthen, guide and bless,
Lead them through the wilderness,
And when Thy due time shall come,
Gather all Thy loved ones home.

R5707: PRAYER—ITS USE AND ABUSE

"And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint." "Pray without ceasing."—Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

IN THE first text under consideration, we see that our Lord used a parable to point out the lessons He designed to give. A parable is a word-picture designed to illustrate some truth, but is not necessarily a statement of facts. On the contrary, it seems very rarely to be a statement of facts, but is merely a suppositionary case. More than this, in a parable the thing *said* is never the thing *meant*, literally. The wheat and the tares of one of Jesus' parables were not literal wheat and tares, but were the children of the Kingdom and the children of the Adversary. So the parable here is of an unjust judge, who had no appreciation of justice. Notwithstanding this, a poor widow came to him again and again importuning for help. To get rid of her he finally gave her the relief desired.

The Lord uses this parable as an illustration of our coming to the Heavenly Father—not that the Heavenly Father is an unjust Judge nor that the Church is a widow, but that the parable is merely an illustration of the reward of importunity in prayer. The woman's persistency in continually coming to the judge illustrated what Jesus wished to emphasize. In concluding the parable, He says that if an unjust judge would grant this poor widow her petition because of her continued asking, what might we expect of our Heavenly Father? When His children cry unto Him day and night, He is sure to hear their prayers. This implies that the prayers are proper ones for the Lord to answer. We cannot think that God would do anything but that which is just and right and proper, and in harmony with this thought the instruction to the Lord's people is that in coming to the

Lord in prayer we should make sure that we ask only for the things pleasing to Him. Therefore Christians who live near to God are the best qualified to offer prayer that would be acceptable and would be answered.

"ABIDE IN ME, AND I IN YOU"

Our Lord Jesus was thoroughly informed regarding proper prayer. We have His own testimony, "I know that thou hearest Me always." He never had a refusal, because he always asked the things in harmony with the Father's will. There must be two conditions met in order that our prayers may be answered. We must first have accepted Jesus as our Savior, and then have made a consecration to God in His appointed way. These steps must both be taken before we can be in Christ at all. When accepted of the Heavenly Father in Christ Jesus, we become New Creatures in Him. It is to the New Creature that all God's promises apply. Whoever has not become a New Creature by being begotten of the Holy Spirit is outside of all these promises—but not outside of hope; for we see that, in God's Plan, there is a broad hope for all the world. But in this "acceptable time," none can offer acceptable prayer except in this special appointed way.

There is but one sheep-fold in the present time. Only those who are in this fold are in God's favor. These have a right to pray. But there is a second consideration, after consecration has been made; namely, Are these *abiding* in Christ or are they going out of harmony with Him? God's Word must *abide* in us—not merely that we should once have read the Bible through, or that we read so many verses or chapters each day—but the Word must *remain* in us, its teachings and principles must be assimilated and incorporated into our lives. Thus we shall be able to see what God's mind is, what is pleasing to Him, what we should ask for and what we should not ask for, under His terms. All who thus abide in Christ, and in whom His Word abides, may ask "what they will." They may ask anything that is guaranteed in God's Word, and this means that they may ask whatsoever they will; for His Word dwells in them richly, and they would not think of asking anything not authorized therein.

BLESSINGS EASILY GAINED NOT APPRECIATED

Our lesson teaches continuity in prayer—not merely that we pray once, and then say, "I have prayed about this matter, and now I will leave it." But the question may arise, "Why *continue* to ask? God knows every need. Why not leave the entire matter with Him?" The Scriptures seem to answer this question by showing us that we need to ask for our own benefit, that we may be ready to appreciate the answer when it comes. If we get things without our realization of our need of them, they would come to us so easily that in our fallen condition they would be unappreciated.

Indeed it is true that the majority of people receive daily many, many blessings that they are never thankful for; they do not appreciate them. God sends the sunshine and the rain, as our Lord Jesus told us, upon the evil and the good; and He intimates that these are great blessings from God. Yet how few people really appreciate the rain as a blessing from God! How few, when they see the sunshine, appreciate the blessing God is sending

to them through the sunshine! Because these blessings are very common, and come without the asking, they are very little appreciated by the majority.

But the Christian, having the eyes of his understanding opened, appreciates more and more all these blessings as from the Lord. Therefore as he comes to realize his needs, and what is promised in the Lord's Word, he knows that he may advantageously go to the Lord in prayer that these needs may be supplied. His heart has come into that receptive attitude where he is ready to receive God's blessings thankfully and profit by them.

What, then, should we ask for as God's children? What do the Scriptures tell us to ask for? In the first place, they tell us *not* to use "vain repetitions." How should we understand this? Our Lord explains that we should not use vain repetitions "as the heathen do," who think that they will be heard on account of the number of times they repeat the prayer. The Chinese, for instance, have praying wheels, by which they can say a hundred prayers a minute. Thus they save time, voice, etc. But such prayers are only vain repetitions. Many professed Christians, we believe, practise vain repetitions; they say many prayers, which we fear often do not come from the heart, but are said over and over from an imaginary sense of duty or obligation.

NOT FOR OLD CREATURE, BUT FOR NEW

The proper heart condition would be one in which we would feel the need of the Lord's blessing and assistance, and would go to Him in a trustful attitude, presenting our petition, and waiting for His time and way to answer. As to the things that we should ask for, the Master points out in one of His discourses that the heathen, the people of the world in general, all not believers, ask for earthly blessings—"What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" So might a child pray for these earthly things in its innocence of mind. But children of God should pray for earthly blessings only to the extent that they would minister to the growth or usefulness of the New Creature.

As the Christian grows in grace and in knowledge he should come to realize more and more that he is a *New Creature*, and that the New Creature is to pray for itself and not for the old creature. The New Creature must take into consideration the needs of the mortal body which is its tabernacle and its servant, but must ask for this body only what will be necessary that the New Creature may properly develop, and may accomplish the work given him to do by the Lord. He may ask nothing merely that the old creature may be gratified; for the old creature is reckoned as dead. He may ask the Lord to supply his real needs according to His unerring Wisdom.

We should pray for strength to overcome the flesh, for wisdom to know how to deal with ourselves, for strength of character and for the development of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. We should pray for spiritual food, for grace and wisdom to keep our garments unspotted from the world and to put on the whole armor of God. We should ask for wisdom as to how to understand the Word of God, and how to appreciate the Spirit of

the Truth. All these things would be proper subjects of prayer, because they are part and parcel of what goes to make up the New Creation.

In these prayers for the higher things, we are not ignoring the body and its needs, though we are not to seek after the things that the Gentiles seek (the name Gentiles including all those who are not in covenant relationship with God). Those who are in this covenant relationship with God should not ask as do those who are not in such relationship. God does not hear the prayers of those who have never come into His family. They have not been instructed to pray. And we are to pray for things different from those for which they would pray. In all the words that Jesus spoke there is no suggestion that His disciples should pray for better shoes or dress or better home or how to pay off the mortgage. Jesus and the Apostles never prayed for such things. What they prayed for is a suggestion of what we should pray for.

We are to distinguish between prayer, petitions to God, and adoration. *Any one* may worship God, may bow down and adore Him. But in the matter of prayer there is a *limitation*. Only certain persons may pray to the Lord with any assurance of being heard. And these are they who have become His people by a definite covenant. Any who have come into such covenant relationship with God have the privilege of prayer. This was true of the Jews under the Law Covenant arrangement; and it is true of us who have made a Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord through Jesus Christ. But even when privileged to pray, we must note the conditions of acceptable prayer. The conditions are that we should pray in harmony with the Divine will and not seek to bend the Divine will to ours. This would lead us to study the Word of God to find out the things which the Lord has promised us, and we should not ask outside of the Divine promises.

BODY CARED FOR AS PROPERTY OF NEW CREATURE

We should appreciate the fact that throughout the Gospel Age the Lord deals with His children as New Creatures in Christ, and that all His promises to us are to the New Creature. The New Creature is interested in the old body, because this body is its property. The body's interests are ours as New Creatures only in so far as these interests are beneficial to us in making our calling and election sure to our Heavenly inheritance, in so far as their consideration will in no wise interfere with our spiritual interests—but no farther. We are not, therefore, to tell the Lord what we prefer, but are to take what He sees best to give; for this will be what is for our best interests. This does not mean that we are not to mention to God our bodily needs. But we are to do so in the way that our Lord indicates to us in His sample prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread," our daily provisions, acknowledging that the daily food comes from Him, whether it is fine or common, bountiful or not. It will all be for the best interests of the New Creature.

The prayer of one who asks only in harmony with the Lord's Word is certain to be answered. Good earthly parents are pleased to give good gifts to their children, gifts that they see are for their children's real interests. But if they see that the child is unappreciative of favors received, they might the next time withdraw the favors until proper appreciation is manifested. And so it is with our Heavenly Father. In bestowing

His best gifts He waits for us to become really hungry for them. He does this that His blessings may do us the more good when they are granted.

PRAYER FOR SPIRIT-BEGETTING UNNECESSARY

In respect to the giving of the Holy Spirit some people have a wrong conception. Many not consecrated pray that the Lord would give them the Holy Spirit; but they have not studied the Scriptures enough. The Lord gives the Holy Spirit without our asking for it specifically, just as with the disciples at Pentecost: they presented themselves before the Lord and waited. They were praying, but they did not know enough about the Holy Spirit to pray for it. But the Lord gave the proper thing at the right time. And so it is with us, irrespective of prayer for the Spirit, provided we meet the required conditions. When we make our consecration to God through Christ, we do not need to *ask* for the begetting of the Holy Spirit—no more than a child in its natural conception. The child does not ask for its own begetting. How could it? But after we have received the spirit-begetting, we should pray that we may have God's sentiment, God's mind, God's will, as our sentiment, our mind, our will.

God loves righteousness and hates iniquity. So we, realizing that we are surrounded by evil and selfishness, need to cultivate the spirit of love, that we may have that spirit which would appreciate and love righteousness. We are to learn gradually to love righteousness and to hate injustice and iniquity in large things and in small. We are to hate unrighteousness so much that we would scorn to do an injustice or an injury knowingly to anybody. The New Creature sees these things but dimly at first—what are just and what are unjust things, what are righteous and what are unrighteous things. We wish to have the Lord's sentiment as our sentiment in everything. Thus by studying the Lord's character as revealed in His Word, and striving day by day to be conformed thereto, we are "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord." And thus we become more and more filled with the Spirit.

EVIDENCES OF POSSESSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

As the child of God develops, the possession of the Holy Spirit is more and more evidenced in his meekness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. These are the elements of character, of disposition, that God wishes us to have. These are to rule in our hearts, in our thoughts, and more and more in our outward lives. Anger, malice, hatred, strife, evil-speaking, envy, jealousy, all these are evidences of the unholy spirit, the spirit of the world and the Adversary, which we as children of the Heavenly King are to put away. They are the works of the flesh and the Devil.

Since all of us have a measure of the unholy spirit in our flesh, some more and some less, it is right to pray daily for a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, more and more of the spirit of harmony with His perfect will. But we must *cooperate* with these prayers; for the Lord never arbitrarily fills any heart with His Spirit, even after the begetting has taken place. By coming to the Lord in sincere prayer for these blessings continually, by asking along these lines, we shall be preparing ourselves to look for the evidences of the

Holy Spirit in our life. We shall be enabled to see whether we have more meekness than we once had, or whether we still lack in meekness. We shall perceive whether we are more gentle and more patient, whether we have more self-control, and in what respects we especially need to develop more in spiritual fruitage. Undoubtedly all of these qualities are lacking to a greater or less extent; but as we watch and pray, we shall learn to find the answer to our prayers; and as we grow in knowledge, in love, in Christlikeness, we grow in likeness also to our Father in Heaven.

IMPROPER VIEWS OF PRAYER

Prayer, as we have shown, is very essential, absolutely indispensable, to Christian growth, yea, to spiritual existence. Yet we have never thought of praying in the extreme way that some do. We have never thought of telling the Lord all about His Plan and of our wishes as to how He shall govern the Universe, and when and how to bring to pass our own will. We think there is far too much praying along this line. The sooner it is stopped the better. In answer to the request of His disciples, the Master gave them a sample prayer, which was surely very different from the prayers that the majority of people offer, who seemingly do not heed the example at all.

The proper thing is to hearken to the Word of the Lord and not do too much speaking to Him. We are to do a great deal of listening, while He speaks to us. The poet has well expressed this important thought:

"Master, speak! Thy servant heareth,
Waiting for Thy gracious Word,
Longing for Thy voice that cheereth,
Master, let it now be heard!
I am listening, Lord, for Thee!
What hast Thou to say to me?"

We understand that the Bible is the Divine presentation of the Divine will, purpose, plan, concerning us as His children. It is the Truth that the Lord designs shall sanctify us. "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." So declares our Master. He does not say, Sanctify them through prayer! The Master's prescription is that we study the Word and become sanctified thereby. And who is wiser than He? If we have not written a volume on prayer, it is because we find no Scriptural authority or precedent for so doing.

While prayer is absolutely indispensable to the Christian, as we have said, yet it is the Word of God which teaches us God's will and Plan and which points out the way for us to go. We believe it is the failure to see this that has been largely responsible for the great want of faith of many professed children of God. No amount of praying will make up for a neglect of the study of the Lord's Word, which is the only Lamp to our feet given us as our Guide in this long, dark night in which sin has reigned in the world. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."—Psalm 119:105.

We are to "pray without ceasing." We are to do this in the sense of not being discouraged when the good things promised us and asked for do not come quickly. We are to remember that the Word of Promise is sure. We are to rest in these promises and to continue to ask and to wait for their fulfilment—patiently, hopefully. Thus we pray unceasingly, "Thy Kingdom come," not by repeating the words every moment or every hour, but by continuing the thought, the expectation, the waiting for it, and by laboring in the interests of that Kingdom and in the preparation of our characters in order that we may have a share in it. We have known some to fall into difficulty by supposed communion with God—remaining on their knees for some time beside an empty chair on which they tried to imagine the Lord to be seated, etc., etc. We believe that they were in danger of falling into a snare of the Adversary by such unscriptural proceedings.

For our part we feel that the Lord has already granted so many blessings that we would be ashamed to ask for many more. Our own requests, therefore, must be few. The Editor's presentations at the Throne of Heavenly Grace are thank-offerings, praise-offerings, indications of his devotion to the Lord and trust in Him, petitions for wisdom and grace to guide in life's affairs. We recall the Divine promises all the time, and not merely when on our knees. We seek to live in harmony with our prayers, and would encourage others to do the same. However, we are not all constituted alike; and having stated the matter from the Bible viewpoint, as we believe, also as viewed in the SCRIPTURE STUDIES and in other WATCH TOWER articles, we must leave it, trusting that the Lord's providence will guide His people aright.

THE HOLY SPIRIT THE SPECIAL OBJECT OF PRAYER

The reason why the prayers of so many Christians are unanswered is that their prayers are for things God has not told us to pray for or that they were not offered in sincerity. They have asked for wealth or temporal blessings, or perhaps for the conversion of a specified number of souls at their revival meeting, or something else unauthorized, or they have not really desired what they asked for, if it was for spiritual blessing. The Lord *might* grant a request for some temporal thing to a babe in Christ who prayed in his ignorance, not being properly instructed. But it would be different with an advanced Christian. The little child at the table might ask for something improper and violate the rules of etiquette without blame; while a person of mature age, advanced in education and in knowledge of etiquette, should know better. The things for which the Lord's children should especially pray are specified in His Word. The Holy Spirit is the special gift of God to His children.

When we come to know that the Holy Spirit is the influence, the disposition of God, then we know what we are praying for. We want more and more of the Holy Spirit of God, that it may make us more gentle, more kind, more loving; we want more and more of the mind of Christ (mind and Spirit being used here interchangeably). We realize that we must strive to have this mind of Christ. If we day by day cultivate the spirit of the Devil, we cannot expect ever to attain the mind of Christ. If we determinedly cultivate the Spirit, the mind, of Christ, then the spirit of the Adversary can gain no entrance into our hearts; and we shall become more and more sound in mind. We come to know more and

more the perfect will of God as we are filled with His Spirit. Thus we are being prepared for an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom.

PRAY IN FAITH, NOTHING DOUBTING

The Lord in the lesson under consideration, tells us that we must not "faint," the word faint being used in the sense of faint-heartedness—"Consider Jesus, ... lest ye be weary and faint in your minds"; "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." We may ask for more of the Holy Spirit, feeling that we need grace along some particular line. For instance, we may feel that we need more patience. While praying for patience, we should not say, "I shall never be patient; I was not born that way!" But we are to expect our prayer along this line to be *answered*. We are to ask and then wait for the patience, continuing our petition, knowing that the patience will come, if we strive for it in harmony with our prayers. An excellent and practical way to assist in this is to impose a punishment upon ourselves for every outbreak of impatience.

The Lord's people have long been praying, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth." This prayer has been offered for more than eighteen hundred years, and God's children have not yet seen His Kingdom established. Shall we cease to pray? Ah, no! We are assured that it will indeed come. Even now it is at the very doors! God's Kingdom shall be fully set up; and the time will come when there will be no disloyalty in all the earth, as now there is none in Heaven. Our prayers will not bring God's Kingdom one minute sooner than He has planned, but we pray by way of assuring the Lord that we are waiting for the Kingdom and expecting it in harmony with His sure promise. By so praying and not fainting, the children of the Lord are strengthening themselves. God's glorious Kingdom will be manifested—and *soon!* Then all who have attained the character-likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be exalted to reign with Him in this Kingdom.

NOVEMBER 28

When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?—Job 34:29.

Who but He, the "God of all comfort," can give quietness in the midst of tumults which rise upon the soul like sudden storms upon the sea? Like ocean mariners in peril, we cry unto Him, and He brings us to the desired haven—blessed haven—of quietness and peace in God. What is the cry which brings this answer of peace? It is not a prayer that all occasion for disturbance shall be removed, for it is not always the Divine will to bring peace to the human spirit in that way; it is not always the best way. But there is a cry which never fails to bring the quietness in which none can "make trouble." It is a prayer for sweet, trustful, loving acquiescence in the will of God—Z '96, 259 (R 2058).

Elihu, like Job's three other disputants, lacked Divine inspiration, which Job had. Nevertheless, there is much wisdom found in Elihu's address, a wisdom that proves him, a contemporary with Abraham, to have been far removed from a monkey, a wisdom that evolutionists have not yet attained. While the statement of our text is not inspired, it is nevertheless a true saying; for God does give a peace to His own that others cannot overthrow. This peace flows from a full faith in, and a heart's harmony with Him, His character, Plan and works, such as the world does not know, nor can bestow, nor take away. His own, by blessed experience, realize this. Secure in His Oath-bound promise, in the High-Priestly work of Jesus and in the possession of the holy Spirit, they arise above the troubles of the present and thus enjoy the peace of God that passes all understanding, guarding their hearts and minds in Christ Jesus unto eternal life with Him—P '35, 171, 172.

Parallel passages: Isa. 26:3; Rom. 8:31; Phil. 4:7; Psa. 1:1, 2; 4:8; 25:12, 13; 29:11; 85:8; 119:165; Luke 1:79; 2:14; John 14:27; 16:33; Rom. 2:10; 5:1; 8:6.

Hymns: 128, 80, 87, 94, 179, 244, 321.

Poems of Dawn, 100: *Mortally Wounded*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 101 (R 5878).

Questions: What have been the week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? In what did they result?

MORTALLY WOUNDED

I LAY me down to sleep,
With little thought or care
Whether my waking find
Me here—or *there!*

A bowing, burdened head,
Only too glad to rest,

Unquestioning upon
A loving breast.

I am not eager, bold,
Nor strong—all that is past!
I'm willing *not to do*,
At last, at last!

My half-day's work is done,
And this is all my part:
To give a patient God
My patient heart;

And grasp His banner still,
Though all its blue be dim;
These stripes, no less than stars,
Lead after Him.

Weak, weary and uncrowned,
I yet *to bear* am strong;
Content not e'en to cry,
"How long! How long!"

R5878: QUIETNESS IN THE MIDST OF STORMS

"When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"—Job 34:29.

ELIHU, the speaker of these words, was a young man who lived in Job's day—supposedly in the time of Abraham. He was one of the four friends of Job who called upon him in his adversity to comfort him. Being the youngest of all, he hesitated to speak as freely as did the other three friends of Job. He had heard them speak, and had discerned where they had made mistakes.

The fact that certain words are recorded in the Bible does not necessarily mean that they are inspired of God or even that they are true. We remember having in our youth a discussion with some one who finally quoted us a passage of Scripture which seemed to be in conflict with all the other Scriptures. We said, "If that is Scripture, we would like to know it." Our opponent looked it up and found that it read, "And the Devil said," so and so. Surely there is no reason to believe that the Devil is inspired—no reason to believe that the Devil's words are inspired.

These words spoken by Elihu were as wise as any spoken by Job's comforters—probably wiser; but they were surely human wisdom, so far as we can discern. When Elihu put this question, "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" he was seeking to draw a line in this criticism of Job, being averse to an extreme position, yet

agreeing neither with Job nor his other friends. Job's three friends had been arguing that he must have done some very wicked deeds, and that as a result his camels and his cattle were destroyed—in fact all of his property, everything he possessed, as well as his children. He had lost all his ten children and lost also the affection of his wife. And these comforters were trying to have him *admit* that he had committed some great crime and that God was angry with him. Still Job insisted that he had been doing his very best—not that he claimed to be perfect, but he had been striving to live a godly life, a just and honorable life.

ELIHU'S SOUND REASONING

So when Job had gotten through with his argument and his three friends had gotten through with theirs, Elihu said (we paraphrase), "Job, you admit that you are in trouble. Now if God had given you quietness, who could make you trouble? He has surely purposed that this trouble come upon you."

Elihu defended God. He claimed that the Lord had evidently designed that Job should not have peace and prosperity longer; otherwise these adversities could not have come upon him. Whatever was the reason for it, Job's calamity evidently was not accidental. There must have been a Divine hand in the matter. Even if Satan had sent all these difficulties and trials, he could not have done so unless God had permitted it. No one could have thwarted the Divine arrangement and will. Elihu contended with Job that the Lord had the right and the power to decide, that Job had not. He showed distinctly the Power and the rightful authority of God to order in all the affairs of life, and incidentally showed that Job was more righteous than all his associates; that while he was a sinner, yet not on this account was he being afflicted.

We may profitably get a thought from this discourse given by Elihu. Here is a process of reasoning used by a man away back in the past—about the time that the Evolutionists tell us man was a monkey. Pretty sound reasoning for a monkey! Many of our college presidents would do no better today. It is sound logic.

AFFLICTION NO PROOF OF GOD'S DISFAVOR

We also see that Job was not a great sinner. On the contrary, we have every reason to believe that he was a true Prophet of God, a true servant of God. He was one whom the Bible tells us God especially loved. This is shown in Ezekiel 14:19, 20. "If I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out My fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast, though Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Again, the Apostle says, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy."—James 5:11.

It is quite true that Job's trouble could not have come upon him if God had not permitted it. If God had wished him to have quietness, no one could have made him trouble. But He permitted trial to come to test His servant, just as He permits trouble to

come upon His Church, and as He permitted it to come upon His well-beloved Son. He permitted that men should do all manner of evil against His Son—should scoff at Him, should spit upon Him, should smite Him, should scourge Him, and finally crucify Him. The Lord has not always given quietness in these cases, but often trouble.

The lesson of the text for those who have put themselves in God's care, is that no one can make them trouble without Divine permission. The Lord tells us that during this Gospel Age He will make all things work together for good to His children, and that He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, (1 Corinthians 10:13.) In our Lord's case it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him, to allow suffering and death to come upon Him. (Isaiah 53:10.) It pleased God to adopt this Plan for the recovery of the world, because it best illustrates His Justice, His Wisdom, His Love and His Power. It also resulted in great honor and glory to our Lord Jesus.

As concerns the Lord's people, there might be certain matters relating to dispensational changes that could best be accomplished through severe trials coming upon them. Then, additionally, God wishes certain trials to come upon His people because He desires them to *trust* Him where they cannot *trace* Him. He wishes them to have unwavering faith in Him. The children of God, then, can take these words of our text in a very different way from that originally suggested to Job by Elihu. We may truly say, "When God giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" We recognize that there is a certain quietness and rest of heart that all the Lord's saints may enjoy. We realize this even when He permits severe trouble.

The Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews says, "We who have believed do enter into rest." We enter into rest by coming into the attitude where we can believe, where we can and do exercise entire trust in God. Sometimes outward difficulties are helpful in overcoming a wrong spirit. The Lord's people are not discouraged by the things that would utterly crush out the vitality and the courage of others. They get the wrong spirit pounded out of them; but it is the hand of love that administers the blows, and the Lord knows just how many and how severe ones are needed.

KEPT IN PERFECT PEACE

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee." (Isaiah 26:3.) This thought is very precious to us as New Creatures. "The peace of God which passeth all understanding," is to rule and keep our minds and hearts. (Philippians 4:7.) We are to count the things of the present life as not worthy of comparison with the glories of eternity. And so the Apostle says, "For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Corinthians 4:17, 18.) When our minds are stayed on the Lord, and we take the proper view of our experiences, we can sing with the poet:

"No storm can shake our inmost calm,

While to this Refuge clinging."

We have peace, no matter what the outward conditions may be. The trials and the difficulties of life come to the Lord's people commingled with joys—the rain and storm, then the sunshine. They enjoy all righteous pleasures that are in harmony with their consecration. They learn to cultivate patience in trial, knowing that patience works out experience, and experience works out more and more that hope which maketh not ashamed.—Romans 5:3-5.

So, then, it is to the Christian that our text brings the assurance that when God gives quietness, none can make trouble. They "shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake," said the Master, but *then* we are to "rejoice and be exceeding glad." "Let not your heart be troubled." (Matthew 5:11; John 14:1.) We think our text very precious when viewed from our standpoint.

TROUBLE NECESSARY TO OUR PROVING

Our Heavenly Father designs that various kinds of trouble shall come upon us, that these may develop and prove our characters. It is a part of the Divine Plan to permit us to have experiences of affliction. (Psalm 119:67, 71, 75; 34:19, 20.) So when we see God's people in trouble or trial today we are not to say that God is against them. We are each to demonstrate our willingness to suffer according to His will, and often to suffer unjustly. Our Lord set us an example of cheerful, patient submission to God's will. We are to walk in His footsteps. And we have the example of the Apostles, when trials and difficulties and persecutions came upon them; and the example of other saints all down the Age.

Trouble is not necessarily a sign of the disfavor of God. On the contrary, we know that "many are the afflictions of the righteous," and that "*All* that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution." The *Truth* will cost them something. *Faithfulness to the Lord* will cost them much. As the Apostle says, "If ye be without chastisement [discipline, training], then are ye bastards and not sons." (Hebrews 2:8.) If God gives peace of heart, who can upset the one who is thus in harmony with God, in whom this peace of heart is ruling? This, then, is the greatest blessing of all. And He grants this peace to those who are faithfully striving to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We have a Refuge which none but His own can know. No harm can reach us within this Shelter; no storm can shake us from our moorings, for we are securely anchored to the Rock of Ages. "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to the called according to His Purpose." (Romans 8:28.) And as Job's *after* blessings far outweighed his brief trials, so it will be with the Lord's saints today.

"What though my joys and comfort die!
The Lord, my Savior, liveth;
What though the darkness gather round!
Songs in the night He giveth.
No storm can shake my inmost calm,
While to that Refuge clinging;

Since Christ is Lord of Heaven and earth,
How can I keep from singing?"

NOVEMBER 29

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised—Heb. 10:23.

God's promise is the foundation upon which all that we hope for, either of character or coming glory, is built. Let us prize this truth so that we will not compromise it in any sense or in any degree; let us not only hold the Truth in the letter but also in the spirit—in the love of it, because it is true, as well as because it is beautiful and grand. And let us ever remember the importance of *patient endurance*, that we may not only cultivate the Christian graces, and practice them, but that we may take joyfully the trials, persecutions or difficulties which God may see proper to permit to come upon us for our testing and character development, which He explains to us is of paramount importance, and without which perfect love could neither be attained nor maintained—Z '01, 119 (R 2790).

The thought of the text would be clearer if the word translated "profession" were rendered "professing" or "confessing." Here the word "faith" has the meaning of the "Truth" (Jude 3). The Apostle's thought seems to be that we *persevere* in declaring the Truth undauntedly, fearlessly, and steadfastly, however great the obstacles that stand in the way. His thought can most clearly be seen when we remember that in this chapter he first describes Jesus in the Holy and in the Most Holy and then describes the Underpriests in the Holy. In our text he is giving the antitypical thought of the Lampstand, which he shows represents the Church in its capacity of giving light, not to those in the Court, nor in the Camp, but in the Holy only. Thus seen, we recognize that the Priesthood in the flesh would have the work of enlightening one another in the deep things. God promises His favors to those who faithfully and steadfastly persevere in His good work. He will surely prove Himself faithful under all circumstances in fulfilling His promises—P '34, 160.

Parallel passages: Heb. 4:14; 1 Cor. 1:17, 18, 21, 31, 27-29; 2:1-8, 12, 13; 14:1-25; 2 Cor. 2:14-16; 3:12, 13; Col. 1:23-29; 1 Thes. 2:3-12; 2 Tim. 2:15; Titus 3:8, 9; Psalms 57:7; Matt. 10:22; 1 Cor. 15:58; Heb. 13:9; Deut. 7:8, 9; Josh. 23:14; 2 Sam. 7:28; 1 Kings 8:23, 24, 56; Psalms 89:1, 2, 5, 8, 14, 24, 28, 33, 34; Isa. 54:9, 10.

Hymns: 293, 11, 44, 70, 164, 260, 309.

Poems of Dawn, 302: *The Granite Wall*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 211 (R 5497).

Questions: Have I persevered in presenting the Truth this week? How did God show His faithfulness therein? What resulted therefrom?

THE GRANITE WALL

I CAME against a granite wall—
It would not break nor bend;

I tried to get around it, but
It seemed there was no end;
I tried to climb up over it,
But its sides—they were too steep;
Then I tried to dig beneath it, but
Its foundation was too deep:
I took my problem to the Lord,
I left it in His care;
And when I sought that wall again—
It wasn't even there!

R5497: OUR HOPE—"AN ANCHOR TO THE SOUL"

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised."—Hebrews 10:23.

NEARLY ALL that God has given us as New Creatures is by faith or hope. When we become followers of Jesus and take up our cross to follow Him, a sacrifice is involved, if the step be taken intelligently—along the lines of Divine instruction and invitation. No one would voluntarily undertake to sacrifice unless he had a hope or a conviction of some blessing that would result or of some reward that would come to him as the outcome of that sacrifice. In every proper action there must be a motive or object. The fact that the Church has been invited to follow Jesus indicates that there was something in His course which brought the blessing and favor of God—some special reward; and that if we will follow Him, we shall share that same blessing and reward—glory, honor and immortality.

So when we take up our cross to walk in our Master's footsteps, it implies that we are inspired with the hope of thus sharing in the glory and honor conferred upon Him. The character of our God assures us that any offer coming to us from Him, with rigid conditions attached, must be infinitely worthy of our acceptance; and the "exceeding great and precious promises" accompanying this offer assure us of His assistance and sustaining power. So by availing ourselves of His strength and of His aid, we shall be able to meet all the conditions and to attain the glorious reward set before us. Hence our faith has a strong and sure foundation upon which to rest; "faith can surely trust Him, come what may."

INWARD FAITH—OUTWARD CONFESSION

We exercise faith in the heart before we make an outward profession—before we confess the Lord with our mouth. And we have no right to confess Him with our mouth until we have believed "unto righteousness"; for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10.) So we have the declaration of the Lord that He will not consider that we have a proper faith or hope unless we confess it. He has declared that if we refuse or fail to confess Him before men, He will account us unworthy to be confessed before the Father and the holy

angels. There is, then, no salvation without a confession of the Lord; the two are inseparable.

It is in vain that any entertain a hope of being accepted of the Lord and of winning His final approval who hides his light under a bushel and shrinks from the reproach of the Cross. "No cross, no crown," is the Lord's inflexible decision. All who have received the Truth in the love of it will be glad to let their light shine to the glory of God and the blessing of others. If the glorious Message of the Lord has filled our own hearts and blessed our lives, we shall rejoice to carry the living water to other thirsty souls. If the good seed has found our hearts fruitful soil, it will surely germinate and bring forth fruitage to the glory of our God.

In harmony with the terms of our consecration, we confess to men that we have a faith that reaches beyond the present life, a hope that "entereth into that within the veil," whither Christ, our Forerunner, has entered for us. We confess our hope that we shall have a part in His resurrection; that "we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and like Him be spirit beings, see Him as He is and share His glory on the Divine plane. We confess that we hope with Him to be instruments in the Father's hands, bringing life and joy and blessing to all the world of mankind, the living and the dead; that we hope to uplift them from death, to raise them from all the sin and blight and sorrow and tears that have oppressed them for these six thousand years. Truly ours is a wonderful hope! Who would not rejoice to tell it!

If, then, we have this faith, this hope, and are properly confessing it before men, let us "hold fast." Tests of our loyalty will continually come. The flesh will be inclined to rebel strongly at times. The questions will present themselves: Are you willing to confess Christ? Are you ashamed to own His name before the world, or do you esteem this your chiefest honor? There will be temptations to become discouraged. Our weaknesses will rise up before us, and the Adversary will take advantage of these circumstances to further dishearten us. And not only will there come these temptations along the line of our faith and hope, but there will come certain reproaches and persecutions, permitted for the purpose of proving our loyalty. Ours is a marvelous calling, and only heroic souls are wanted to fill the places in this elect class—only those who have the Spirit of the Master.

DANGER OF WITHHOLDING THE LIGHT

If any are disloyal or weak, and fail to take a firm stand for the Lord and the Truth, for fear that they will be disesteemed amongst their fellow-men, or for any other reason, it will prove that they are not worthy to share with Christ the glories of His Throne as members of His Body. All who hope to be of this number have professed His Name; and they must be steadfast, must hold fast their confidence and profession of their faith even unto the end.

The flesh needs to be dealt with rigorously, and be brought into subjection and held there. According to the inclinations of the flesh, the Lord's children would wish to refrain from what would bring contumely and adverse criticism. The flesh would prefer to keep

quiet, where the speaking forth of the Truth might bring reproach or persecution or ostracism. But the New Creature would feel "a burning fire shut up in his bones" if he were to withhold the Message of Truth when a suitable opportunity was granted, and he would find that he must be faithful and let his light shine. Otherwise, the light would grow feeble and would finally die out altogether, and he would be in utter darkness. And "if the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit of God which is within us. The Lord gives us a solid basis for our hope, for our faith. It is a hope which He has Himself inspired. This hope is backed by all His sure promises and by His Oath; and He reminds us that "He is faithful that promised." (Hebrews 10:23.) It is as yet a promise only; it is all of faith. We have now but the begetting of the Holy Spirit to this new nature, and the sealing of the same Spirit, "the earnest of our inheritance." (Ephesians 1:13, 14.) But we have learned to know our God and to trust His faithful Word. We have proven His gracious promises in many a time of stress and danger, and we know that He will not fail us. And "he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

OUR ANCHOR SURE AND STEADFAST

If we were to let go this hope, this anchor to our souls, we should be adrift upon a shoreless sea, whose mighty billows would sweep us down to eternal death. A great Time of Trouble is now about to break upon the whole world, and any of the Lord's people whose faith and hope are not firmly anchored to the Rock of Ages, any who are fearful to trust His promises, will be overwhelmed in the storm. Shall this be our experience?

"The Time of Trouble nears, 'it hasteth greatly,'
E'en now its ripples span the world-wide sea;
Oh, when its waves are swoll'n to mountains stately,
Will the resistless billows sweep o'er me?"

Some of the Lord's real children will have their part in the great trouble-time; yet none who are faithful, who are obedient, will suffer thus. These will be kept in perfect safety to the end of their course, and will, we believe, be gathered "within the veil" before the great storm breaks in its fury. Because of our faith in the Master, because of our strong confidence in Him, our knowledge that *He* has been an overcomer, and that the Father has rewarded Him and that He is now our Advocate, our great High Priest, who "ever liveth to make intercession for us," therefore our hearts have good courage. We know that He will shortly "stand up" in power and great authority to establish His Kingdom and to exalt all His faithful to reign with Him in that Kingdom; therefore our hope is firm; it is indeed an anchor to our souls. We are "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."—Ephesians 6:10.

We shall never lose our courage if we keep our eyes continually fixed on Him, and our hand closely clasped in His. God's eternal promises are the foundation upon which all that we hope, either of character, or of coming glory, is built. And what a strong foundation! Let us be faithful to Him who hath called us. Let us hold the glorious Truth

not only in the letter, but also in the spirit. Let us hold it in the love of it, because it *is* the Truth, as well as because of its matchless beauty and grandeur.

Let us ever remember the importance of patient endurance, constancy, that we may develop the fruits of the Holy Spirit, that we may take joyfully every trial, every persecution, every difficulty, which our God in His infinite Wisdom and Love may permit to come upon us for our testing and the ripening of that character which is of paramount importance, and without which we can never hope to see our Father's face, nor partake of the glory to which we have been called with Christ. Let us indeed "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful who hath promised." Let us "hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end." Yea, "we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope" unto death.—Hebrews 3:6; 10:23; 6:11.

"Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
When the clouds unfurl their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift, or firm remain?"
Surely by the grace of God our anchor will *hold*; for
"We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll;
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Savior's love!"

NOVEMBER 30

Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the Age—Matt. 28:20.

Surely He who was careful to supervise the sowing work is not less interested and careful in respect to the reaping. Let us then thrust in the sickle of Truth with energy and courage, remembering that we serve the Lord Christ, remembering that we are not responsible for the harvest but merely for our energy in gathering what ripe grain we can find. If the labor be great for the finding of a few kernels of ripe grain, we are to rejoice the more in those we do find, and learn to love and appreciate that which is scarce and precious. Let us remember, too, while using all the wisdom we can in this service, that the Lord's object in giving us a share in His work is not so much what we can accomplish as in the blessing that the labor will bring upon us—Z '01, 155 (R 2808).

This is one of our Lord's last promises to the Church before His ascension. It gives the assurance, not of His bodily presence with His elect, but of His special favor, fellowship, sympathy, love, care, direction, restraint, protection, correction, encouragement, counsel and cooperation. The expression rendered "always" should have been given as "all the days." The idea seems to be that the Lord would be with us not intermittently, but continuously, not even permitting a day to pass without His keeping His promise to the full according to the needs of His Church. Faithfully has He kept His promise, as Church history proves. We by experience and observation are living witnesses to this fact in the unfolding of the Truth, in the Harvest gatherings and siftings and in our individual lives, during this, the Laodicean period of the Church—P '33, 162.

Parallel passages: Ex. 33:14, 15; Josh. 1:5, 9; Psa. 34:7; 46:1, 5, 7, 11; 105:14, 15; Isa 41:10; Jer. 15:20; Ezek. 48:35; Hag. 1:13; Zech. 2:5; John 14:16-23; 1 John 1:3.

Hymns: 333, 110, 120, 242, 293, 328, 330.

Poems of Dawn, 234: *Our Burden Bearer*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 363 (R 5587).

Questions: Have I this week experienced the Lord's presence? How? What were its effects?

OUR BURDEN BEARER

THE little sharp vexations,
And the briars that catch and fret,
Why not take all to the Helper,
Who hath never failed us yet?
Tell Him about the heartache,
And tell Him the longings, too;
Tell Him the baffled purpose,
When we scarce know what to do.

Then, leaving all our weakness
With the One divinely strong,
Forget that we bore the burden,
And carry away the song.

R5587: THE CHURCH'S ORDINATION

—Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:36-49.—

"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."—Matthew 28:20.

TODAY'S Study relates to the commission, or authorization of service, which Jesus appointed to His Church in His discourses during the forty days following His resurrection. First we have the Master's words on the evening after His journey with two of His disciples to the village of Emmaus, near Jerusalem. Then we have a part of the general commission which Jesus gave just before He parted from His disciples and was received up into Heaven.

The lessons of that journey to Emmaus and of subsequent appearances must have been very valuable to all the followers of Christ at that time. He said, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you [while I was yet the Man Christ Jesus, before My resurrection change], how all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

The Evangelist sums up in few words conversation and Scriptural exposition which probably occupied at least an hour. We are not told what these expositions were which opened their eyes of understanding, but we can surmise. He probably explained to them the significance of the Passover lamb that was killed at that time of the year, and showed that He was the Antitype of that lamb. He probably explained to them the true significance of the Passover—that in the type the first-born of Israel were passed over, and subsequently represented by the tribe of Levi, including the priests; and that the antitype of these first-borns is the Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven—all the saintly followers of Jesus who will be of the Royal Priesthood, and the antitypical Levites, their servants, in the work of the world's uplift during Messiah's Kingdom.

The Master doubtless also gave them some suggestions respecting the antitypical Atonement Day and "the better sacrifices"—that He Himself began "the better sacrifices," which would be continued in His disciples; and that, the sacrifices being finished, the Atonement blessings would go forth from the High Priest to all the earth, during Messiah's Kingdom of a thousand years.

POWER FROM ON HIGH PROMISED

Whatever features of the great Plan the Master unfolded, we have the assurance that His auditors were deeply interested. Their sadness disappeared. Their first thoughts were merely that they had lost their blessed Master, His counsels, His instructions; but now, through this enlightenment, their hearts burned with a fresh inspiration of knowledge. They saw heights, depths, lengths and breadths that they had never dreamed of in God's Plan. They saw that the death of Jesus was necessary for the carrying out of all the hopes and prospects inspired by the promises of God. They saw that they themselves were privileged also, not only to suffer with Him, but also to be glorified.

The concluding part of the Master's Message on that occasion was, "Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you." The Father had promised in various types that the Church, the Bride of Christ, would receive the Holy Spirit from Jesus, their Head. It was typified, for instance, in the holy oil which, poured upon the head of Aaron, typifying Jesus, flowed down upon the body of Aaron, typifying the anointing of the Church.

This promise of the Divine acceptance of the Church was all-important. Without it the disciples would have no commission, and could not be ambassadors for God. Jesus indeed had sent out The Twelve, and afterwards the Seventy; but they were His personal representatives, and He had given them of His own spirit, His own power, by which they worked miracles, cast out devils, etc. But they had never been recognized of the Father. As we read, "The Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39.) They must wait for this begetting and anointing of the Holy Spirit. It alone could imbue or qualify them for the Divine service—to be God's ambassadors and representatives.

"LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS"

St. Matthew's account of our Lord's benediction upon His disciples and His commissioning of them to declare His Message, is full of interest to us. By His appointment the Eleven met Him in a mountain in Galilee. For a few moments only He appeared to them. They worshiped, some fully convinced, others wavering. It was for the convincing of such waverers that Jesus remained during the forty days. And we are sure that He fully accomplished His work of convincing the Eleven; for they were all of one heart and one mind when they waited in the upper room for the Pentecostal blessing.

Jesus came near to them, and declared that full authority had been given unto Him in respect to both Heavenly things and earthly things. Unless they could realize this, it would be impossible for them properly to represent Him before the world. He had not this power and authority previously, during His earthly ministry. He was then in process of trial as respects His faithful loyalty even unto death, even unto the death of the cross. But after He had demonstrated His loyalty, the Father had raised Him from the dead to a glorious fulness of power. He was thus declared to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead. He wished His disciples to know that He was no longer under

the human limitations or under the limitations of the Death Covenant. That work He had finished. He had entered into the blessing, the reward. He had experienced His change and now had all power, not only in respect to earthly things, but also in respect to Heavenly things.

Prophecy had declared that unto Him all would bow, both those in Heaven and those on earth. He had entered into the condition where this prophecy would soon begin to be fulfilled. He had ascended up on High, where all the angels worshiped, gave heed to Him as the Father's exalted One. Not yet is the latter part of the promise fulfilled—that all on earth should bow to Him. The time for such a recognition will be during His Messianic Kingdom of a thousand years. As now, all who come to a true knowledge of Jesus as the Son of God gladly bow their knee to Him as the Father's Representative, so gladly the world will come to recognize the Only Begotten and render obedience to Him.

Eventually every knee shall bow and every tongue confess; for, according to the Divine arrangement all who fail to appreciate the glorified Son of God at that time will be destroyed—counted unworthy of any further blessings and favor of God, who has bestowed upon Christ all the blessings which He designs for the fallen race.

"GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH"

Here is the commission. Primarily it belonged to the eleven Apostles, but subsequently it included St. Paul, who took the place of Judas and who was "not one whit behind the very chiefest of the Apostles." (2 Corinthians 11:5.) The Apostles, and they alone, are authorized as mouthpieces of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church to the world. All that has been told us of Apostolic Bishops being successors of The Twelve is false, unscriptural. They had no successors; they are with us yet. The Master's Message through them is given us in the New Testament, of which one of them wrote, "The Word of God is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished." (2 Timothy 3:16, 17.) To the Apostles was given the great work of inaugurating the Church. They were endued with the power at Pentecost.

But while Jesus appointed especially the Twelve Apostles to be His mouthpieces to the Church, and declared that whatsoever they would bind on earth we might know was bound in Heaven, and that whatsoever they would declare was not bound on earth was not bound in the sight of Heaven, nevertheless the Lord arranged that each member of the Church should be His representative, and that each in proportion to his opportunity and ability might have a share in proclaiming the Gospel Message. Whoever receives the Spirit of begetting, the anointing, is included in the statement of Isa. 61:1-3 as a member of the Body of Christ, under the anointed Head, Jesus.

Thus we read, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath appointed Me to bind up the broken-hearted," etc. Everyone who receives the Holy Spirit is thus ordained, or authorized, to preach, according to his or her opportunity or limitation of circumstances

or conditions. One limitation of the Apostle is that the sisters are not to teach in public. (1 Tim. 2:12.) Nevertheless there are plenty of opportunities for all.

Evidently, therefore, a great mistake has been made in the arrangement of a clergy class, who declare themselves to be the only ones who are ordained, or authorized, to preach or to teach God's Message. Jesus and the Apostles knew nothing of a clergy class or of a laity class. On the contrary, our Lord declared, "All ye are brethren; and One is your Master, even Christ." And the Master and His twelve Apostles especially forbade anything approaching a lordship amongst His followers, anything like a clerical class.

THE CHURCH'S COMMISSION

The Message given is, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples from all nations." The commission is not to make the nations disciples, but, as elsewhere expressed, to gather out of all nations those willing to be disciples of Christ, whether rich or poor, learned or ignorant, noble or base. A disciple of Christ is a follower, one who learns, one who copies. Jesus defined this discipleship, saying, "If any man will come after Me [be My disciple], let him deny himself [set himself aside, ignore himself, his talent, his will, his wealth, his everything—discipleship first], and let him take up his cross and follow Me."

The intimation is that all true followers of Christ, all true disciples, will find the path in which the Lord will lead a difficult one, in which their own wills must be continually crossed, opposed—a way in which they will continually have difficulty according to the flesh. However, the promise is that eventually, "Where I am [in Heaven or in Kingdom glory], there shall My disciple be."

While the Church of Christ has properly viewed water immersion as a symbol of death to the world, death to self, and of rising to newness of life as members of Christ, the Body of Christ, nevertheless the water baptism is only a picture of the true. So here it is stated that our commission is not water baptism, but baptism into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. "Into the name of" signifies into accord with, into fellowship with. All of Christ's disciples are to recognize the Father's name as standing for righteousness; and they are to become dead to every other principle than that which His name represents, and to be thoroughly immersed into that name of righteousness, justice, truth.

Ignoring all other names, such as Lutherans or Wesleyans or Calvinists, or State Church names, such as Roman Catholics or Anglican Catholics or Greek Catholics, these are to be thoroughly immersed into the name of Christ and to recognize His name and to be His members, His Body, His Church. Furthermore, they are to be immersed into the name of, the recognition of, the Holy Spirit—their own spirit, their own wills being dead. Their own aims, hopes and prospects are to be ignored. God's holy will, God's mind, God's holy purpose, are to be their will and purpose.

Thus we see our commission as respects all people of all nations who have an ear to hear our Message. We are to make them disciples and to immerse them into the name of

the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We are to teach them to observe all things whatsoever Jesus commands. This is the extent of our authority. We are not to organize human systems and to call them kingdoms, churches, or other names. We are merely to prepare the followers of Jesus, co-operating with God, who will work in them to will and to do His good pleasure.

"UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD"

"And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." His words have been understood to signify that the world is to come to an end; whereas what the Master really said, according to the Greek, is that He would be with His people, even to the end of the Age—down to the time when this Gospel Age will have accomplished its Divinely purposed mission of gathering out a sufficient number of disciples of Christ to complete the Divine purpose—until the Gospel Message shall have accomplished the sanctification through obedience to the Truth of a proper number to complete the Bride of Christ in glory, the Royal Priesthood. Then the end of the Age will come. Then will come the Master Himself, to gather His Elect, to glorify them with Himself, to establish His Kingdom, to bless the world of mankind—the non-elect.

"A LITTLE WHILE"

How long, O Lord, till I am meet
To hold with Thee communion sweet?
How long until Thine eyes shall see
The Spirit's fruits complete in me?

When shall I come to Thee, my Lord,
As promised in Thy blessed Word?
When shall I see Thee as Thou art,
And satisfy my longing heart?

Ah, then, how mean will seem these toys,
These transitory, earthly joys!
How short appear this dreary way,
When night hath turned to endless day!

Then, peace, my soul, be strong, my heart,
And bravely strive to do thy part;
"A little while," He soon shall come,
And say, "Enough, my child, come home!"
NOV. 22, 1914. GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

DECEMBER 1

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself—Matt. 22:39.

You would not want your neighbor to use brain and tongue in evil surmises and slanders against you; and you should not do so to him. The law of the Lord commands that all under His Covenant shall take heed not to utter one solitary suspicion against a neighbor; and that if suspicion beyond knowledge be forced upon the mind by associated circumstances, the new mind shall promptly, with its native benevolence, counterbalance the suspicions by suggestions of the possibility of misinformation or misinterpretation and always give the apparently guilty the benefit of the doubt—Z '99, 72 (R 2442).

Every free moral agent is our neighbor, regardless of race, nationality, sex, station, age, clime, relation or plane of being. Especially do we have two classes of neighbors, *i.e.*, those in Adam and those in Christ. Some neighbors are nearer than others; and their varying degrees of nearness to us govern our varying degrees of obligation to them. Thus we are under more obligation to our families than to strangers, to the consecrated than to the tentatively justified, and to the tentatively justified than to the unjustified. The following seems to be the practical application of this text: to give our neighbor the same good will and service as we, ruled by our knowledge of the Lord's will pertaining to the circumstances, would have him give us, if we were in his place, and he in ours. This is the rule of duty love, *i.e.*, justice toward our fellows. Sacrifice in violation of this rule is unacceptable to God—P '32, 197.

Parallel passages: Lev. 19:18; Mic. 6:8; Matt. 7:12; 9:13; Mark 12:31; Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:14; Jas. 2:8; 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2 Pet. 1:7; 1 John 3:18.

Hymns: 166, 165, 95, 196, 198, 267, 125.

Poems of Dawn, 124: "*God Bless You!*"

Tower Reading: Z '15, 168 (R 5699).

Questions: Did I this week love my neighbor as myself? What were the circumstances and results?

"GOD BLESS YOU!"

I SEEK in prayerful words, dear friend,
My heart's true wish to send you,
That you may know that far or near
My loving thoughts attend you!

I cannot find a truer word,
Nor fonder to caress you;
Nor song nor poem I have heard
Is sweeter than "God bless you!"

"God bless you!" so I've wished you all
Of brightness life possesses;
For can there any joy at all
Be yours unless God blesses!

"God bless you!" so I breathe a charm,
Lest grief's dark night oppress you,
For how can sorrow bring you harm,
If 'tis God's way to bless you!

R5699: "WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?"

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—Matthew 22:39.

THESE words were quoted by our Lord in His summarizing of the Ten Commandments. Dividing the Ten Commandments into two parts, He showed that one part related to the duty and obligation toward God, and the other to the duty and obligation toward fellowmen, toward the neighbor. The first part calls for all the love of our heart, our being, our mind, our strength, for the Lord and His service; and the second part, which relates to humanity, calls for us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

In a special sense the Jews recognized themselves as being God's people. Therefore under the Law they recognized each other as neighbors; for they were all the people of the Lord. But they thought that while they should cordially love their neighbors, they should hate their enemies—all the outside nations that God did not recognize. However, the fact that God had in the past commanded them to slay or drive out the surrounding nations did not mean that the Jews should *hate* them and wish to do them real injury. Our Lord seems to indicate that the Jews had taken a wrong view of matters. He taught them that to love their enemies, and to do good to those who persecuted them, was the better way. He showed them that they should have a broad view, a benevolence that would take in all the world.

To this effect He on one occasion gave them a parable—that of the Good Samaritan. In that parable He pictured a man who was not a Jew ministering to a Jew who had been injured. A Jewish priest had seen the wounded man and had passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, not so close in relationship to God as the priest, is represented as looking at the man and then also passing on the other side. Then came this stranger, a Samaritan, one not in relationship to God at all. The Samaritan promptly served the injured man—anoointed him and bound up his wounds. The man had been assaulted, robbed and maltreated. The Samaritan "set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn and took care of him." He remained over night with the injured man, and when he left in the morning he gave some money to the inn-keeper and said to him, "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." (Luke 10:29-

35.) Jesus declared that in this Samaritan of the parable they had an example of one who was a real neighbor.

This parable is also for our instruction today. If we appreciate the conception of a true neighbor which our Lord gave, and say that we have the same conception, then let us observe this Golden Rule: Whatsoever I would have you do unto me, let me do even so unto you. And if you feel that if you were on the roadside, plundered and injured by highwaymen, you would wish that some one would help you, then do the same to others, if you have opportunity. And so in all things. From this viewpoint the whole world are neighbors, no matter how far apart they are—whether they live on our side of the earth or on the opposite side. This the broad, general view shows our relationship and obligation to all the world, to one the same as another. All are our neighbors. All should be treated in a neighborly way as we have opportunity. There is no exception.

It will not do to say that one should be kind merely to those who have been kind to him, that to such only are we to act the part of a neighbor. In that event, the Samaritan would not have been the neighbor. He might have thought that as nobody had found him by the wayside and done anything for him, he consequently would not do anything either. The Lord, in this parable, and in His statement of the spirit of the Law as related to our fellow-men, was laying down a principle that all should be neighbors and treat each other in a kind, neighborly manner, which is the only proper rule amongst mankind. We are to express our love for our neighbor by being thoughtful and considerate of his welfare and interests, and helpful to him as far as is in our power, other obligations being considered.

When we come to the Church, there is a special relationship and bond between its members. We are to love one another as Jesus loved us. This is a new commandment. The Golden Rule is not a new commandment; for it properly belonged to man when God created him, and is designed to be the rule of life. The Jewish Law, as it related to the attitude of the people of Israel toward one another, had for its essence the Golden Rule. But Jesus said to His disciples, "A *new* commandment I give unto *you*." He meant *this*: Those who have become New Creatures have a new relationship; they belong to a new family—the family of God.

Our brethren on the spirit plane are nearest to us of any. Whoever is a New Creature, and thus a brother to all those who are New Creatures, is not merely to observe the Golden Rule, but is to be ready to do toward any and all of the brethren as Jesus did; namely, to lay down his life for them. He is not to say, "I would lay down my life for him, and so I expect him to be willing to lay down his life for me." No! Regardless of his own interests and life, regardless of what others do or do not for him, he is to be willing to spend and be spent for the blessing of the brethren. He is to have *sacrificial* love, which goes beyond the Golden Rule. Thus are we to be true disciples.

DECEMBER 2

And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized—Acts 22:16.

There is a directness in this address that is worthy of being copied by all who have an influence upon others, and who are seeking to bring them along in the right way. Urge them to promptness, to full and complete obedience, to a full confession of the Lord and the Truth. If they are not inclined promptly to obey after their eyes of faith have seen the Lord, and after their ears have heard His voice, they will be much less likely after a while, when the world and the flesh and the devil will say to them, Do not be an extremist; be moderate; do not make a full consecration of yourself to the Lord. Your neighbors and friends will think you beside yourself, and it will interfere with your hopes and prospects, and turn your friends into enemies. It will cost you too much; go slowly—Z '01, 186 (R 2823).

Saul of Tarsus, according to our text, seems to have waited before entering into the activities that his circumstances, experiences and condition seem to have warranted, until encouraged by the Lord's messenger so to do. In this he is an example to us. We are to stand still and wait upon the Lord, even if our circumstances, experiences and condition seem to urge us forward, until the Lord's Word through its principles as well as His Spirit and providence agree to the course to which we are urged. But like Saul, let us not hesitate to go forward after the Lord's Word bids us advance. It is a glorious degree of attainment in character development successfully to resist wrong pressure to go forward, and victoriously to wait upon the Lord, until He bids us go forward, and then promptly to obey. Perhaps on no other point of Christian character are we, especially if we are leaders among the Lord's people, more frequently tested—P '26, 172.

Parallel passages: Ex. 22:29; Matt. 8:21, 22; 19:16-22; Luke 9:61, 62; Acts 24:25; Josh. 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21; Isa. 50:7; 1 Cor 15:58; 2 Pet. 1:10.

Hymns: 1, 14, 203, 80, 94, 13, 25.

Poems of Dawn, 53: *Baptismal Hymn*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 248 (R 5520).

Questions: Was I promptly obedient this week? Why? With what results?

BAPTISMAL HYMN

O WELL-BELOVED Son of God
Be in our midst, we pray;
Our feet are in obedience shod,
To tread the narrow way.

Who giveth, gain; who loseth, finds;
Who dieth, lives to Thee—
Teach us this Law. Incline our minds
To drink Thy cup with Thee.

As drop by drop its bitter draught
Thy sinless lips did lave,
The uttermost of woe was quaffed,
This sin-sick world to save.

Death kissed Thy feet on Jordan's shore,
Thy hands on Calvary,
His Sovereign Thou! Our hearts adore
Thy glorious majesty.

Baptize us, Lord, into Thy death,
And may we chosen be
From out the world, as royal priests,
As sons and heirs with Thee.

R5520: LOYALTY PROVED BY PROMPT OBEDIENCE

"He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him."—John 14:21.

THE WORDS of our text are a part of our Lord's last discourse to The Twelve before His crucifixion. The words, "He that hath My commandments," signify, He that hath *received* My commandments, and is willing to become My disciple. The mere *hearing* of the command, or the mere *understanding* of the command, is not the receiving it. People misunderstand this point. Many hear the command, and yield a partial obedience to it, but they do not *receive* it in the true sense of the word. This matter of a definite contract with the Lord is a very important one. Those who do not make it are not truly His disciples, have not really put themselves into His hands, and are in danger of shipwreck.

We may *know about* a certain blessing, but in dealing with the Lord we need to *finish* our contract. One who merely says, "I will try not to do anything *contrary* to the Lord's will; I will do whatever He forces upon me," is not in the right attitude to enter the School of Christ. There are certain steps by which we become Christ's disciples. A person may be a visitor at a school, but he has not become a member of the school unless he has met the terms—has accepted the rules and regulations under which the school is operated.

OUR LORD'S LAW OF LOVE

The Apostle Paul says, "Ye are not under the Law, but under grace," and yet the Lord speaks of our keeping His commandments. How shall we harmonize these two thoughts? We are to recognize a distinction between the Law, the commands which Christ gives, and the Law Covenant, to which the Apostle refers. We are not under the Law Covenant, which required that those who would have its blessings must keep its every requirement

perfectly or suffer the curse, death. The arrangement under our Lord Jesus is that if His disciples, those already under His Robe of righteousness, seek to do His commandments, strive with their whole heart to do His will, they shall have eternal life through Him. The mediator of the Law Covenant was not competent to make any allowance for imperfections.

Our Lord here speaks of "commandments"—plural. We should, therefore, not understand these words to mean the same as when He said, "A new commandment I give unto you"; neither should we understand Him to mean the epitomized statement of the Law of the Ten Commandments—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." We understand our Lord to mean, Whoever receives My teachings, whoever will follow Me, will thus be demonstrating that he has love for Me; and such I will love. These "commandments" would seem to be the general teachings of the Lord as they bear on all the affairs of life. We do not understand them to be some set, particular statements, as in the 5th chapter of Matthew. He there designates a number of qualities that are necessary—meekness, righteousness, etc.; these are not *commanded*.

LOVE DELIGHTS TO SERVE

Our Lord's commands are not put in the form of compulsion, but whoever *loves* Him will *serve* Him. Speaking through the Apostolic Epistles, and in the Book of Revelation, Jesus has given us various expressions of what righteousness is, what love is. Whoever, therefore, desires to be with Him, to reign with Him, should wish to obey every hint coming from Him. There is nothing put in the nature of an arbitrary command—merely the statement of principles. But these become to us *commands*. To *know His will* is a *law* to such as love Him—they *wish* to serve Him. This seems to be the Divine arrangement for this Age—that we should be left without a "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not," so as to prove the degree of our interest and loyalty.

Some of our friends say to us sometimes, Do you think the Lord will reject me if I do not leave the nominal church, or if I do not perform the symbol of water baptism? And we have to tell them they have misunderstood the whole matter. The Lord is merely showing us the line of duty and of privilege, and whoever does not take *delight* in doing the Lord's will would better not do it at all. The Lord seeks such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth. In the Millennial Age He will deal with the world through stripes and blessings; and obedience will be compelled. But now He says, Here is My will; you can read between the lines, if you desire. I do not put you under a Law Covenant, but I place before you a great opportunity. If you appreciate the privilege, become My disciple. You will not need to make any boast, but *show* your obedience, your appreciation—take a prompt and positive stand. I will not *insist* on anything, then, but will give you the *opportunity*.

The Lord will take note of those who appreciate His great offer, and when He comes to claim His Bride these are the ones who shall reign with Him.

DECEMBER 3

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth—Rev. 3:10.

This is the special reward of those who are running the race with *patient endurance* in the present time, in the Laodicean period. While it was not our privilege to escape the hour of temptation, it is our privilege to have a counterbalancing special blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's *parousia* (presence). We may have His fellowship, His instruction, His dispensing of spiritual food which is now "meat in due season," in a manner and to a degree in which none of the faithful of past periods enjoyed these. But as we might expect, this greatest favor is correspondingly offset by the subtlety and severity of the trials of this hour of temptation coming upon the whole world. If ever *patient endurance* was necessary it is necessary now—Z '01, 118 (R 2790).

It is called the hour of temptation because throughout its duration great tests involving the whole human race, particularly the Church, real and nominal, have prevailed. To the nominal and real people of God these temptations have been severe, especially along six general lines, *i.e.*, No-Ransomism, Infidelism, Combinationism, Reformism, Contradictionism and Revolutionism. While the Philadelphian Church was spared these particular trials, the Laodicean Church has had to meet them. To His Laodicean faithful, however, the Lord has given special help in the light due in the Lord's Parousia and Epiphaneia. The Revolutionism feature of the hour of temptation has been operating coincident with the Epiphany, the "*bright shining*." It is bringing it and many other things to light—P '36, 166.

Parallel passages: Rev. 1:9; 13:10; 14:12; Matt. 6:13; 26:41; 1 Cor. 10:13; Eph. 6:13; 2 Pet. 2:9; Matt. 24:24; Isa. 24:17; Dan. 12:10; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 4:12.

Hymns: 13, 145, 56, 57, 99, 119, 137.

Poems of Dawn, 125: *The Trial Hour*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 327 (R 5981).

Questions: What were this week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? In what did they result?

THE TRIAL HOUR

EPHESIANS 6:10-18.

THE "hour of temptation" hath come to the
Church,
The time of her testing is here,
And storm clouds of ominous portent roll up,
Betokening the tempest is near.

The carnage grows fiercer 'twixt error and truth,
The hosts of the foe press around,
As the day waxes late, and the shadows grow long,
And their tauntings and boastings abound.

And many who fought in the ranks by our side,
Have been pierced by the enemy's dart;
Their "shield" and their "helmet" lie prone in the
dust,
And the "arrow" hath smitten their heart.

Their arm lost its cunning in wielding the "sword,"
Their "breastplate" was loosed from its place,
The "helmet" was lost, and the shafts of the foe
Smote them down, and they sank in disgrace.

O, dear fellow-soldiers! O, brethren in Christ!
Let us gird up our "armor" anew!
Let us heed the sure Word of our Leader and "Head,"
And be loyal and steadfast and true.

The night hastens on—only one hour to fight;
No thought now of wavering or fear;
Our captain calls "Onward!" Then close up the
ranks,
For the hour of our victory is near.

Courage, comrades! The banner of truth waves
aloft;
No such banner was ever unfurled!
We will follow its lead, e'en thro' carnage and blood,
For by it we shall conquer the world.

Tho' feet may grow weary, and hearts throb with
pain,
Let us never give up in the fray;
Our Captain is strong, and can know no defeat,
And will guide to the end of the way.

Soon the fight will be over, the conflict be past,
And the "roll-call" will sound thro' the sky;
Will you answer your name? *Shall I answer to
mine?*
Can we gladly respond: "Here am I?"

O, God of the battle, our Father, to Thee
With strong supplication we cry!
The conflict is deadly, and wily our foe,
Yet we know that deliverance is nigh.

And Thou who has guided and led all the way,
Wilt guide till the victory is won,
Till the night is all spent and the glad day hath
dawned,
And we hear Thy sweet plaudit, "Well done!"

R5981: "THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

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

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

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

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

Before mentioning the sad feature, we mention one for general encouragement; namely, that, so far as we can discern, through intercourse with the friends at

conventions, etc., there was never a time when the rank and file of Bible Students possessed such a spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, love, intelligence, faith, joy, as now.

"TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES"

It causes real grief to write that much of the difficulty and danger to the Church seems to lie at the door of the Elders and Deacons—not all, thank God, but apparently a small minority of them, judging from the queries which come to the Office from time to time from the bewildered sheep, who seek advice as to their proper course. The true, loyal servants in the Church should be all the more appreciated by the Lord's people in proportion as they realize the difference between true Elders and Deacons and those who are untrue. Nor are we writing with a view to the discouragement of the unfaithful, but rather to open their eyes to the true situation, that perchance they may be recovered out of the snare of the Adversary and become helpers of the Lord's Flock, instead of hinderers.

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

COURSE OF TWO OF GOD'S SERVANTS CONTRASTED

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

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

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

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

In many cases, the Classes are solely to blame, according to their own statement. In some instances, persons have been elected to Eldership who had not even made a profession of consecration to the Lord or who had not symbolized their consecration. Why? Because the Class happened to be without any special talent, and the one who was not a Brother at all, not a New Creature in Christ, was chosen because he had some speaking talent. What could we expect from such a one being exalted to the position of a teacher amongst Bible Students? We could expect only injury to the Cause and injury to the person thus pushed forward contrary to the directions of the Lord's Word. If the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit himself, how could he communicate things of the Spirit to the Lord's consecrated ones? How could we expect the Lord to guide such a one, who had not given over his life to be a footstep-follower of the Lord and to be instructed by His Word?

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

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

"DECEIVING AND BEING DECEIVED"

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

But some one will say, "We would have a great disturbance if we attempted to do anything contrary to the wishes of those who have fastened themselves upon us as our leaders and rulers. To make a move at all, would endanger a division of the Class, and how could we think of anything which would result in that catastrophe?"

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

REMEMBER DOCTRINAL TESTS ALSO

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

We reply, Let those who wish to follow such leaders do so—that is their right. We shall wish them well. But let us not follow with them nor submit for a moment to such arrangements. It is the height of impertinence for such a leader to intrude himself in such a manner, and attempt to tell the Church what they shall and what they shall not do. As the power of *election* is in the hands of the *Church*, so the power of *dismissal* is in their hands. We recommend that such Classes vote to *dismiss* such an Elder from his *position* of service, telling him kindly that his services are no longer desired. Perhaps with a back seat for a while, and an opportunity for thinking over the matter, he may be benefited

himself, and the Class also be greatly helped forward by taking such a stand—no matter whether there be no other person in the Class able to address a public meeting or accustomed to leading Classes. Far better would it be to appoint any one of your number to act as chairman, or to take turns in the matter of opening and closing meetings—anything to preserve your liberty and to continue the work of worship and study along proper lines.

Let us make a discrimination between the positive teachings of the Bible—the doctrines of Christ—and the slightly variant ways of *expressing* those doctrines. We are not to expect any two persons to use exactly the same words; but there are certain doctrines which are *fast and immovable* from the viewpoint of the majority of Bible Students. Any one not in good harmony with those presentations should not be encouraged in the *slightest degree*, but, on the contrary, should be discouraged. If he has different views, do not persecute him—do not follow the style of the Dark Ages, but follow the proper course of letting him "flock to himself," or with as many as prefer to view matters as he views them.

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

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

"BY MY SPIRIT, SAITH THE LORD"

We should never forget the Apostle's instruction, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14.) Additionally, experience demonstrates to us that even after we have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, our ability to understand spiritual things

depends, not only upon our study of the Scriptures, which are able to make us wise, but also upon the measure of the Holy Spirit which we possess. Hence the Apostle's exhortation, "Be ye filled with the Spirit!"—Ephesians 5:18.

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

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

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

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

THE V.D.M. QUESTIONS

Long ago we called attention to the fact that many of the titles applied by the nominal church to their ministers are wholly un-Scriptural—Reverend, Most Reverend, Doctor of Divinity, etc. They are not only opposed to the letter, but also to the spirit of the Scriptures. We called attention to the fact that the words Elder, Deacon and Pastor are Scriptural terms. We also called attention to the Latin title, Verbi Dei Minister (V.D.M.), and stated that this expresses exactly the Bible thought that every representative of Christ

who preaches in public is a Minister of the Divine Word—not a minister of human creeds or of self. All Bible Students approved of God and of His people are of necessity Ministers of the Divine Word—each according to his talents, opportunities and restrictions, as set forth in the Bible.

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

These we prepared and sent to the Pilgrims—the traveling preachers sent forth under the auspices of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, and to all representatives of the Society in any capacity everywhere. Next came applications from Elders and Deacons in various quarters, and from others of the Bible Students. Then we advised that the questions be studied and answered, as formulated, by all Bible Students. We received many applications, and many of these have been filled out and returned. It is our recommendation to all the Classes that any brother not able to answer these questions in a reasonable way be not considered a suitable representative.

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

V.D.M. QUESTIONS FOR ADVANCED BIBLE STUDENTS

- (1) What was the first creative act of God?
- (2) What is the meaning of the word "Logos," as associated with the Son of God? and what is signified by the words Father and Son?
- (3) When and how did sin enter the world?

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

(22) Do you believe you have a substantial and permanent knowledge of the Bible which will render you more efficient as a servant of the Lord throughout the remainder of your life?

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

SUPPOSED OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

One, and only one, objection was raised to the foregoing—a fear that it is Babylonish, Sectarian. Ah! it is wonderful how the great Adversary strives always to make out that the right is wrong, that the light is darkness. Babylon's method is to take all power and authority out of the hands of the people of God and put it into the hands of one person or a clique of preachers or bishops or elders. Our aim continually is to preserve the liberty of each ecclesia and have each recognize its own authority and responsibility.

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

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

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

For instance, each member of every class in voting for Elders and Deacons should certainly consider before voting the qualifications of those for whom he votes: (1) What are his religious professions as respects faith in the teachings of the Bible on the fundamental points; (2) Whether or not the one to be voted for is clear in his understanding of the Truth so as to be apt at teaching it to others; (3) Whether or not the individual has made a consecration of himself to the Lord and has symbolized it; (4) Whether or not the individual manifests a high standard of morals in his deportment, and whether or not he is in sympathy with high ideals such as are represented in the Vow.

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

representatives as the Bible directs should be shown by the stretching forth of the hand and the ordaining or authorizing of the individual to serve as a representative of the class.

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

I reply that each class certainly has the right to recognize or appoint certain brethren in whose judgment they would have confidence to examine the answers given to the questions, and to report if any of them were answered unsatisfactorily in their judgment—so that the class could have the final decision. This seems to be an easier way than to have each member of the class read over the answers to the questions before voting. However, the matter is one for the class to decide. In the case of the New York City congregation, the vote was unanimous that all would have confidence in the broad-minded decision of the three brethren approved as a committee of examiners.

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

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

I here remind you that this Vow is unto the Lord, and not unto the brethren! We hold therefore that any one who declares that he has taken the Vow, has not brought himself thereby under bondage to any of the brethren; but merely declared to the brethren the obligation he has recognized and declared to the Lord—hence it would not be the province of the brethren to investigate the affairs of the brother who declares he has taken the Vow, any more after his declaration than before it. The keeping of that Vow is between the individual and the Lord. It neither adds to nor diminishes his responsibility to the brethren and the class. His declaration that he has taken the Vow merely informs the brethren of the high standard of moral living which he recognizes and is seeking to follow.

DECEMBER 4

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?—Luke 11:13.

If the Lord's consecrated people could all be brought to the point where the chief aim in life, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might have a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of the Truth, the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of a sound mind, what a blessing it would mean! If then they should wrestle with the Lord until the breaking of the day, their hold upon Him would be sure to bring the desired blessing. The Lord has revealed Himself to His people for the very purpose of giving them *this* blessing; nevertheless, He withholds it until they learn to appreciate and earnestly desire it—Z '01, 271 (R 2864).

When our Lord tells His disciples that they are evil, He does not mean that their intentions are wicked; rather that they are fallen in mind and heart; yet He implies that they still have vestiges of God's image whereby they know how, and are enabled, to give natural good gifts to their children. From the imperfect who can do some good, He reasons that the Absolutely Perfect One can do more good, *i.e.*, can and will give His holy Spirit to His children who ask it at His hand. The gift of the holy Spirit is the highest spiritual gift; in fact, it is the sum of all our present spiritual blessings, and "the earnest" of our eternal inheritance. Therefore, requests for the holy Spirit should be the main burden of all our prayers to our Heavenly Father. God gives it to His own—P '30, 183, 184.

Parallel passages: Psa. 103:13; Prov. 1:23; 3:12; Joel 2:29; Matt. 7:7-11; 21:22; Mark 11:24; John 14:16; 15:7; 4:10; Eph. 1:3; Titus 3:4, 5.

Hymns: 35, 239, 1, 90, 91, 95, 198.

Poems of Dawn, 102: *Lord, Give Me This!*

Tower Reading: Z '15, 38 (R 5623).

Questions: Did I this week pray for the holy Spirit? How? Why? What was the effect?

LORD, GIVE ME THIS!

LUKE 11:13.

O HEAVENLY Father, Thou hast told
Of a gift more precious than pearls and gold;
A gift that is free to every one,
Through Jesus Christ, Thine only Son.
For His sake, give this to me.

O give it to me, for Jesus said

That a father giveth his children bread,
And how much more Thou wilt surely give
The gift by which the dead shall live!
For Christ's sake, give this to me.

I cannot see, and I want the sight;
I am in the dark, and I want the light;
I want to pray, and I don't know how;
O give me Thy Holy Spirit now!
For Christ's sake, give this to me.

Since Thou hast said it, I must believe
It is only "ask" and I shall receive:
Since Thou hast said it, it must be true,
And there's nothing else for me to do!
For Christ's sake, give this to me.

So I come and ask, because my need
Is very great and real indeed.
On the strength of Thy Word I come and say,
Oh, let Thy Word come true today!
For Christ's sake, give this to me!

R5623: "YOUR FATHER KNOWETH"

"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of."—Matthew 6:8.

SHORTLY after the beginning of our Lord's ministry, He gave the discourse commonly known as the Sermon on the Mount. The disciples had not yet become sons of God in the full, proper sense of the word; indeed, they could not be received into sonship until Pentecost. They were members of the fallen race, under the same condemnation as other men. The very highest claim that they could make was that which the Jews made—that of being servants of God. But now, as recorded in John 1:12, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power [privilege] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; who were begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

This spirit-begetting was not possible in its full, proper sense until Jesus had made reconciliation for the sins of the world, or, at least, had prepared the way for reconciliation by His own death. In one sense of the word, however, His death had already occurred; namely, in that He had presented Himself a living sacrifice, and that the Father had accepted that sacrifice. But that death must be finished, and Jesus must ascend into the presence of God and present the merit of His sacrifice, before the Divine blessing would descend upon any, permitting them to be the sons of God.

THE FATHER OF THE CHURCH

We see, therefore, that Jesus spoke in an anticipatory, or prophetic, sense as to their relationship to God. Because they believed in Him and were seeking to do His will, they were in full line with God's arrangement for their becoming sons. Just as after a person has adopted a child and while the papers are in process of being drawn up in legal form, the child might be spoken of as a son, or he might address the one adopting him as Father or Mother; so these would have the privilege of addressing God as their Father and their privilege would depend on their faith. The majority of the Jews did not have this faith, and when Jesus said that He was the Son of God, they were about to take up stones to stone Him for blasphemy. But Jesus said that not only was He the Son of God, but that He would bring many sons to God; and He quoted from the Psalms in support of this assertion.—John 10:31-40; Psalm 82:6.

Thus our Lord spoke to His disciples as if they were already New Creatures, had already become sons of God and had already received the Holy Spirit, even though both He and they knew that this was not to be completely accomplished, until, as He told them, "not many days hence" they should actually and personally have received it—at Pentecost. Addressing the disciples from this standpoint the Master said, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." These words are part of His Sermon on the Mount. As we read, "When He was set, His disciples came unto Him; and He opened His mouth and taught them." The multitude were not to call God Father, but they were to understand that those who had become the followers of the Lord Jesus could call Him Father.

The word Father implies a great deal when taken in conjunction with other Scriptures. God was the Father of Adam in the sense that He gave Adam his life. Jesus was not Adam's Father, although, as the Logos, He was the One particularly active in giving Adam life. By Adam's disobedience, this life was lost for himself and for all of his children. Not only life was lost, but the Spirit of the Lord was lost, and that included the relationship of sons.

THE EVERLASTING FATHER OF HUMANITY

After Adam, we find none called sons of God down to the time of Jesus. Jesus was the first Son of God after Adam; and since our Lord's time the Church have been called sons of God. (1 John 3:2.) The fact that we are called sons of God implies the begetting of a new life; for the old life which we inherited from Father Adam is gone. This new life which we have received is not from Jesus, but from the Father, Jesus being the channel through which this life comes to us. "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... hath begotten us." (1 Peter 1:3.) We see that the arrangement for the world is somewhat different. God does not purpose to beget the world of the Holy Spirit, as He has the Church. On the contrary, we see that Jesus is to become the Everlasting Father of the world, in due time. (Isaiah 9:6.) That due time will be the great thousand-year Day of the Messianic Kingdom.

In that thousand-year Day Christ, as the great King, Mediator between God and men, will give life to humanity. We see that the life He will give will be human life. He will be the Father of humanity, because that human life which He will give them will be something that is His own. By His obedience to God's Plan He bought the right to give human life. Hence, in giving that life at His own cost, He is styled the Father of the human family. This will not mean that the world will not be considered sons of God, any more than a grandson would not be a son of the father and of the grandfather. Mankind will not receive their life directly from God, but indirectly through Christ—Christ is the Father and God the Grandfather. God does not speak in random terms, but with great exactness. This being true, we have great confidence in His Word.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL

When Adam and his family became sinners, some of them went further than merely neglecting God. It was no fault of theirs that they were cut off from Him. But they did not retain God in their minds, and so God gave them over to a reprobate mind. They became children of Satan in the sense that they became obedient to him. He adopted them into his family, they willingly accepting him and becoming obedient to him. Of course, Satan did not give life actually to the world, but they adopted him as their father by accepting his terms and becoming members of his family. To some of the human family our Lord said, "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."—John 8:44.

When Adam was rejected, he came under the sentence of death. He was left to shift for himself. The statement, You are under a curse of death, would mean, You cannot avoid dying—"Dying thou shalt die." There will be pestilences, earthquakes and famines. You will be subject to these because you are sinners. Mankind could not expect God to do anything for them when they were under death sentence; yet God has done much for them, even though they are sinners. He causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall upon the just and upon the unjust.—Matthew 5:45.

When the Jews were called of God under the Law Covenant, it brought them under a special relationship to Him as servants. "Moses was faithful over his own House," a servant over the House of Israel. These servants were subject to some care, even as a caretaker in a great house would look after all the servants as well as the sons. While the son would have the more particular care, yet the servant would be cared for also.

Thus the Jews were invited to have a share in God's care. They were promised that everything would work together for their good. God would bless their flocks and herds, and would do them good if they would obey His statutes. They did not do so, and thus brought upon themselves chastisements. As we read the record of the people of Israel, we find that they were the most chastened people of history, passing through the most wonderful experiences and disciplines, through which they were brought to a high religious attitude. So when our Lord came into the world, they were of the highest religious sentiment, of the most devoted sentiment, of all mankind. Many of them were prepared to have the special favor that Jesus came to give; namely, the privilege of becoming sons of God.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH THE CHURCH

The sons of God during this Gospel Age are similarly under special favor of God and under special Covenant with Him. He has engaged to treat them as sons, not as servants; not as opposers or enemies, but as children. "God dealeth with you as with sons." (Hebrews 12:7.) With this assurance that God will deal with His people as with sons, we might be surprised that the saintly people have not been blessed, as those who are unsaintly, with money, health, temporal prosperity. We inquire how this is. Is God neglecting His part when He has promised that He will deal with these as with sons? We are not sons of God according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. Having been begotten of the Spirit, we are sons of God according to the New Creation, the interests of which are often best served by experiences which are not favorable to the flesh.

With these sons of God, the New Creature is the special thing in God's sight. The flesh matters little. And God wishes these sons to have the proper experiences that will bring them to the required development as sons of God on the spirit plane. This means that they must ultimately die according to the flesh. There is no other way of entering into the spirit nature than by dying according to the flesh. We must all follow in the footsteps of the Master.

The trials of the narrow way are special tests of the New Creature. How will the New Creature act under these trials and difficulties? Will he prove loyal to God when things seem unfavorable to him according to the flesh? If so, the New Creature will grow strong; and the warfare between the two, the spirit and the flesh, will finally result in the victory of the New Creature, and in his birth in the First Resurrection, or Chief Resurrection, to the spirit nature, the Divine nature.

PROPER MENTAL ATTITUDE FOR PRAYER

The words of our text apply only to the New Creatures. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." It is not necessary for us to use vain repetitions as the heathen do, asking God over and over again for blessings of a temporal kind. He knoweth what things we have need of; that is to say, whether we as New Creatures will be most profited in the abundance of wealth or in the absence of wealth; whether we as New Creatures will be most profited in the possession of health or otherwise. We are not to tell God what we wish. We are to give up our will in order that His will may be done. We are to pray, therefore, as Jesus prayed, "Not My will, but Thine be done"; for "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." The heathen do not have God as their Father, and He is not supervising their affairs. They get certain common blessings that God is providing for all—sunshine and rain.

The prayer of God's people should not be for temporal things. We know of no Scriptural illustration where the spiritual sons of God asked definitely for temporal things and received an answer. We remember that St. Paul prayed three times very earnestly for the restoration of his eyesight. God would not give him the thing he asked for, but would

give him that which would be better for him as a New Creature. And this affliction of poor eyesight, watery eyes, would help to keep him in remembrance of the fact that he was once a persecutor of the Lord's people. The Lord would not take away his affliction, but would give him the grace necessary. Presumably, when the Apostle learned that lesson, he did not pray for such things again; but doubtless it was to our benefit that he did not find this out until he had prayed those three improper prayers. We learn from this that we should be in the attitude to say, "Lord, Thou knowest what I have need of. Give what is best."

THE MODEL PRAYER

Some might declare that this would not be the proper way to offer a petition—that we should ask God for something definite; for instance, if one needed a coat, he should ask for a coat. But our Father has said that we need not go into particulars. God knows that we have need of bread. Our petition, therefore, when we say, "Give us this day our daily bread," is not that we think that God would forget about it, but rather as an acknowledgement on our part that all we have—our food and everything else—comes from God. He knows what we have need of, and provides these things aside from our asking. Nevertheless, it is the Father's good pleasure that we should go to Him, asking forgiveness for our sins, realizing that He has made provision in advance for that forgiveness, and that only as we are merciful to others will He deal mercifully with us in respect to our trespasses. With regard to our food, we thank our Father as the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

We hallow His name—honor His name—put it first in our petitions, in our thoughts. The idea is not as to how much glory we can get; but, first of all, we mention our Father and His glorious name—we hallow His name, make it holy. It should be hallowed and revered everywhere in the whole world. Then we follow with the petition desiring that His Kingdom would come; for we realize that His Kingdom is the very thing that the whole world needs, and that He has promised that it shall come. This is merely to tell Him of our dependence upon Him, and our waiting for Him and for those things which He has promised and arranged for in His Kingdom. We are not merely *saying*, "Thy Kingdom come"—we are *waiting* for it, *expecting* it. Then comes in the mention of our necessities. He knoweth what things we have need of—whether it be a full loaf, a half loaf or a quarter loaf, a small ration or a large one. Then we ask for protection from the Evil One.

There is no such request as, "My shoes are needing to be replaced with new shoes," or "My coat is getting glossy." The heathen, the world might pray for these things; but we are children of God, and are to conform our prayers to what He has said. We are to take for examples the prayers of Jesus and such prayers as the Apostles offered. These prayers are not so much requirements made of God, but telling Him we are depending upon Him, seeking to have no will of our own—merely sinking into His will, asking that His will be done in all our affairs. Then we are to live and act according to that will and according to those prayers.

DECEMBER 5

Choose you this day whom ye will serve ... as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD—Josh. 24:15.

Let others reverence whom and what they will; we who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, we who have come to know Him through His Word, and through His providences, and through the power of the Spirit by which we are energized to newness of life—we can do naught else than reverence our God; and reverencing Him we must trust Him implicitly; and trusting Him implicitly we will gladly walk in whatever way He may mark out for us; and thus trusting and thus walking we are content, whatever lot we see, since 'tis His hand that leadeth us. And let us be assured that, following the true Shepherd after this manner, we shall ultimately reach the Kingdom fold. In these assurances we have joy and peace and blessing of heart, even in the house of our pilgrimage—Z '01, 284 (R 2872).

Prompt decision to do the Lord's will after discerning it, is the course of the faithful. It is characteristic of the measurably unfaithful to hold back from doing God's will and measurably to compromise with evil, even after discerning the Lord's will respecting the good and the evil. While the Lord is long-suffering, ultimately He will force these to come to a decision; for He will so shape their experiences that they must decide for or against His will. Like Joshua of old, let the faithful seek by word and example to encourage the measurably unfaithful to a righteous decision; but whether the latter accept the encouragement so given, or not, let the faithful under Christ, their Head, continue to remain dead to self and to the world, and alive to God, and thus, with as many as we can influence, serve the Lord—P '35, 172.

Parallel passages: 1 Kings 18:21; Ezek. 20:39; Luke 16:13; Rom. 6:16; Gen. 18:19; John 6:67-69; Matt. 19:16-22; 26:33, 35; Josh. 24:16-18; 23:15; 1 Chron. 28:9.

Hymns: 160, 1, 8, 14, 78, 130, 136.

Poems of Dawn, 38: *Whom Will Ye Serve?*

Tower Reading: Z '11, 78 (R 4780).

Questions: Have I exercised decisiveness this week? How? Under what circumstances? With what results?

WHOM WILL YE SERVE?

JOHN 19:12, 13.

CASESAR'S friends? or friends of Jesus?

Solemn question for to-day!

Friends of Caesar! Friends of Jesus!

Take your sides without delay.

If ye pause for man's forbidding,

Caesar's friendship ye secure;

If ye do the Father's bidding,
Scorn, reproach, ye shall endure.

Friends of Caesar! Friends of Jesus!
Stand revealed! your choice declare!
Who in truth two masters pleases?
Who may rival banners bear?
Jesus' friends account Him precious,
Lose for Him all other gain:
Dearer far the smile of Jesus
Than the praise of worldly men.

Free from Caesar, friends of Jesus!
Stand in phalanx! never fear!
Love, severely tried, increases;
Courage yet! The Lord is near!
Onward still, His name confessing,
Weaving crowns to grace His brow;
Lo! His hands are full of blessing,
Lifted for your succor now.

Caesar's friends were we, but Jesus
Owns us for His friends to-day!
What! Shall rival friendship please us,
While the Bridegroom is away?
No! through grace would we surrender
Caesar's things to Caesar's care,
whilst to God, our God, we render
Filial homage, praise, and prayer.

R4780: THE WISE CHOICE

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."—Joshua 24:15.

THE Children of Israel had crossed Jordan. Moses was dead and Joshua was their Leader. They were having no difficulty at that time; but Joshua thought that it was proper just then for them to make their decision—proper for them to decide whether or not they would be faithful to the Lord, or would allow themselves to be led away by the idolatry of the people who lived in Canaan. Joshua had called them together and had recounted to them the Lord's blessings and favor which they had thus far enjoyed, and then expressed himself in the grand and noble sentiments of our text.

So, dear friends, we who realize that the Lord has been blessing, guiding and sustaining us in the past, should come to a full, positive *decision* as respects our course of

life. The very fact of coming to a positive decision is a great blessing and a great help in the formation of character. Every time we come to a wise decision on any question, it strengthens mind and character, and makes us much more ready for another test—along some other line, perhaps.

We well recognize the fact that the entire consecration which the Christian makes, leaves nothing out; but we need to have some touchstone, something which will enable the mind to reach a decision quickly, and this touchstone should be *God's will*, so that to perceive the Lord's will on any subject would be to settle it without any temporizing. Again, it is highly proper that we should reiterate our consecration, and thus make it prominent before others.

For instance, if this were New Year's Day, and we were at a testimony meeting, there would be nothing wrong in saying, "Whatever any one else may do, I acknowledge God and will serve him!"—not as a new vow, but as a fresh acknowledgment of the consecration Vow we have already taken.

We are to recognize the difference between making a new covenant every day, and the daily renewing of our covenant; the one would be an impropriety; the other would be proper. If we have made a binding covenant for life, we should no more think of breaking it than would a man who had leased a house or sold it.

Every day we should renew our covenant with the Lord—renew it and make it fresh in our minds, thus showing that there has been no change on our part; that we are still in the same attitude. This is the same thought as was in the making of our consecration; we are dead with Christ—"Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." We are exhorted to make this review of our lives and renewal of our consecration daily; to continue to keep this before our minds and hearts; to render our sacrifice to the Lord. Thus we are baptized by baptism into his death; and this baptism continues just as it was with our Lord. He had made his consecration and so it had to be completed; so it is with us; our vow, our covenant is unto death.

If the Lord's consecrated people could be brought to the point where the chief aim in life, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might have a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of a sound mind, what a blessing it would mean! If then they should wrestle with him until the breaking of day, their hold upon him would be sure to bring the desired blessing. The Lord reveals himself for the purpose of giving this blessing; but he withholds it until we learn to appreciate and desire it.

DECEMBER 6

He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls—Prov. 25:28.

The battle with self is the greatest battle, and we have the Lord's word for it that he that "ruleth his spirit [his own mind, will] is better than he that taketh a city," because he has to that extent learned to exercise the combativeness of a true character in the right direction, in self-control. It is after we have had considerable experience in battling with sin and selfishness in ourselves, in casting the beam out of our own eyes, in subduing anger, malice, hatred and strife in our own hearts and flesh—it is then, and by means of this severe battle and experience, that we shall be prepared to assist the brethren, and to assist our neighbors in their difficulties—to help them to overcome their besetments and weaknesses—Z '01, 295 (R 2877).

The word *spirit* here means disposition; and to have no rule over one's spirit means to lack self-control. Such a person, from the standpoint of character, is a wreck. Solomon illustrates this by a city that is broken down and without walls. Accordingly, in our dispositions we are like a city, our various good qualities corresponding to the homes, our good thoughts to the soldiers defending the city and self-control to the wall of the city. Outside are sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, as soldiers under Satan, their general, and the flesh and the world, his lieutenants. These will chiefly assault our self-control, which breaking down, they will desolate every good thought and quality in our possession. Our chief concern is to prevent a breach in the wall of self-control. So doing, we will prove victors in our defensive warfare, preserving our symbolic city from ruin—P '34, 174, 175.

Parallel passages: Psa. 116:11; Prov. 14:29; 16:32; 19:2; 21:5; 23:2; 25:8; 29:20; Eccles. 5:2; 7:9; Luke 14:26, 27; Rom. 8:12, 13; 13:14; 14:1—15:5; 1 Cor. 6:12; 8:13; 9:12, 15, 18, 19, 23, 25-27; Col. 3:5; Titus 2:12; 1 Pet. 4:1, 2; 2 Pet. 1:6.

Hymns: 145, 136, 125, 267, 1, 183, 130.
Poems of Dawn, 206: *Wait Upon the Lord*.
Tower Reading: Z '15, 87 (R 5652).

Questions: Have I this week exercised or failed to exercise self-control? Why? How? With what results?

WAIT UPON THE LORD

WHEN clouds hang heavy o'er thy way,
And darker grows the weary day,
And thou, oppressed by anxious care,
Art almost tempted to despair,
Still wait upon the Lord.

When friends betray thy loving trust,
And thou art humbled in the dust,
When dearest joys from thee have fled,
And Hope within thy heart lies dead,
Still wait upon the Lord.

When Death comes knocking at thy door,
And in thy home are sorrows sore,
Though age comes on and eyes grow dim,
Still look to Christ, still trust in Him,
And wait upon the Lord.

Whate'er thy care, believe His word;
In joy or grief, trust in the Lord.
Good courage He will give to thee,
And strong, indeed, thy heart shall be,
By waiting on the Lord.

R5652: THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CONTROL

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city which is broken down and without walls."—Proverbs 25:28.

THE word "spirit" is used in a variety of ways. We speak of a horse as having a fiery spirit or as having no spirit. We speak of the angels as being spirits. We sometimes speak of the spirit of life. We also speak of the spirit of the human mind—that is evidently the thought that is here presented. The words of the text are equivalent to saying, He that hath no rule over his own mind, his thoughts, is like a city that is broken down.

What would a broken-down city be like? In olden times, when civilization had not reached the degree to which it has now attained, there was but little police protection, and marauders were numerous. Those who were disposed to get their living by stealing had excellent opportunities. It was necessary that cities be surrounded by walls as a protection against enemies. Any city with broken-down walls would have great reason to fear such marauders. It would invite attack and be certain to meet with disaster some time.

The wise man has here likened such a city to a broken down human will. The will is to be continually on guard over the mind and to allow nothing to enter there except through the regular gates—Conscience and Judgment. These gates are to be watched so closely that they may admit only such thoughts as would be non-injurious, profitable, wise—in harmony with the Word of God. Every human being should have a will and should keep it in good repair, should see to it that it does not get broken down; otherwise shipwreck of character will follow.

By the *will* is not meant merely a *wish*. There is a decided difference between a wish and a will. Some wish that they possessed a million dollars, but they have not the will even to try to get it. Some have a wish to get up at a certain hour in the morning; but the *wish* does not get them up, because the *will* is broken down. They say to themselves, "Oh, a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands in sleep!" They have no control of themselves. They may think they will gain this control by setting an alarm clock. By and by the alarm clock does no good; they do not hear it at all.

CONTROL IN SMALL THINGS GAGE OF CHARACTER

Whoever allows his will to become broken down as to the time he will arise in the morning has a more or less weak will in all matters. We should make reasonable regulations for our time of rising and of retiring. Having used our best judgment as to what should be done, we should see that it is done. Unless the doing of this should be found harmful to ourselves or to someone else, it should be carried out.

It is important to carry out the dictates of our best judgment so that the will may be strong, so that the individual may not be a vacillating character. The same principle applies to our choice of food. Some will say, "I know that this dish does not agree with me; but it comes to the table, and it seems to agree with others. I cannot eat it without subsequent discomfort; but I like it. I wish it would not come to the table!" So he partakes of it and suffers the consequences. He has the desire for the food, but not the will to resist taking it. The proper course for each one is to see to it that he does not eat what he knows is injurious to him, whatever others may be able to do or may choose to do.

Indecision and lack of character in little things affect all the greater things in life. The person who gets up irregularly is apt to be irregular in business. The person who cannot determine what he should eat is likely to be subject to caprice, to be weak in all his decisions. Such a one will be likely to let some salesman influence him as to what he will buy. Some are too largely subject to the control of others.

A FIRM WILL—NOT OBSTINACY—ESSENTIAL

An old adage has it that "A wise man sometimes changes his mind—a fool never." Ruling our own spirit does not mean that we are to go to extremes and say, "Well, I said I wouldn't; and I won't!" There may be good reasons for changing our mind, and then it would be our proper course to make that change. God is seeking for the class of people who *properly* rule their own minds. If they learn to rule their minds before they come into the family of God, it will be that much the better for them. But at any rate, the only way they can get into the Kingdom will be by developing character.

The Bible tells us particularly what things are of the flesh, and what are of the Holy Spirit, the holy mind, of God; what things, therefore, constitute the holy disposition we should have. It tells us that we should put away anger, malice, hatred, bitterness, wrath, anger, strife; and that we should put on meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. These lessons must be learned. We cannot say that the *flesh* will

ever be brought under complete control; but the *will* must be there, and as much control of the flesh as is possible by Divine help should be added day by day.

The Lord is seeking people of strong will, strong character. Therefore there must be a positive turning to the Lord and a definite covenant with Him at the first, or else we are not acceptable to the Father. Then after we come into His family we find that some things that we thought all *right* are all *wrong* and must be corrected; and in proportion as we have in our past life ruled our own minds, controlled our fleshly appetites and impulses, in that proportion we shall make slow or rapid progress in the new way. How much of consecrated time may we use for business, for pleasure, or in one way or another? How much of consecrated money shall we spend on ourselves? All this is to be regulated by our Covenant with God. We must seek first the interests of the Lord and His Kingdom. These must be first in all our arrangements, and earthly things must be secondary. Hence the importance of fixed character, a will prompt and unflinching for God.

DECEMBER 7

When he was reviled, he reviled not again—1 Pet. 2:23.

Not because Jesus' enemies had found in Him something that could properly and justly be reviled and evil spoken of; nor because His enemies were so nearly perfect that He could find nothing in them to revile and speak evil of; but because He was so full of submission to the Divine will that He was enabled to take the scoffs and railings of the people, and to bear these humbly and patiently, and to remember that *even hereunto He was called*, did Jesus endure patiently and learn the lessons, and prove Himself faithful, and develop and demonstrate His true character, and feel and manifest His pity for the people, in their blindness and ignorance, and His love for them—Z '01, 298 (R 2877).

To revile means unjustly and needlessly to say and do uncomplimentary things to others. Jesus was more especially reviled after His sentence, by the soldiers in Caiaphas' and Pilate's palaces, and by the people and soldiers on His way to, and at, Calvary. But while He was not, and they were, deserving of reviling, He returned it not to them. Doubtless Satan sought to keep their vile words and deeds upon His mind, to stir up in Him the spirit, words and deeds of reviling. In this he failed, because our dear Redeemer, "despising the shame," looked upon it as of little consequence, and fixed His will upon pleasing the Father amid and despite their reviling. In this as well as every other respect, our blessed Lord is an example to us. Whatever reviling falls to our lot, whatever temptation comes to us to return reviling for reviling, let us, like Him, "despising the shame," fix our wills upon pleasing the Lord, amid and despite the reviling that is our portion—P '33, 177.

Parallel passages: Matt. 26:65; 27:13, 27-30, 39-44, 49; Psa. 22:6, 7, 16, 17; 31:11-13; 35:20, 21; 71:10, 11; 109:25; Isa. 50:6; 53:7; Heb. 12:3.

Hymns: 168, 5, 28, 132, 190, 325, 326.

Poems of Dawn, 22: *Tell Me About The Master*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 35 (R 5172).

Questions: What has this text meant to me this week? In what relations and experiences?

TELL ME ABOUT THE MASTER

TELL me about the Master!
I am weary and worn tonight;
The day lies behind me in shadow,
And only the evening is light!
Light with a radiant glory
That lingers about the west.
My poor heart is weary, aweary,

And longs, like a child, for rest.

Tell me about the Master!
Of the hills He in loneliness trod,
When the tears and blood of his anguish,
Dropped down on Judea's sod.
For to me life's seventy mile-stones
But a sorrowful journey mark;
Rough lies the hill country before me,
The mountains behind me are dark.

Tell me about the Master!
Of the wrongs He freely forgave;
Of His love and tender compassion,
Of His love that is mighty to save;
For my heart is weary, weary,
Of the woes and temptations of life,
Of the error that stalks in the noonday,
Of falsehood and malice and strife.

Yet I know that whatever of sorrow
Or pain or temptation befall,
The infinite Master hath suffered,
And knoweth and pitieth all.
So tell me the sweet old story,
That falls on each wound like a balm,
And my heart that is bruised and broken
Shall grow patient and strong and calm.

R5172: THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

"Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it."—1 Cor. 4:12.

SINCE GOD HIMSELF is Love, the very highest ideal of perfection which He has given to His people is the standard of Love. We cannot imagine a higher standard than this, nor one more difficult to attain. It is the special characteristic without which none will get the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This mark of perfection was stamped on our Lord. He delighted to do the Father's will in *all* respects, even to the extent of *laying down His life* for those who, on account of Adam's sin, were under the sentence of death.

Our Lord did not, however, need to run toward this mark of perfect love; for He was *always perfect*—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) The Church, on the contrary, are naturally imperfect and fallen by heredity; but we have been washed from all stain of guilt in the blood of the Lamb. The mark of perfect love *we*

attain *gradually*. We first reach perfection of heart intention, and then we pass through experiences which crystallize our characters in righteousness. In all of these trials and difficulties, we must demonstrate that, if our physical organism were perfect, we would always do God's holy will.

As we see this quality of love in our Lord Jesus, we appreciate it, even though we realize that we are not up to the standard which God requires. Nevertheless, our great desire is that we have perfect love for everything in harmony with the will of God. After we have reached perfection of heart intention, the test is no longer upon us of *attaining* the mark, but of *pressing down upon* that mark *until our character has been crystallized*. As the Apostle Paul says, "Having done all, *stand*." (Eph. 6:13.) We do not progress beyond *perfect love*; for no one can do more than to have a full desire that God's will be done in him. He could do no more, whether he lived five years longer or fifty years. Perfect love is the mark toward which he pressed, and he can attain no higher standard.

While one stands at the mark of Love, the *tests* grow *stronger*. We pass through experiences—often trivial enough—which tempt us to malice, envy, anger and strife. If we are overcome by these tests, and fall away from the condition of *perfect love*, we shall lose the prize for which we are running. (Phil. 3:14.) One who thus falls away may get into the Great Company for development; but if he were to lose all love, he would go into the Second Death. In either of these cases, the person has moved away from the mark of perfect Love, the only standard for those who desire to be in the Kingdom and to participate in the glorious things which God has in store for those who love Him supremely.

GENEROSITY AND BENEVOLENCE CHARACTERISTIC OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Our Lord desires to see in His followers the disposition to overcome the weaknesses and tendencies of the fallen condition and to follow in His footsteps. Of Him it is written, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in His steps; ... who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not." (I Peter 2:21-23.) To be reviled is to be made to *appear vile*, to be evil spoken of, slandered. The natural tendency of all is to resent injustice, to render evil for evil, to give as good as we get—and a little more if possible. This is the natural inclination because we are in the fallen condition, unbalanced in our minds.

Our Lord's teaching is all the opposite of the spirit of reviling. No matter how much we are reviled, we are not to revile in return; no matter how much we are persecuted, we are not to persecute in return. This is the Law of the New Creation. Instead of reviling again, we are to *bless*. This does not mean that when one has said a slanderous thing of us, we are to say, "God bless you"; but that if the person is in difficulty and needs help, we are to overlook altogether what he has done to us, and be just as ready to help him as any other person.

This spirit of generosity and benevolence should be the spirit of the Lord's people. We are to bless those who revile and persecute us by doing them good and by explaining to them, if possible, the situation, which evidently they have misunderstood. We are to bless them by helping them, if opportunity offers, out of darkness into light.

Our faith is greatly strengthened by considering the course of our Lord and noting the similarity between His experiences and ours. Both He and His Apostles were persecuted by the Jewish household of faith. The whole Jewish nation professed to be God's people; and our Lord recognized them as His own, as it is written. (John 1:11.) Yet when "He came unto His own," they received Him not, but persecuted Him and even crucified Him. Later, they persecuted His Apostles and their followers.

Apparently the household of faith has had a monopoly of persecutions. All down the Gospel Age, those who have professed to be God's people have persecuted others. Both Catholics and Protestants have persecuted each other and the Jews, God's chosen people. The majority of persecutions have been by those who professed to be the people of God, many of whom really *thought they were*.

The persecutions of today are of the same kind. They come from those who profess to be the Lord's people. In harmony with this fact is the Scripture which says, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My Name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." (Isa. 66:5.) This statement applies also to the members of our own families, who are not in sympathy with the Truth; that is to say, any persecutions coming from the members of our families are usually from those who profess to be Christians. As a rule, their opposition is not for personal reasons, but on account of some doctrinal point, which they do not see in the same light as do those whom they persecute.

It behooves the Lord's people to look with great sympathy upon those who may be their persecutors. We recall instances where persecution has been carried on with the thought that the persecutors were doing the will of God. Those who persecuted the Lord Jesus were to some degree ignorant of who He was. In Acts 3:17, St. Peter says, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." St. Paul says, "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (I Cor. 2:8.) When Saul of Tarsus persecuted St. Stephen and others of the early Church, he verily thought that he did God service, as he himself afterwards tells us.—Acts 26:9-11.

FIDELITY TO THE TRUTH A CAUSE OF PERSECUTION

All down through the Gospel Age, those who have been faithful to the Truth of God have been put "out of the synagogue." The creeds of men have been barriers to keep out those who understood the Word of God. There was a time when many were excommunicated as heretics *because of conscience*. One of these was Michael Servetus, a brother Christian, whose horrible death at the stake was brought about by John Calvin. This course of conduct literally fulfilled the Scripture which says, "They shall put you out

of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."—John 16:2.

Those who had charge of the synagogues were not always *bad* people, but they were *mistaken*, as was Saul of Tarsus when he haled men and women to prison. (Acts 8:3.) The same conditions exist today. The darkness hateth the light. When any become enlightened in the Word of God, they are told, "If you stay with us, you must not present these matters." Those who are loyal to God are in this way forced out of the synagogues.

Our day has a peculiarity, however, that other days have not had. The Divine Plan is so beautiful that by its light we see that others are in darkness. The voice of God, the voice of conscience, of enlightenment, calls the people of God out of Babylon, which is misrepresenting God's character, Plan and Word. Instead of feeling like bringing vengeance upon our enemies, we should feel sympathy for them—not *with* them, but *for* them. We should realize that with them it is very much as it was with the Jews of our Lord's day, who, had they known what they were doing, would have been very much ashamed of their course.

The persecutions of today are different from those of any other period of history. Many faithful followers of the Lord are reprov'd and slandered for their loyalty to the Word of God. Our Lord's words, however, warrant us in expecting that those who are faithful to Him will be evil spoken of, even as He was. With His words before our minds, we should not be surprised at false charges and false insinuations made against His true followers in proportion to their prominence as His servants.

Our Lord's warning that men "shall say *all manner of evil* against you *falsely for My sake*" (Matt. 5:11), does not imply that those who malign the true Christian will say, "We do this to you for Christ's sake, because you are one of His followers." We have never heard of any one who was thus persecuted, and therefore such a course cannot be what our Lord meant. Evidently His meaning was that His followers, honorable, moderate, truthful, honest, virtuous, possessing the spirit of a sound mind, like Himself, would be highly esteemed amongst the nominally religious, were it not for their loyalty to the Word of God. Because of faithfully pointing out popular errors, because of fidelity to the Truth, they are hated by those prominent in Churchianity.

THE GOLDEN RULE A TEST TO CHRISTIANS

These conditions are testing the adherents of Churchianity along the lines of the Golden Rule; and when they speak evil through malice, hatred, strife and opposition, they are condemning themselves under that rule; for well do they know that they do not wish others to speak evil of them—either through hearsay or through concocted lies or through malice.

These conditions are also a test to the Lord's people, to prove whether they are willing to endure these persecutions and oppositions cheerfully, as a part of the cost of being disciples of Christ. If under the pressure they revile in return and slander and backbite,

they are thus demonstrating their unfitness to have a place in the Kingdom. If, on the other hand, they receive these lessons with patience and long-suffering, they will develop more of the character-likeness of their Redeemer and thus become more worthy of a share with Him in the future glory.

Our Lord's declaration, "Ye are the salt of the earth," may very properly be applied to those of the followers of the Lord who give heed to His teachings and who cultivate His character-likeness. As salt is useful in arresting decomposition, so the influence of these faithful ones is preservative. At the time of the First Advent, the world was in a condition in which it would probably have hastened to degeneracy and decay, but for the introduction of the preservative influence extending from the members of the Body of Christ. That influence is still manifest in so-called Christendom.

Even today, although the truly consecrated believers in the great Redeemer are confessedly few in number, yet the saltiness from the teachings of the Savior has a wide influence upon the world. Without it, doubtless, corruption and a complete collapse would have come long ago. In spite of it, we see very corrupting and corrupt influences at work everywhere; and the wider our horizon, the more general our information, the more we realize the truth of this statement. When the last member of the Body of Christ shall have passed beyond the veil, the salt will be gone. Then corruption will take hold swiftly, and the result will be the great time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.—Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1.

The Scriptures point out the fact that the Lord's consecrated people belong so completely to Him that in all their afflictions He is afflicted. (Isa. 63:9.) When Saul of Tarsus was persecuting the early Church, our Lord called out to him on the way to Damascus, and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME? And he said, Who are Thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am *Jesus*, whom thou *persecutest*." (Acts 9:4, 5.) Saul was not persecuting the glorified Savior directly, but he was persecuting the *followers* of Jesus—not the *New Creatures*, but the *flesh*. Since, then, our Lord adopts the flesh of His followers as His, the Church is said to be filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.—Col. 1:24.

Throughout the Gospel Age, the world has been blind to the fact that it has persecuted the Church of Christ—those whom God has chosen to be joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 8:17.) When later the eyes of mankind shall have been opened, they will realize what they have done, and will be very much ashamed of their conduct. After Saul of Tarsus saw that he had been fighting against God, his whole course of life was changed.

THE ANTITYPICAL BURNING OUTSIDE THE CAMP

As our Lord suffered in the flesh, so will also those who are members of the Church, which is His Body. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) St. Peter admonishes us to expect this, saying, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same

mind." (I Peter 4:1.) It is the *flesh*, not the *New Creature*, that *suffers*. While we are suffering in the flesh, we are also being developed in the spirit.

In Psalm 44:22, we read, "For Thy sake we are killed all the Day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." St. Paul shows that this statement is a prophecy applicable to the entire membership of Christ, of whom our Lord Jesus is the Head. (Rom. 8:36.) The day to which reference is made is the Gospel Age (2 Cor. 6:2), the antitypical Day of Atonement. As on the typical Atonement Day the typical sacrifices were offered, so all down the Gospel Age the antitypical "better sacrifices" have been made. (Heb. 9:23; 13:11-13.) These "better sacrifices" began with our Lord and continue with His Body, which is the Church.

The antitypical sacrificing began at the time of our Lord's consecration, which was His full surrender of His life to God, to be used in any way that the Father saw fit and that His providences might direct. The Church follows in His steps. Our consecration is our death to the world, to earthly hopes, aims and ambitions. In our Lord's case, we see that His sacrificial death not only meant the giving away of His physical strength in healing, teaching, etc., but included also the suffering resulting from the opposition of those about Him. Even from members of His own family He experienced ostracism. So Jesus died daily.

In proportion as we are faithful to our Heavenly Father and to the terms of our consecration, we shall have similar experiences. Faithfulness to our covenant of sacrifice will bring upon us opposition from the world, the flesh and the Devil. Particularly will our persecution come from those Christians who are not developed sufficiently to appreciate matters from the proper standpoint.

St. Paul, in speaking of his own case, says that he was dying daily. (I Cor. 15:31.) This statement applies to all who are laying down their lives in the Lord's service. Sometimes it is by the expenditure of physical strength; sometimes it is by a stab from some one who has hurt us, wounded us, injured us with his tongue. In the type, this kind of experience is represented by the burning of the flesh outside the camp, a place which typifies the outcast condition.

The faithful servants of the Lord will be ostracised by the world, as our Lord foretold. (Matt. 24:9; John 16:1-3.) Their attitude of full consecration to do the Father's will is not appreciated; for to the world it seems to be foolish. It is a reproof. As our Lord said, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."—John 3:20.

To be faithful unto death is a part of the covenant of sacrifice. In some instances, death may come early; in others, it may come late. St. Stephen was faithful unto death, which came early in his Christian experience; St. Peter was also faithful, but met his death after a long lifetime. The promise to the overcomer is, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10.) "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."—2 Tim. 2:12.

DECEMBER 8

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you—John 15:18.

As our Master was hated without a cause, so let it be with us so far as possible, that the hatred, malice, envy and murder which may be poured out against us may be wholly unmerited by us—that our lives shall be as nearly pure as possible; that so far as we are able, our thoughts and words and deeds may show forth the praises of our Lord, and speak of our love for all men, especially for the household of faith. By and by, when the new dispensation is fully inaugurated, those who hate us now, largely because they are blinded by the Adversary and misled, will bow before the Lord's Anointed, and we shall have the great pleasure of lifting them up, blessing them, encouraging them and forgiving them, and assisting them back to the full image and likeness of God—Z '01, 300 (R 2880).

The word *world* is in the Scriptures used in various senses, *i.e.*, the universe, the earth, a dispensational order of affairs, the people in harmony with it, and the entire human race. Evidently the whole human race did not hate our Lord; for the few heathen with whom He came in contact honored Him. Rather, the Jewish religious leaders and those influenced by them hated Him. They hated Him because His teachings refuted their errors; His example disparaged their hypocrisy; His exposures injured their prestige; His reforms endangered their ambitions; His religion subverted their sects; and His influence diminished their power. Because "the darkness hateth the light," God's faithful people during the Gospel Age have been hated by the nominal people of God—even for the same reasons as Jesus was hated. It will be so even to the end—P '32, 197.

Parallel passages: Psa. 41:9; John 15:17, 19-25; Isa. 53:1-3; Matt. 10:16-39; 24:9; Mark 13:13; Luke 21:17; 19:14; John 16:2, 3; 17:14; 1 John 3:1, 13.

Hymns: 312, 47, 48, 134, 150, 8, 114.

Poems of Dawn, 56: *Why Dost Thou Wait?*

Tower Reading: Z '11, 141 (R 4813).

Questions: Have I this week for the sake of the Truth experienced others' hatred? How? With what results?

WHY DOST THOU WAIT?

POOR, trembling sheep! Ah! Who outside the fold
Hath bid thee stand, all weary as thou art,
Dangers around thee, and the bitter cold
Creeping and growing into thine inmost heart?
Who bids thee wait till some mysterious feeling,
Thou knowest not what—perchance mayst never know—
Shall find thee, when in darkness thou art kneeling,
And fill thee with a rich and wondrous glow

Of love and faith; and change to warmth and light
The chill and darkness of thy spirit's night!

For miracles like this who bids thee wait?
Behold, God's precious word to thee is, "Come!"
The tender Shepherd opens wide the gate,
And in His love would gently lead thee home,
Why shouldst thou wait? Long centuries ago,
O timid sheep, the Shepherd paid for thee!
Thou art His own. Wouldst thou His beauty know,
Nor trust the love which yet thou canst not see?
Thou hast not learned this lesson to receive:
More blest are they who see not, yet believe.

Still dost thou wait for feeling? Dost thou say,
"Fain would I love and trust, but hope is dead;
I have no faith, and without faith, who may
Rest in the blessing which is only shed
Upon the faithful? I must stand and wait."
Not so. *The Shepherd doth not ask of thee
Faith in thy faith, but only faith in Him;*
And this He meant in saying, "Come to Me."
In light or darkness, seek to do His will,
And leave the work of faith to Jesus still.

R4813: THE WORLD'S HATRED

"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you"; "Ye know that it hated me before it hated you."—1 John 3:13; John 15:18.

HERE the great Teacher seems to show that the kind of hatred that would come to us would be the same that came to himself. Looking at his experiences we see that he was hated chiefly by the most prominent, the most influential amongst the people. The Scribes specially hated him; but the Pharisees, the Chief Priests and the Sadducees also hated him. In time their hatred extended to the common people. The lower classes are always led by the superior classes; the lesser Pharisees by the greater Pharisees; the lesser Sadducees by the greater Sadducees, etc. Probably the common people could not give an intelligent reason why they hated the Lord. Accepting the presentations of their leaders, they assumed that he was a fraud and an impostor, and hated him as such. In proportion as they esteemed their leaders, they were inclined to disesteem whomsoever these disesteemed.

So it is today. We can see that there are motives behind the hatred manifested toward the Lord's people. No prominent person poses as being wicked. Hence, there is a general disposition on the part of all to justify themselves (politically and religiously), as moved

by noble sentiments, as either the supporters or originators of high standards. But we see the hypocrisy which is made manifest by the lies and the procedure of those who hate the Lord's people without a cause. When, therefore, the Truth comes to any of those who have error and pride mingled with worldly religion, it becomes a rebuke to them. As the Apostles went from one place to another it was said of them, "These that have turned the world upside down have come hither also."—Acts 17:6.

The thoughts of Jesus are so deep and touch so upon the heart that everything not fully in accord with them appears worthless in comparison. Hence, many of those who have been teachers of religion find themselves impelled, through hate and envy, to try to crush, to blacken, to defame that which is true. But these teachers are being tested; they are being proved. To the Lord, at least, their hypocrisy is manifested, whether others be deceived by it or not. It is, therefore, today as it was in our Lord's day—"The darkness hateth the light."

**"WHOEVER WILL LIVE GODLY IN CHRIST JESUS SHALL
SUFFER PERSECUTION"**

As our Lord explained, the darkness of sin and error is in direct antagonism to the light of Truth, and consequently when his people lift up the light—"Let their light so shine as to glorify their Father which is in heaven," who has called them "out of darkness into his marvelous light"—the effect upon the darkened world is to awaken opposition, antagonism, and thus to disturb and make uncomfortable those in sympathy with darkness. Consequently, those who love darkness, those who love evil, those who love sin in its varied forms, hate the light, neither come to the light; but either publicly or secretly oppose the children of the light, the enlightened ones, the light-bearers. And even those who have gotten out of the extreme darkness of moral pollution into a kind of twilight of civilized reformation and moral reform, cannot endure the clear, searching light of the true Gospel. They much prefer a measure of darkness.—John 3:20.

In consequence of this conflict between light and darkness, our Lord suffered at the hands of those who professed to be children of the light, children of God; and who had, at least, a little light. Our Lord was not maltreated by either the Roman Governor or the Roman soldiers, of their own volition; for they were so totally blind as not to appreciate the light which he displayed. His persecutors were those who had some light, but who hated the brilliancy of the great Light shining upon them.

Similarly, all down through this Gospel Age, those who have been burning and shining lights in the world have been hated and persecuted chiefly (almost exclusively) by those who had some light, but whose light was *darkness* in comparison with the great light of the holy Spirit shining in and through the Lord's fully consecrated ones. Thus was fulfilled our Lord's testimony, "If they hated me they will also hate you"; "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (John 15:18; I John 3:13; 2 Tim. 3:12.) The Lord's followers in the present time are called upon to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, not because it is either reasonable or proper, but because the Lord, wishing to test, prove, and polish his people, is willing to permit the evil, opposing

influences to prosper and to persecute and oppose his "members," and thus to serve his cause in the preparation of his Elect for a future work of service. Thus the persecutors of the Body, as did the persecutors of the Head, are co-operating to fulfil the Divine Plan in a manner they little suspect.

"MARVEL NOT IF THE WORLD HATE YOU"

When the Lord's followers take a firm stand for Truth and righteousness, as did their Leader, the results are the same. Satan is their implacable opponent; he will see to it that they suffer, that there will be opposition, not only by himself, but by the world, which is largely under the influence of his spirit in various ways. Having taken this stand, the Lord's people must not marvel if the world hate them and say all manner of evil against them falsely, for Christ's sake. The more prominent they may be, as in our Lord's case, the more virulent will be the attacks against them; the more interested will be the great Adversary in overcoming them.

This thought that Satan opposes us, and that we are contending not merely with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and wicked spirits in high positions of power (Eph. 6:12), would be appalling to us did we not, on the other hand, realize that by this same positiveness of decision for Truth and righteousness we acquire great help and assistance by other unseen powers. From the moment of our positive resistance of temptation and positive standing up for the Lord and his cause, we become stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might. Let us remember that "greater is he that is for us than all that can be against us."—Matt. 5:11; Eph. 6:12; I John 4:4.

The chief opposition to our Lord came from the religious leaders and professors. The union of the worldly and the semi-religious is sometimes complete, as in the union of Church and State in foreign lands; in other instances, it is incomplete, as in this country, where the Church and State are not fully united. Nevertheless, the politician desires the support of the professors and supporters of religion. These, in turn, plume themselves on their political influence and seek to use this influence for their own advantage, or, as they would say, for the "good of the cause." So, where there is no *direct* union between Church and State, there is an affiliation, an *indirect* union. The politician wishes to have the support of the moral and religious leaders of the community and others. Thus drawn together, the princes of this world, both religious and secular, uphold one another. Their interests are one. Hence, the Lord and all those who are his "members" and followers would be unsympathetically viewed, hated, persecuted; for the presentations of the Truth make manifest various errors and hypocrisies in contrast with Divine standards.

DECEMBER 9

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him—Jas. 1:12.

If we could but keep in memory the fact that every trial, every persecution, every difficulty of life, permitted to come upon those who have made the covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, is intended to *prove them*, to test their love, to see whether or not their characters are fixed, rooted and grounded in righteousness, and being built up in love, it would put all these trials, difficulties and temptations in a new light before us, and greatly assist us in fighting a good fight and overcoming. We would say, If by these little trials the Lord is proving my love and devotion to Him, then, however trifling they may be or however important, I will diligently use them as favorable opportunities to demonstrate to my Lord the fullness of my love and devotion to Him and His cause—Z '98, 41 (R2257).

Temptation in this verse means trial, test. To endure temptation means while cheerfully bearing tests, to persevere victoriously amid them in well-doing. The Christian life is full of trials; we must be tested and stand approved in every point of character, before we can be accounted worthy. Blessed are we, if we expect trials; for such expectation will prepare us for them. Twice blessed are we, if we are being tested; for this gives us opportunities to overcome. And thrice blessed are we, if we faithfully endure our trials unto complete victory; for after our testing is successfully completed, the fruition of our hope will be ours. Life everlasting in the Kingdom, with all that it implies in disposition, nature, sights, honors, associations, inheritance and work, will surely become ours. By an oath God has covenanted this to "the seed"; and "the seed" consists of those consecrated ones who love God supremely—P '26, 173.

Parallel passages: Job 5:17; Psa. 94:12; 119:67, 71; Prov. 3:11, 12; Matt. 24:13; 1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Tim. 4:8; 1 Pet. 5:4; Matt. 19:28, 29; Jas. 2:5; Rev. 2:10.

Hymns: 93, 56, 57, 67, 197, 200, 313.

Poems of Dawn, 45: *The Refining*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 83 (R 5650).

Questions: In what trials did I gain victory this week? How? With what results?

THE REFINING

MAL. 3:3

"TIS sweet to feel that He who tries
The silver takes His seat
Beside the fire that purifies,
Lest too intense a heat—
Raised to consume the base alloy—
The precious metals, too, destroy.

'Tis good to think how well He knows
The silver's power to bear
The ordeal through which it goes;
And that with skill and care
He'll take it from the fire when fit,
With His own hand to polish it.

'Tis blessedness to know that He
The piece He hath begun
Will not forsake till He can see—
To prove the work well done—
His image, by its brightness known,
Reflecting glory like His own.

But ah! how much of earthly mould,
Dark relics of the mine,
Lost from the ore, must He behold—
How long must He refine,
Ere in the silver He can trace
The first faint semblance of His face!

Thou great Refiner! sit Thou by,
Thy promise to fulfil!
Moved by Thy hand, beneath Thine eye,
And melted at Thy will,
O may Thy work forever shine,
Reflecting beauty pure as Thine!

R5650: PATIENT ENDURANCE THE FINAL TEST

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—James 1:4.

THE Scriptures everywhere represent patience as an important element of character. In every phase of human experience we can see its need. To be just under present conditions, one must be patient, not rash; for it would be unjust to be impatient and severe with the unavoidable imperfections and weaknesses of our fellowmen. Therefore the spirit of a sound mind demands that we be patient in dealing with fallen humanity. God Himself possesses this quality of patience, and has long exercised it. In dealing with the world in the next Age the Church will need to have much patience, and under our present environments we need it constantly in order to develop the character necessary for a place on the Throne with our Lord.

Patience is closely allied to love and mercy. If God were unloving, unmerciful, He would be without patience. In man's present blemished, fallen condition, patience is sadly lacking, although it is often exercised outwardly for policy's sake. This Godlike quality, like all the other qualities of character inherent in God and in all perfect beings created in His likeness, has been largely obliterated in humanity by the fall of the first pair.

In the New Testament there are two Greek words translated *patience*. One of these words signifies forbearance, longsuffering. The other carries the thought of cheerful or hopeful endurance. The latter is the word used in our text, and has a much deeper significance than attaches ordinarily to our word *patience*. This constancy—the endurance of evil in a cheerful, willing manner—represents an element of character, and not merely a temporary restraint of feeling or of action. It signifies a development of heart and character which manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full acquiescence in the requirement of Divine Wisdom and Love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised in due time to overthrow them.

It will surely be profitable for us to cultivate carefully this element of Christian character of which our Lord speaks in such high commendation, and without which, His Word assures us, our character cannot be perfected. The Christian requires patient endurance to put on the whole armor of God, and having put it on, to keep it securely buckled. We need it in dealing not only with others, but also with ourselves, with our own blemishes. We should always take into account the various circumstances and conditions surrounding ourselves and others. As we look around, we see that the world is in a condition of blight, of sin. This knowledge should give us great sympathy with humanity, without which we would have but little patience. All of our brethren in Christ, like ourselves, are by nature members of this fallen human race. Therefore we should have a great deal of patient endurance with the Lord's people, as we would have them exercise this grace toward us.

THE PATIENCE OF GOD

As the quality of justice will always persist, so will the quality of patience, though not in the sense of patient endurance of evil. God patiently works out His own glorious designs, in perfect equipoise of mind. At present this requires the exercise of patient endurance with evil, sinful conditions; and in the Ages of glory to come God will, we believe, still work out His purposes in perfect patience, probably in worlds yet uninhabited.

But in the exercise of patience under present evil conditions, Wisdom must have a voice. God has declared that in His Wisdom the time will come when He will cease to exercise patience toward the world. That is to say, He will no longer bear with the world in their present sinful, imperfect condition. That time has almost arrived. The great cataclysm of trouble, now about due, will sweep away the entire present order preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. Then

God will give men the fullest opportunity of coming into harmony with Himself and righteousness before He will deal with them summarily.

The time is coming when there will be no more sin. God will have a clean universe by and by. But He will first give everybody an opportunity to rise out of sin. If they will not avail themselves of the opportunity, then God's patience, longsuffering, will cease to be operative toward such. This will not mean that God's patience has ceased, but that its activity has ceased in that direction.

God's patience has arranged the thousand years of Messiah's Reign for man's blessing, and His Wisdom has decided that those thousand years will be sufficient for the elimination of evil. Whoever will not learn to live righteously under those favorable conditions would never learn, and it would not be the part of Divine Wisdom longer to exercise patience with such. Likewise also, in our dealings with ourselves and others, there is a limit to the proper exercise of patience—longsuffering. We should not be patient with ourselves beyond a certain point. There are circumstances in which we would properly feel that we should have *known* better and should have *done* better than we did.

LET US JUDGE OURSELVES

If a child of God realizes that he has been derelict with himself, he should say, I will not be patient with myself any further. I will take myself in hand and conquer this weakness which I have permitted in a measure to assert itself to the weakening of my own character and probably to the discomfort and pain of others. I cannot do this in my own unaided strength, but by the grace of the Lord I am determined to overcome in this matter.

Parents require much patience, forbearance, in dealing with their children. The limit of patience might differ in regard to different children. Therefore the wise parent will judge how nearly each child has been doing the right thing, and how well each has received and profited by instruction. If he finds that any child of his is wilfully doing wrong, he should not continue to be patient, but should administer the rod. This would not mean that the parent had ceased to be patient. He might have patience the next day with the same child, and subsequently the application of the rod might come again. We are rather to be too patient, too sympathetic, than to have too little patience, too little sympathy. Remembering our own weaknesses, we are to exercise patience toward others who are seeking to overcome their imperfections, even as we are seeking to overcome our own. We all need that patience, forbearance, be exercised toward us.

OUR LORD'S LESSONS ON PATIENT ENDURANCE

Recurring to the word patience as used in our text, let us glance backward to our Lord's Parable of the Sower, as recorded in Luke 8. In verse 15 we read, "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience," patient endurance, constancy. The thought here is

that to be of the fruit-bearing class which the Lord will approve and accept in His Kingdom we must do more than to receive the Word of His Testimony, even though we receive it with joy. It means more; for the stony ground class at first thus received it. For a brief time these seemed to give evidence of fruitfulness and vigor; but when the hot sun of persecution arose, they withered away, because of lack of depth of soil.

In this parable the Lord shows that patient endurance, constancy, is the final test of character. It follows after the receiving and the sprouting of the seed; it follows after love, hope, joy and faith have caused the seed to spring forth and begin to bear fruit. Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the fruit may be developed and thoroughly ripened, that the grain may be made ready for the garner. Ah, how important this grace is seen to be, in the light of God's Word! But remember that the endurance must be *cheerful*. We cannot suppose that He who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with His children, even when He saw them bearing much for His sake, if they endured it in an impatient or dissatisfied or unhappy frame of mind.

Those who thus endure surely would not be copies of God's dear Son, whose sentiment found expression in the words, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O My God!" All of the Royal Priesthood are sacrificers, as was our great Chief Priest; and God who accepts our sacrifices through the merit of our dear Redeemer, informs us that He loves a *cheerful* giver—one who performs his sacrifices gladly, with a willing heart. This does not mean that our bodies will never grow weary; but that our spirit will rejoice in the privilege of suffering weariness of the flesh in so noble and wonderful a service. But if our Father should see best to lay us aside from active work for a time, when our hearts are longing to serve, this too will be an opportunity to endure cheerfully His will for us. It may also be a test of our full submission of our wills to His, and thus be an important stepping-stone upward toward the Kingdom glories and privileges.

The other instance in which the Lord used this word patience, or patient endurance, is recorded in Luke 21:19. He had just been telling His followers that they must expect tribulations as the result of being His disciples during the present time, when sin abounds, when Satan is the prince of this world. They must expect opposition from various quarters; but He assured them that nevertheless they would be fully under Divine care and protection, even though persecutions would be permitted to reach and to affect them. Then follow the words, "In your patience [patient endurance, cheerful constancy] possess ye your souls."—Luke 21:19.

Our faith and our trust in the Lord and His gracious promises should be so strong and unwavering that they will far more than counterbalance the oppositions of the world, of false brethren, and of Satan's blinded servants. So implicit should be our faith in our Father's love and care that all these persecutions will be recognized and rejoiced in as the agencies of His providence in chiseling, shaping and polishing us as living stones for the glorious Temple which He is constructing, and which is now so soon, we believe, to be set up.

Viewing our trials from this standpoint, we can indeed rejoice and can possess our souls, our lives, as New Creatures, even amidst tribulations, with cheerful endurance. Yea, we may realize that the soul, the real being, to whom God has given the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the future, cannot be injured by the persecutions of the flesh, or by anything that man can do unto us, so long as we are faithful to the Lord, accepting every experience that He permits to come to us as ministrations of His providence for our ultimate good and His glory.

THE NECESSITY FOR PATIENT ENDURANCE

Let us here examine carefully into the reason why it is necessary for us to develop this grace of patient endurance. It appears that the development of this quality is one of the conditions which God has attached to the call to joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom, and one of the same conditions required of Him. The wisdom of this is manifest when we consider the work to which we are called—the work of blessing all the families of the earth, as God's Millennial Kingdom, in joint-heirship with the Only Begotten Son of God, our great Redeemer. That will be a mighty work; and it is eminently proper that Jehovah should require that those whom He shall account worthy of that exalted position shall not only appreciate His goodness and His glorious character, and prefer His service to sin and iniquity, but demonstrate their thorough loyalty to the principles of righteousness and to His will to the extent of a joyful willingness to suffer on behalf of these principles. A transitory endurance of one or two or three brief trials would not prove the individual to have an established character for righteousness; but a patient, cheerful, endurance even unto death would be necessary to demonstrate such a character.

We might illustrate this with the diamond. Suppose that we were able to make diamonds out of some plastic material with the brilliancy of the real diamond; and suppose that they became hard, but not so hard as the genuine diamond. Would these imitation diamonds have the value of the true diamond? By no means. If they were subjected to severe pressure, they would be crushed. And so with the Christian. If we supposed him possessed of every grace of character that could belong to the sons of God, save this one of firmness, endurance, he would not be fit to be amongst the Lord's jewels. Hence we see the necessity of the Lord's demand that patient, cheerful endurance shall be a characteristic of each one who shall be accepted to a place in His Royal Diadem.

The importance of this quality in the Christian character is again emphasized by the Apostle Paul. In His Epistle to Titus (2:2), when enumerating the character-qualities of an advanced Christian, he declares that they must be "vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience." The final test of patient endurance must be passed before we can be accepted as of the Very Elect.

The same Apostle in writing to Timothy, thus reminds him, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patient endurance." We need this important grace more and more as we speed along on our race course and near the end of the way. Feet grow weary; trials and testings abound; therefore we need to

"gird up the loins of our mind" and, looking to our great Exemplar for the needed inspiration and strength, to set our faces like a flint for the home stretch.

TRIALS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL

Our ability and strength to patiently endure should increase as we progress in the narrow way. We should grow "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." But we cannot possibly develop this essential trait of character without trials—experiences intended to call for the exercise of cheerful endurance. So let us not think it strange if we are called upon to pass through protracted trials which make necessary the nerving of ourselves to *bear*. But let us repeat that the virtue is not merely in the bearing; for the *world* has much to bear, but it is particularly in the *manner* in which we endure. At heart we must be sweet and submissive—in fullest harmony with the Lord's processes of development. This may be hard at times; but His grace will be sufficient, if we constantly apply for it. "Having done all," let us "stand!"

Ah, yes! We can see a new reason for the Lord's arrangement that we should have our trial as our Master had His—under an evil environment—that we might not only have all the necessary qualities of Christian character, but have them rooted, grounded, fixed, established.

The Apostle James likewise draws our attention to the importance of this quality. He says, "The trying of your faith worketh patience"; that is to say, if our faith stands the trial, it will work out in our character this patient endurance. On the other hand, if we do not attain this development, it will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactorily, and that we are not fit for the Kingdom. Thus we see clearly what a great mistake has been made among Christian people in general in supposing that religion is a thing to be gotten suddenly as an answer to prayer, or by going to the mourner's bench, or by standing up for prayers, or in response to some Divine or human appeal—just as one would get a dollar and put it into his pocket. On the contrary, the step of repentance from sin and justification is only the beginning, and not the end, of the Christian way. The next step is consecration of ourselves and our all to God. But this also is far from the end. Not only must we go on and on, to the attainment of faith, fortitude, self-control, meekness and love, but having attained all these, we must *patiently endure*. We must "run with patience [cheerful endurance] the race set before us." Or, to use another figure of speech, it is merely starting in the School of Christ; merely having our names enrolled as pupils, to be taught of the Lord.

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

The Church of the Philadelphia period were promised of the Lord that because of their faithfulness, because they had "kept the Word of My patience," they should be kept from "the hour of temptation" which was to come upon all the world a little later. The Church of Laodicea—the Church of our day—is not kept from entering into the "hour of temptation"; but we may be sure that we will be kept while *in* it, if we are faithful and true. Our dear Lord's special message to the Laodicean phase of the Church has been,

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."—Revelation 3:20, 21.

Though we are not spared from this hour of temptation, we have a counterbalancing blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's parousia.* We may have His instruction, His dispensing to us of spiritual food, "meat in due season," in a manner and to a degree never before enjoyed by His saints. And, as we might expect, this greatest favor is offset by the subtle and severe trials and testings of this special "hour of temptation." If there was ever a time when patient endurance was needed by the Lord's faithful, it is *now*. If ever they needed the counsel, "In your *patience* possess ye your souls," they need it *now*. Those who are able to *patiently endure* will *stand* in this evil day. All others will fall. As the Apostle forewarned us, the fiery ordeals of this day "will try every man's work, of what sort it is."

We find this quality of patient endurance lacking everywhere throughout Christendom today, even among the majority of the professed followers of Christ. It is becoming more and more scarce. Few wish to endure anything—for righteousness' sake, for Christ's sake, or for any one else's sake; and if endurance of anything unpleasant is absolutely necessary, the trial is borne with much of impatience, complaint and chafing. Moreover, a spirit of defiance and rebellion against everything like self-denial or resignation, a spirit of intense bitterness, is daily growing in the hearts of mankind.

This general tendency of the civilized world today toward non-endurance, impatience and rebellion against restraint necessarily has its influence upon those who are seeking to walk in the narrow way. Only by Divine grace can this tendency be successfully resisted, and progress be made toward the development of the likeness of Christ. This special grace, needed today by the Lord's children, will be withheld from those who are not walking close to the Lord, following in the footsteps of Jesus. It is because the professed followers of Christ are living so far from Him that we see today the tendencies are developing which we have noted amongst those who profess His name.

This spirit so prevalent is at the bottom of mob violence which is kept down largely by military force, in the outbreaks against law and order which we hear of so frequently. We may expect this spirit to continue to grow. There is a feeling amongst the masses that in the past they have been too patient, not sufficiently aggressive—the feeling that if they had taken things into their own hands long ago present conditions might have been averted. But those who have kept the Lord's Word of patient endurance, who have sought from Him the wisdom from on High, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and of good fruits," have learned that He has a due time in which His purposes shall be accomplished, and they are willing to abide His time patiently, knowing that it is best. They have learned that

"God's plans, like lilies white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the hidden heart of gold."

ONE OF SATAN'S SPECIAL DECEPTIONS

The Apostle counsels us respecting this "hour of temptation" which is now upon us. Its besetments and trials will be many, and some of them will be so subtle and deceptive that all who are not thoroughly rooted and grounded in the Truth will be carried away by the false arguments of those whom Satan is now permitted to use as his agents in trying all those who dwell upon the face of the whole earth.

Amongst these subtle theories of the Adversary, none seems more deceptive than Christian Science, falsely so called; for it is neither Christian nor scientific. Backed by the power of the Evil One, it is able to promise its dupes that if they will affirm an untruth, and *stick to it*, they shall have relief and cure of certain ailments and bodily afflictions. Those who have not learned to endure patiently all that the Lord permits them to experience in the way of pain and sickness—all that cannot be relieved by rational and reasonable methods—will be ready to accept almost any relief which the Adversary may bring to their attention. And as they learn to *deceive themselves* in respect to pain and sickness, and gradually to pervert words from their real meaning, and to ignore and deny *facts*, they become in time so confused in their minds that truth appears to them to be falsehood, and falsehood appears to be shining Truth.

SOME BEING FREED BY THE TRUTH

These deluded ones are led into this deception partly through curiosity. It seems so strange to them to hear one say, "There is no death; all is life! There is no pain; all is health! There is no evil; all is good!" They say to themselves, "These statements are certainly very inconsistent, yet I am curious to know how people reason them out. What is their philosophy?" This is just what the Adversary desires. He wishes thus to attract their attention, that step by step he may lead them from one falsity to another, until the whole brain and conscience are subverted. They have accepted darkness for light, lies for truth. For this they are rewarded with physical relief—small recompense!

This is the reward of selfishness, of unwillingness to suffer anything they could escape by any means. They preferred their own way, the way most attractive to the fallen flesh. They chose this rather than the *Truth*, which did not appeal to their flesh. They were ready to exchange the testimony of the Lord for the sake of physical ease and comfort, or to satisfy morbid curiosity. Thus they escaped troubles and pain which, if endured patiently and joyfully, would have worked out for them blessing and strengthening of character. Some who have been thus enslaved by the great Adversary, a very few, are being freed by the power of the Truth at this time. But it is a very difficult task to be thoroughly accomplished. In some cases the experiences undergone in the efforts to break the bonds so tightly binding them have been very painful, and accompanied by buffetings from the Evil One and his hosts, who have so long held them in bondage. But it is well worth the struggle and the pain to be free from all such slavery.

ST. PAUL'S PICTURE OF PRESENT CONDITIONS

The hour of trial is not coming alike upon all, for all of Christendom are not upon the same plane—mentally, morally or physically. The trial as it is coming upon Christendom in general, however, is pictured by the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. He here enumerates certain characteristics of this "hour of temptation." He says, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves—covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers [enticers to strife], incontinent [not under restraint, impetuous], fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors [those who cannot be trusted, would sell out their best friends for selfish considerations], heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a *form* of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

This is a graphic picture of present-day conditions in the Christian world, so-called. Because they received not the Truth in the love of it, therefore God has sent them "strong delusions, that they should believe a lie," and should be condemned thereby. This hour of temptation has not yet reached its greatest intensity, but we believe this stage will be reached in a very short time. Blessed are all they who have made the Lord, "even the most High, their Habitation." These shall not be moved; yet many of them will pass through most severe trials and temptations. Through the mails we learn of the struggles and prayers of many of God's children—some because of their own imperfections and frailties, and some because of the imperfections of others; and still others are tried because of earthly cares and burdens which they seem unable to fully overcome or to cast upon the Lord.

LET US HAVE THE PROPER FEAR

We sympathize with these dear ones, and counsel them as best we can, remembering the Master's words, "Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh." (Luke 6:21.) Our heart is especially solicitous for those whose letters give evidence that they are in temptation, but realize it not—who are being swallowed up of ambition or business or other "cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches"—whose love for the Truth seems to be growing cooler instead of hotter, and who seem to *feel* less and *see* less than they did years ago. These seem to be sleeping when they should be watching and praying; and this hour of trial, we fear, is finding them unprepared; while some who are weeping, praying and striving are more like our dear Master in Gethsemane; and like Him, they will be strengthened for the final trial.

Let us each, dear brethren, be very solicitous for ourselves and for each other, and counting the prize held out to us as far dearer and more precious than all else beside, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left to us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." Let us so love all the Lord's dear children that their welfare will be our chief concern; and this will mean our own spiritual health. Yet we must not allow our love even for the brethren to hinder our fullest confidence in the Lord's love and wisdom in the choice of His Bride, even though siftings should take from us some whose fellowship we have cherished.

Let us patiently hold on our way—this blessed way! Let us do with our might what our hands find to do. Soon will come the Harvest Home! Soon, if faithful, we shall gather, as a glorious company, to go out no more forever. We shall come with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us! But let us remember that "we have need of *patience*, that after we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise!"—Hebrews 10:36.

"How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning Day!

* * * *

"Then peace, my heart! and hush, my tongue!
Be calm, my troubled breast;
Each passing hour prepares thee more
For everlasting rest!"

DECEMBER 10

Them that honour me I will honour—1 Sam. 2:30.

In whatever department of the Lord's service He is pleased to open the door of opportunity to us, we should enter it promptly and with energy—with zeal for Him and for the cause to which He has called us. This is one condition of our acceptableness to Him. If we are slothful, inattentive to opportunities, undoubtedly they will be removed from us, and given to others, for the Lord is abundantly able to raise up one or another to serve His cause without interfering with, or overruling our free moral agency. Let us more and more appreciate what a privilege we enjoy in being co-laborers together with God, and especially in connection with this great service which our Lord and Master Jesus is exercising, and to fellowship in which we have been called—Z '01, 318 (R2888).

To honor God implies putting God first in our lives. On the one hand, this means that we set ourselves constantly and successfully against that against which God sets Himself, *i.e.*, Satan, the world and the flesh, as they appear in sin, error, selfishness and worldliness within and without. On the other hand, it means to set ourselves constantly and successfully in favor of that in favor of which God sets Himself, *i.e.*, meditation on and spread of God's Word, character development in harmony with God's Word, endurance of evil for loyalty to God's Word, and watchfulness and prayer in harmony with God's Word. Such God will truly honor. In this life He honors them with the holy Spirit, with the understanding of His Word, with the privilege of prayer, with privileges of service, with separateness from sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, with development of Christlikeness and with victory in their battles. In the next life He will honor them with great Kingdom blessings, in disposition, nature, sights, glorification, association, inheritance, office and work—P '36, 166.

Parallel passages: Jer. 18:9, 10; Psa. 18:20; 91:14; 50:23; Prov. 3:9, 10; Isa. 29:13, 14; Dan. 4:34; Mal. 1:6; John 5:23, 44; 8:49; 12:26; 13:31, 32; 17:4, 5; 1 Cor. 4:5; 1 Pet. 1:7.

Hymns: 235, 11, 45, 46, 89, 83, 219.

Poems of Dawn, 278: "*Amen!*"

Tower Reading: Z '15, 173 (R 5703).

Questions: Has this text been this week fulfilled in me? How? Under what circumstances? With what effects?

"AMEN!"

SO let it be! The prayer that Christ enjoins
Lives ever in our soul and on our tongue!
So let it be! The worship He assigns—
Our great Creator—with thanksgiving song,
From hearths, in temples, yea, the woods among,

Pour forth! So let it be! As drooping vines
Drink the reviving shower, so sink along
Our hearts His precepts! Lo, one word enshrines
Full attestation of our faith! "Amen"
Includes the sum of our assent, and bears
The seal of truth: it is the wing of prayers,
Speeding the voice of millions, not in vain,
To God's high throne, borne on seraphic airs,
To ratify in Heaven our glorious gain!

R5703: THE CLASS TO BE HONORED BY THE LORD

"Them that honor Me, I will honor."—1 Samuel 2:30.

THE words of our text are found in conjunction with the story of Eli and his family. Eli was God's representative in a very special sense—a priest and a judge of Israel. Eli's sons were also priests; yet they seem to have been egregiously wrong in their course of conduct, living in licentiousness, favoring injustice, taking advantage of their own position and that of their father to do violence to the principles of righteousness. Eli was reproved of the Lord because he did not maintain a proper control over his sons and prevent their doing the things that were unjust, unrighteous, contrary to God's will and a disgrace both to His Cause and to their priestly profession. These words of reproof were uttered to Eli, through the boy Samuel, as an indication of what was God's mind and to show him why the honor that had been given to him and his family would be taken away. The Lord's view of the matter is shown in the words of our text, "Them that honor Me, I will honor."

RESISTING THE PROUD, GIVING GRACE TO THE HUMBLE

We believe that this is a principle that holds good always. Now, today, those who are seeking to honor God He will be sure to honor. Those who are seeking merely self-honor may obtain some of that honor, may glorify themselves to a certain extent; but it will not be the Lord that will glorify them. In the service of His Cause, His Truth, they will not be honored by Him. "The Lord resisteth the proud, and giveth grace [favor] to the humble." The way to honor God is to seek to know His will and to do it from sincere hearts, to have God first in all our affairs, to show forth His praises. We are to never mind ourselves, our own honor. We are to serve in accordance with the principles which the Lord is promoting. To seek the glory of God is the proper course for us who are His children and whom He has blessed.

It might seem as if our text is in conflict in some sense with the words of our Lord, "Love your *enemies*." When we come to analyze the text carefully, we perceive that although the Lord says that He will honor them that honor Him, and declares, "They that seek Me early shall find Me," yet He does not say that He will *do harm* to those who do not love Him and honor Him. On the contrary, the Lord's provision is so comprehensive

as to include "all the families of the earth." God thus *loves* those who are His enemies—loves them to the extent of providing a Sacrifice for them and a reconciliation with Himself. But He does not *honor* His enemies.

HATING THE SIN, LOVING THE SINNER

We may well believe that God loves those especially who seek to do His will. We are commanded to love our enemies, but this does not mean that we are to love our enemies in the same way that we love the members of the Body of Christ. The difference is that we would love our enemies with a sympathetic love, while we would love our brethren in Christ with a holy love, a love of kinship, of comradeship. Sin is not lovely to God; or to any one else who is in relationship with God and is possessed of His Spirit. Sin is a deformity, an enormity, displeasing to the mind, the Spirit, of God. But God has a sympathetic love for the sinner; and He wishes us to have the same, to be ready to do good to those who would do us injury, who would treat us unkindly, who would persecute us. We are thus to be imitators of God.

God has been pleased to choose certain ones of the human family to be His ambassadors. Instead of speaking to humanity directly, the Lord speaks through these representatives, His children. These are the ones He will be pleased to honor, to make His representatives—these who seek to do His will, who are loyal to His Word. Would God choose ambassadors who would not properly represent Him? Surely not! We, His children, can enter into the spirit of the Lord's testimony here; and it is for us, therefore, to seek to honor Him by showing forth His praises to others, both by proclaiming the pure Message of Truth and by our exemplary lives, that we may have His blessing now and may have the great honor that He has promised His faithful in the Kingdom, so near at hand.

DECEMBER 11

My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways—Prov. 23:26.

The heart, the will, thus given over to God, seeks to know the Divine will, to catch the Divine thought and to obey it in word and in act; and in proportion as this condition of the new mind is attained, in that same proportion will there begin to be a newness of life in every respect—in ambitions, hopes, sentiments and efforts. It is for this reason that the revelation of the Divine will and Plan is furnished to believers—that by growing in the knowledge of it, by thinking on these things, by filling the mind with the Divine Plan and will, the transforming influence may extend into every avenue of life—Z '01, 324 (R 2890).

The Lord desires our intellects, our affections and our wills. He wants our intellects, so that emptying them of sinful, erroneous, selfish and worldly thoughts, and filling them with just, truthful, loving and spiritual thoughts, our intellects, so emptied and so filled, might become vessels sanctified and meet for the Master's use for the blessing of others and ourselves. He wants our affections and our wills, so that, purging them from sinful, selfish, worldly and erroneous affections and intentions, and filling them with just, truthful, loving and spiritual affections and intentions, our hearts, so purged and filled, might become vessels sanctified and meet for the Master's use for the blessing of others and ourselves. Therefore our text lovingly encourages us to yield our hearts and intellects to God; and blessed in the consequent enrichment of heart and intellect is he who so yields himself—P '30, 184.

Parallel passages: Psa. 119:9; Eccles. 12:1; Matt. 13:15; 16:24; John 17:17; Rom. 6:13, 16, 19; 12:1; 15:16; 2 Cor. 8:5; Gal. 2:20; Col. 2:11; Heb. 10:5-7, 10.

Hymns: 8, 14, 114, 244, 208, 134, 325.

Poems of Dawn, 36: *I Offer Thee*.

Tower Reading: Z '16, 163 (R 5905).

Questions: What and how did I do with my consecration this week? Why did I do it? What was the result?

I OFFER THEE

EVERY heart's throb, it is Thine;
Every human tie of mine;
Every joy, and every pain;
Every act of mind, or brain—
My blessed God!
Every hope, and every fear;
Every smile, and every tear;
Every song and every hymn
"Laudamus Te."

Take them all, my blessed Lord,
Bind them with Thy secret cord;
Glorify Thyself in me—Adored One!
Multiply them by Thy Word,
Strengthen, bless, increase, my Lord,
Perfect in Love!
Thou first, and last!

R5905: TRAINING OUR AFFECTIONS HEAVENWARD

"Set your affection on things Above, not on things on the earth."—Colossians 3:2.

IN THE natural make-up of humanity there is a certain tendency which we all recognize as a sort of mental sacrilege, although we are unable to philosophize upon it or to explain it. So surely as we are men and women we have certain impulses of affection, certain powers that go out toward other creatures, other things; and it is very important that we see where they are tending; otherwise they will lead to idolatry. Just as the little tendrils of a vine will take hold of whatever is within reach, so our affections go out to various earthly objects; and they need to be pruned and trained, just as a vine needs to be. When you desire to have your vine grow a certain way, you turn it in the proper direction, tie it if need be, and see that its tendrils take hold of the proper supports.

VARIOUS WORLDLY OBJECTS OF AFFECTION

Thus it is with each of us. These affections are proper, they are good; but they need guiding, training. If we did not have these affections, we could not love God. We must have them in order to a proper balance of character. Without them we could not hold together. The need for their proper guidance is manifest when we see some lady setting her affections on a little dog, giving it much time, care, choice food, etc. Some of the wealthy set their affections on poodle dogs, bull dogs, bird dogs or Angora cats. Some make pets of Canary birds, rabbits, white mice, etc. They spend upon those pets much valuable time, thought and care that might be much better spent in other ways—often treating them as if they were children, and lavishing as much affection upon them as if they were human. Some do the same with flowers.

Although we believe in having a very kindly feeling toward dumb animals, and although we greatly admire flowers, yet we hold that as the Lord's people we should not treat any of these as if they were human beings, nor set our affections upon them to our injury and the neglect of much more important things. There are plenty of children to care for; and we should not put flowers, dogs and toys in place of them. Although it is very proper for us to think how good is our Heavenly Father to give us all these things for pleasure, yet we should be on guard that we do not set our affections upon them and give them too large a place in our hearts. Where people do this, something valuable has been lost in their lives. If they are grown people, perhaps it would have been better if they had

had children, rather than to set their love upon dogs and cats, and to waste precious time upon them.

As we look out upon the world of mankind, we see that some are much better balanced than others. We sympathize with the world; for most of them do not know the Lord. They are not Christians. Very many of them have poor, meager lives with little to fill their hearts and to brighten and enlarge their mental horizon. Many who spend little or no time upon pets, set their affections and thoughts upon a home. It is a great pleasure to them to be able to say, "I have a good home of my own." This longing for home is a natural craving of our beings. Phrenologists call this natural trait, inhabitiveness—love of habitation. But we are not to permit our affections to center even here. As children of God we should have far higher aspirations than the world has.

Many set their hearts upon having a large bank account. We have known people whose minds are so unbalanced that they would do almost anything to secure a good bank account. And when this is gained, they still are not satisfied. They continue to grasp after more, often resorting to very questionable or very dishonest methods to gain their ends. Such people are mentally and morally deranged. But we are to remember that the human family in their fallen condition are all more or less deranged. Only a thorough and radical course of treatment can remove the difficulty. The Lord alone can cure the malady that affects the entire human race.

LEGITIMATE AFFECTIONS LIABLE TO PERVERSION

There are still higher affections than those we have named which are also dangerous unless properly trained and guided. These are the affections of man for woman, woman for man, man for man, woman for woman, etc. All this is proper, of course, but we are to avoid inordinate affections, and are to have only that which is ordinary—that is, reasonable, proper. We are to beware of going to extremes. In His Word God has given us the proper outlines of conduct for His children; and we can know these only when we study His directions. Otherwise we are sure to take a wrong course. "Set not your affection on things on the earth."

It is God's arrangement that even husbands and wives should not set their affections too much upon each other. Thus the Apostle Paul enjoins, "The time is short; it remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none." (1 Corinthians 7:29.) The intimation seems to be that we should not reckon our earthly relationships as being the highest and best of all things. It is a great thing to have each other's support in the trials and difficulties of life. We are not wishing to say anything to weaken this blessed bond. But it should be held in accordance with knowledge of and in harmony with God's Word. It should not be permitted to be in any wise a hindrance to our running the Heavenly race successfully. It should not become an earth-born cloud to veil from us the Father's face and approval.

By natural tendency we would all be inclined to go wrong; therefore we need to give careful heed to the admonition to set our affection on things Above. Let each of us look

around carefully and sweep before our own doors. We are not here simply to have a good time. We are here for the purpose of learning certain principles, certain lessons that the Lord would have us learn, so that we may more than ever shape our lives in harmony therewith, that we may be able to see all the things of life from God's viewpoint. God's Word does not go into every detail of life; but it lays down important principles that touch our lives at every point; and it is for us to learn more and more how to apply these principles, to see what we need to restrain, what we need to cultivate, etc. The Lord wishes us to be intelligent children.

"GOD FIRST"

Those who come into harmony with the mind of the Lord have that wisdom from Above, which is first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits. (James 3:17.) Each of us should scrutinize the affairs of his own life and observe whether to any extent he is *setting* his affections upon earthly objects or things, even upon things which are in themselves right and proper. One cannot love his wife too much, unless he permits her to come into the Lord's place in his heart. If he should love her so much that he would please her rather than the Lord, then he is doing wrong. God must be first. Everything must be subordinate. Everything should be brought into line with this: GOD FIRST—His will, His Plan, His ways.

As husbands and wives, kindred and friends, there is a certain degree of love that is in full harmony with the Heavenly love, the Father's will; and there are other affections or degrees of affection that are not in accordance therewith. Beware of these latter. Every one is imperfect, and each has tendencies whereby he might be led astray. Our great Adversary goeth about seeking whom he may devour. If he could, he would be glad to devour us. The better Christian one is, the better the Adversary would like to get hold of him.

To be a child of God does not mean that we shall be free from all earth-born tendencies. The Apostle points out that there is a continual fight of the New Creature against the old. (Galatians 5:17.) The Heavenly impulses, tendencies and aspirations need to be fought for; they must be carefully and continually cultivated. Not only must our affections be torn from their earthly props, to which they naturally cling, but they must be trained Heavenward, and be held there by the cords of love and devotion to God. Do not let them gravitate again earthward. There are many things on this earth that are attractive, that are beautiful; but we need not set our hearts upon them. We may see them and admire them; but we must go right along the narrow way. Our hearts are only just so large; and if we fill them with flowers or pets or earthly ambitions or affections, how can there be room for the infinitely more important and beautiful things?

FRUITS, NOT CHIPS, SHOULD FILL OUR MENTAL BASKETS

We all remember the familiar story of the boy who was very fond of reading novels, and whose father wished to impress a valuable lesson upon his mind. One day he said to his son, "John, empty that basket of apples in the corner; then go and fill the basket with

chips." The boy did so, and brought in the basket filled with chips. "Now," said the father, "put all the apples also into the basket." The surprised boy said, "Father, I cannot put the apples in while the chips are there." "No," said the father, and your mind is just like that basket. It can hold only so much; and if you fill it with chips, there will be no room for other and better things."

This was a wise father; he gave his son a good suggestion. You and I, as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, should fill our minds with the glorious Heavenly things—the Heavenly hopes, the Heavenly ambitions, the Heavenly affections. All these earthly things are but as chips in comparison. The mind and the heart filled with chips cannot contain the fruits of the Spirit. If we fill our baskets with the Heavenly loves and joys, the spiritual treasures, we shall have that which is transcendentally above any earthly love and joy.

Beware of earthly, spurious love; for it will be a hindrance to the Heavenly love. The two should not be confused and mixed. The unselfish natural love, which is an element of perfect human nature, will not, if kept in subservience to the Heavenly, interfere with our spiritual interests. The one does not infract or destroy the other. There should be a natural love for husband, wife, children, parents, and the Lord would have this continue; but He would have it in full subjection to the Heavenly things. Here, also, God should be first.

SETTING AFFECTIONS ABOVE A GRADUAL WORK

In our text the Apostle is addressing Christians, the class who are day by day training their affections Heavenward. This matter of *setting* the affections on Heavenly things, however, is something that must be repeated, persevered in; for the affections are inclined to slip off. We have nothing but our old brains with which to do our thinking, and these brains have tendencies toward the flesh. Therefore the necessity arises for a repeated and continual setting of the affections on the things Above, until they become securely fastened there, fixed, established. Heaven is to be our eternal Home, not the earth, not the fleshly condition. All the precious promises center Above. Christ our beloved King is there. We are being prepared to enter soon into Heaven itself, the condition beyond the veil. The glories of the Holiest of all are now ours by faith; and they will soon be ours in reality if we hold fast and continue faithful to our covenant with God.

The Lord has now through His promises given us a foretaste of the good things to come. We have "the earnest of the Spirit." It is like the paying down of a hundred dollars to secure the purchase of a house. The balance remains due, and the buyer does not get the property until this balance is paid. But the earnest money holds the place for him until the full payment is made. By giving us His Holy Spirit God binds the contract into which we have entered with Him. In giving us this advance payment the Lord says, "Now prove to Me how faithfully you will keep your part of the Covenant into which we have entered. You keep your part, and I will keep Mine." "Faithful is He that calleth us, who also will do it." The only question is whether we shall do our part faithfully; for God will surely do His part.

CAREFUL PREPARATION OF THE BRIDAL GARMENTS

When we ponder on earthly things we see that they are not worthy to be compared with the Heavenly things. But there is danger of spending consecrated time on things that are of less value even than flowers, etc. How much time do you think you should spend in reading the newspapers? How much does this enable you to set your affections on the things above? Each of us is responsible to the Lord for how he uses every moment of his time—God's time. We are not here condemning the reading of important world-news which bears upon the fulfilment of Scripture prophecy. It is not wrong for us to keep in touch with the progress of the great war, for instance, in so far as it is related to the incoming Kingdom. But we do not need to read much to find out what is necessary.

Doubtless if Jesus were here in the flesh now, He would be interested in noting how the world conditions are fulfilling the testimony of the Scriptures. He told us to watch for these fulfilments and to lift up our heads when we saw them coming to pass. But how can we lift up our heads if we do not see them coming to pass? And how can we see them if we do not read that which will give us this necessary information? But we are not to read for entertainment, nor are we to read what is unprofitable to us as New Creatures.

So then, dear brethren and sisters, we see the course we are to pursue. We are to be the Bride of Jehovah's great Son. Therefore we must be very diligent to get everything in readiness for the approaching marriage. When we consider the preparations which an earthly bride makes for her nuptials, we have a good illustration of how important it is for us to have our garments all prepared, our robes spotless, our embroidery-work all completed beforehand. You and I are privileged to have a most important part in the greatest, grandest wedding ever held. Therefore we should be ready. We who were by nature children of wrath even as others, are now privileged to be cleansed from all defilement by the precious blood of Christ. Daily also we are to wash with the water of the Word. We are to be purified from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and be fitted to become the Bride of our Heavenly King.

This preparation means a continuous work as long as we sojourn in the mortal body. God's great Program has been so arranged as to demonstrate who will be fit to constitute the Bride of His Son. This decision in our case will depend on our diligence in making ourselves ready. If we attend to this most important work properly, we shall have no time to fritter away. We shall have little time for anything else than this one thing. But the proper making of ourselves ready means the helping of others as we have opportunity, especially the brethren who are walking this same Heavenly way with us. We are to lay down our lives for the brethren. This is an important part of our preparation. We are to build up ourselves and also the brethren in the most holy faith.

We hope, then, dear friends, that we are getting ready for the marriage of the Lamb, for our marriage to the Lamb. Something that we may do or fail to do today may have a bearing upon our final readiness. Our minds are the foundation for everything in this matter. The Lord knows that we have imperfect bodies. So the testing will not be as to whether our bodies are perfect, but whether our hearts are perfect. If our heart is perfect

before God, we shall bring our words, our actions and our thoughts into harmony with the Law of Love to the extent of our ability. If we see to it that we *keep* our hearts thus loyal, we shall become more and more a copy of God's dear Son, our Heavenly Bridegroom; and we shall enter in due time with exceeding joy into our "house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens." Then our Lord will present us before the Father—the "Bride adorned for her Husband"; He will present us with exceeding joy, BLAMELESS.

Oh, the blessedness of this thought! *Can we be blameless?* If we reach the Kingdom, dear brethren, we shall indeed be blameless! Meantime, our characters are to be blameless here. God would never blame us for things we could not help, but only for the things we could help; and He has made an arrangement whereby if we have made mistakes we can go to the Fountain of cleansing. If we strive to do our best, and if we go daily, or oftener if necessary, to the Mercy Seat for pardon and cleansing, we shall be spotless in the Father's sight; and in His own due time He will give us perfect bodies like our Lord's. Then we shall be perfect in the most absolute sense.

So long as we stay in the imperfect flesh we shall need the Throne of Heavenly Grace. We shall need mercy and assistance from the Lord every day. If we are faithful at heart, our mistakes will help us to be more watchful, more positive, than before. The Lord so arranges His providence as to teach us the necessary lessons. As we grow in the Divine likeness, we shall more and more come to love as God and Christ love—to love character, to love the principles of righteousness. We have never seen God or Christ with our physical eyes, yet we love them above all else. (1 Peter 1:8.) We have never seen the Apostle Paul, or the Apostle John, yet we love them; for we know their characters are lovable and worthy of admiration. We love the personality which shines from their writings, the beauty of their spirit. We love St. Paul because he counted all things but loss and dross that he might win Christ and be found in Him. We are to love whatever is good and noble and worthy, and in proportion as it is so.

What do we love in each other? Is it the shape of the head, the symmetry of the features, the cut or style of the clothing? Oh, no! We love one another in proportion as we see the Master's likeness in each other. If one is much like Jesus, we love such a one all the more. This is the Heavenly, the spiritual love. This is the kind of love which we are to cultivate day by day. All other affections are to be entirely secondary. Let our love and esteem be for the things that are highly esteemed in the sight of God; let these be more beautiful to us than all else, that we may become like unto our Father in Heaven.

DECEMBER 12

As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he—Prov. 23:7.

It behooves the Lord's consecrated people carefully to strain out the impurities, and see that they do not enter into our hearts, our thoughts, realizing that if they enter, the result will be to work our defilement, to a greater or less degree. Whoever maintains purity of thought will have comparatively little effort in maintaining purity of word and of action. Whether the impurity come from one direction or another—from the world or the flesh or the devil—its attack must first of all be upon the mind; and if repelled there the victory is won; if not repelled, we cannot know what the consequences might be, as the Apostle James (1:15) declares: "When lust [selfish desire of any kind], hath conceived [in the mind], it bringeth forth sin [develops sinful words or deeds]; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death"—Z '01, 325 (R 2890).

To think in the head and to think in the heart are two distinct things. All kinds of thoughts enter the intellect. Some of these thoughts are injected into our minds by Satan, the world and the flesh; and some are given to us by God, His servants and His people. Nor are we necessarily responsible for the first entrance of thoughts cast into our minds by outside sources. Only then do we become responsible for our thoughts, when we harbor them; for this makes us think them in our hearts, which implies that our affections cleave to them, and our wills, laying hold of them, make them our own. Only such thoughts mold our characters. If they are impure, vicious, distrustful, resentful, proud, vain, cowardly, lazy, contentious, brutal, covetous and hypocritical, they give us characters of the same qualities. If they are pure, noble, trustful, long-suffering, humble, simple, brave, active, peaceable, gentle, liberal, sincere, they will impart to us characters of the same attributes. Thus, we become in character like the thoughts that we cherish—P '35, 172.

Parallel passages: Gen. 6:5; Deut. 5:29; 6:5; 1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Chron. 28:9; 2 Chron. 12:14; Psa. 22:26; 34:18; 51:10, 17; 57:7; Prov. 4:23; 15:13-15; Jer. 17:1, 9, 10; Matt. 15:19-21.

Hymns: 196, 130, 198, 1, 136, 145, 8.

Poems of Dawn, 118: *Thy Will Be Done*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 163 (R 5246).

Questions: Have I kept my heart this week? How? Why? Where?

THY WILL BE DONE

MY Lord, Thy will not mine be done:
Whatever path Thy love shall choose for me,
Through desert sands, or if beside the sea,—
Thy will be done!

Oh, may Thy will in me be done:
Should "harvest" labor be for me Thy will,
Or if I may but suffer and be still,—
Thy will be done!

My Father, let Thy will be done:
If *sweet* the cup Thou pourest for me to drink,
I'll praise Thee, but if *bitter*, I'll not shrink,—
Thy will be done!

Forever may Thy will be done:
I would not choose, I leave it all with Thee,—
The pilgrimage, if short or long it be,—
Thy will be done!

R5246: THE TRANSFORMING INFLUENCE OF THOUGHT

"As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7.)
"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—
Proverbs 4:23.

THE HEART is one of the most important organs of our body. If it ceases to work, death is sure to follow. The blood that flows through the heart constitutes the life, the energy of the body. If the blood current is interrupted for a little while, a clot is formed. This is so much of a preparation for death. There must be a continual stream of blood circulating through our bodies to keep life there.

In view of this important function of our natural hearts, the Bible very properly uses the heart, the center of life, as a symbol of the center of our affections, including the will. Our will has to do with everything we do. Whoever of the Lord's people wills to seek more and more to purify himself becomes more and more alive. If we are pure in heart, we resolve to live righteously and soberly in the present life. Whoever appreciates the principle that right is *right*, and wrong is *wrong* will desire to live right—whether Jew or Gentile or the Church of God.

The Church, having accepted God's terms, have made a consecration of their lives to Him. They have engaged to fight a good fight against the world, the flesh and the Devil. They are under special obligations as New Creatures. Their hopes and ambitions are separate from those of the world. They are therefore doubly responsible in respect to their hearts, which represent their inmost sentiments.

According to a man's innermost sentiment, so is he. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is his real character. What is your real will? What are your real sentiments? Not, What

words do you use? not, What are your *actions*? but, What is the *motive* underlying all these?

The New Creature is to be God-like, spiritual, eventually of the spirit nature in glory—perfect. But before it attains that perfection, the heart of the New Creature is required to prove its loyalty. Some will be overcomes in a higher sense than others, but none will be overcomers except those who are true, loyal, pure. If, therefore, we have made a consecration to God, it would be our endeavor that our hearts, our desires, our motives be perfect. The only proper attitude is to confess our imperfections, if we are wrong. God expects us to be loyal of *heart*. And that loyalty of heart should reach out and control the whole life.

If our thoughts are not according to our ideals, we should endeavor to make them so. We should put away anger, malice, hatred, strife, and all such works of the flesh and the Devil. With some people, in some conditions, these thoughts go very deep. It is not the transitory thoughts of the mind—the passing thoughts—that are meant in our text. Even people of very bad character may at times have deep emotions. The eyes of some persons will be suffused with tears over some trivial matter. This makes them appear to be very tender-hearted, and yet their lives may show that they would as easily be moved to some vicious deed as to sympathy.

We see this fact illustrated in the conduct of mobs. The people who hailed Jesus as King were five days later crying, "Crucify Him!" Those who shortly before had seemed to be so appreciative of Him appeared to lose that appreciation.

IMPORTANCE OF RIGHT THINKING

In reality a man is not always what on the surface he seems to be. His real character is deep down below—the purpose of his life. These are not the mere transitory thoughts, but the deep fissures of thought, if we may so designate those which involve the whole life. The Scriptures bring to our attention the fact that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds—by having them made over.—Rom. 12:2.

The Apostle, speaking of some very vicious traits of character, says, "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:11.) This cleansing, this sanctifying, comes not merely through the reading of the Truth, or the *mental* application of the Truth, but through the *heart*—thinking on the Truth. This heart-thinking, these deep resolutions, are ours as Christians, and are to be guided by certain principles. These have to do with the real man whom God is considering—not the old creature, more or less blemished, according to the degree of depravity. God looks at the New Creature.

These deep heart convictions and purposes constitute a transformation of character. This is the man's *real* condition, and so is *he*. If he have some transitory emotion of anger or of malice, it would not be his *real* thought, his *real* intention. Therefore it would not be *he*, but his old *nature*, temporarily asserting itself. As a New Creature, he is to watch his

words, his thoughts, his actions. If a transitory, wrong thought should pass through his mind, it would not be the thought of his heart. And he as a New Creature, should stop it, put it away, so that it may not take root in his heart, and choke out better sentiments.

This right thinking of the heart has very much to do with the whole life. The Apostle says that we are transformed by the renewing of our minds, to know what is the perfect will of God. This is the Christian's standpoint. How glad we are that our Heavenly Father is judging us from this standpoint! How glad we are that He is able to read the heart, that He knows our hearts, that He knows our inmost thoughts!

At one time we might have thought that we were doing God service when we were not. We show our loyalty to God by giving attention to His Word, that we may know what is His will. The more we study God's Word, the more we receive the spirit of the Truth, and the more we appreciate it. And in proportion as we understand God's regulations and desire to be guided by them, our hearts will become purified. Then the more care shall we take of our hands, what they shall do; and of our tongues, what they shall say. Thus we shall keep our hearts—submit our wills to the will of God.

The will is a part of our heart, just as the rudder is a part of the ship. The new will is the rudder to steer us this way or that way. The more we understand the Word of the Lord, the better we understand how to guide our lives. Therefore we are to keep our hearts and purify them by the *knowledge* of God's Truth, the *study* of God's Truth. To do this, the will must ever be on the alert, watching with prayer and thanksgiving.

THE CHURCH ON TRIAL FOR LIFE

Some one may ask, why should we do all this? In a general way we might answer, that we may do right—because right is *right*. But that reason is not sufficient for us. While all appreciate the superiority of right over wrong, yet in our fallen condition we need to have some inducements to action. So the Lord puts certain inducements before us. He says, "If your heart is right, I desire to give you everlasting life. If your heart is wrong, then you will not be of the kind to whom I will grant this boon. You will die the Second Death."

Six thousand years ago there was a trial. Our first father, Adam, was tried, and failed. Consequently we have no right to life. But God has arranged through our Lord Jesus that every member of Adam's race may have another trial. The Father is willing to give life everlasting to all who love righteousness.

So we thankfully accept this provision, and say, "Heavenly Father, wilt Thou indeed give us another opportunity for gaining everlasting life? We would love to have that life! We are very thankful for the opportunity! We love righteousness! If we are loyal to the principles of righteousness, shall we get everlasting life? It is our desire that Thy will be done in us—even that we love righteousness and hate iniquity." "Very well, then," the Heavenly Father says, "I will put you into the School of Christ, where you will learn righteousness."

Day by day we are learning in the School of Christ. Our different experiences are a part of the general instructions for those who love righteousness and who desire to be taught of the Lord. The issue of our trial will be life or death. The world is not now on trial. There is no possibility for the world to gain life as yet. During this Gospel Age the Church are the only ones who are under this Covenant of Sacrifice—who are on trial, therefore, for everlasting life or everlasting death. In the next Age, the world will have their opportunity for learning obedience. Then the issue for them will be life or death.

God says, "I have set before you life and death, blessing or cursing." There is a curse for every one who loves unrighteousness; there is a blessing for every one who loves righteousness. So during the thousand years of Christ's Reign the world will be on trial for everlasting life or everlasting death. All who are obedient will get everlasting life. But all who have the spirit of Satan will be destroyed in the Second Death.

Only those who are more than mere overcomers will be of the Royal Priesthood. There is no excuse for our getting into the Great Company. Let us keep our hearts with all diligence. Let us watch our hearts. If they are in full harmony with God's will, we shall have little trouble with our tongues. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."—Math. 12:34.

Our heart is the most wonderful organ of our body. The tongue is the most subtle of all our members. The Lord takes our words as an index of our heart condition. But since we are imperfect, it is not possible for us to be faultless in word and deed. Yet we are diligently and faithfully to seek to attain the perfect mastery of our words. We should be especially on guard in respect to evil speaking. Every tendency toward slander is to be checked. Whoever of us is reviled is not to revile again. These tendencies belong to the old nature. To be pleasing to the Master, we are to keep our hearts free from every form of evil. If this be done, the heart is rightly instructed of the Lord. Then we will know that we must make good whatever is wrong. We are bound, thoroughly bound, to make it good to the best of our ability. Our heart must keep itself right.

DEFICIENCY IN MODERN EDUCATION

This same principle is applicable to the whole world, though not on a scale so far reaching. Mankind are influenced by thought, by experience. So vicious children may be trained up under favorable environments to become useful citizens. We have seen where, even with people of the world, good resolutions to live honestly, justly, soberly, have had a blessed influence on the life, making noble men and women, although these may not be Christians.

We have also seen the reverse of this—those who were criminals, but not so of necessity. Some of them were born under good conditions; but have read bad books and meditated upon sinful things. Thus the thoughts of their hearts have been evil instead of good. Thus they have become inclined toward evil. As they allow their minds to run in a certain direction, and allow these thoughts to become deeply rooted in their hearts, some of them become very vicious.

We were deeply impressed with this fact in noticing the photographs of the four gunmen recently convicted of murder in New York. Had we seen their pictures before knowing who they were, we should have said, "Those are strong characters." Their hearts had gone wrong, doubtless because of wrong education and a failure to appreciate the principles of righteousness. This seems to be largely the case at the present time. Very few see the principles of righteousness at all. The majority are swayed by superstition, by fear and by hopes which are more or less ephemeral, more or less deceptive.

So we see that the general education of our day is lacking in a very important respect. Although the schools have taken away to some extent the veil of ignorance and superstition, yet they are not giving instead the full, proper view of righteousness. This is because in a general way the Divine character and the Divine laws are being ignored. There is an attempt to teach mortality entirely aside from the Divine Law. But this course seems to be undermining faith—separating the pupils from faith in a Supreme Creator. Thus we see that while the world is making wonderful progress in education, yet it is not reaching its own ideals. The human mind in its fallen and perverted condition, is unable to see the subject of morality from a standpoint which educators would put before it.

The human mind needs the influence of its higher organs to assist the lower organs. Hence, although these educational influences are beneficial in many respects, yet they are very injurious in others. They do not inculcate veneration for God and for the Divine will. Therefore people are unable to grasp the best principles. The only persons who are in the right attitude are those who are seeking to have new thoughts, to have thoughts conformed to the Divine arrangement, taking the mind of Christ instead of their own imaginations and judgment, and thus growing up into Him in all things. This is our happy position.

INFLUENCE OF THOUGHT UPON HEALTH

There is another view of the text—"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"—given by Christian Scientist; namely, that according to our minds, so be it unto us. They get some good out of this view. They say that if one thinks about kind, noble things, he will be influenced thus. We think our Christian Scientist friends are partly right and partly wrong. They hold that if one thinks himself to be well, he will be well; that if one thinks himself to be sick, he will be sick. There is a *measure* of truth in this view.

One-half the people in the world are sick because they think they are so. If they thought, not about their aches and pains, but about more helpful things, they would no doubt be better and stronger in every way. The mind has something to do with our condition. Whoever mopes about a headache will undoubtedly make it worse. Whoever tries to put the thought of his condition away and to give attention to other things will undoubtedly help himself.

The less we think about our aches and pains the better for us. If we talk about them we aggravate them. It is also bad to exercise too much sympathy with each other. Of course,

there are times when it would be cruel not to show sympathy. But it is not wise to encourage those who are weak to complain about their condition. We become stronger in proportion as we try to avoid thinking of our ailments.

The mistake made by our Christian Scientist friends is that they carry this principle too far. *Thinking* ourselves sound will not *make* us so. And it would not be right to lie about the matter, and to say that we have no aches and pains when we have them. The middle line is the one which the Bible encourages—not to say that we have neither aches nor pains, not to say that death is "mortal error," and that there is no death. But we can help the dying process along, or we can seek to cultivate the more helpful thoughts, and thus exercise a helpful influence upon ourselves and others.

One notices this principle in action in a sick room. Some people will go into the sick room, express a great deal of sympathy, and leave the sick person under the impression that he is in a much worse condition than he really is; whereas they should have helped the person by encouraging remarks. It is not necessary to say to the sick, "You are looking extremely bad!" But we might say, "Are you feeling better this morning? Have you had a good rest?" Many people do not know how much they do rest, and do not feel thankful enough. So we might suggest, "I hope you are feeling thankful to the Lord, and that you are glad because of this beautiful day. See how the sun shines into your room! Hear the birds sing!" The condition of some people when they are sick is that of "groanings which cannot be uttered." Sick people need some one to bring sunshine into the room.

So, then, dear friends, let us resolve that since we have covenanted with the Lord to become dead to the old life, to the old ambitions, to the things of the past, these are to be all given over. We will wish to think as the Lord would have us think, to view all the affairs of life as He would have us view them, and to be influenced by the ambitions which He sets before us in His Word. Thus doing, we shall as New Creatures grow into the character-likeness of the Lord.

DECEMBER 13

Lay not this sin to their charge—Acts 7:60.

How great a blessing it would be for all spiritual Israelites to learn well this lesson; namely, that if we accept the results of any matter as being good, and if we realize that we were guided to those results by Divine providence, we should think and feel most generously, most kindly, toward those who were the instruments used by providence, notwithstanding the fact that they might have been unwilling instructors or, like Joseph's brethren, have verily intended opposite results. Those who are enabled to take such a view of affairs and forces operating in their daily lives are enabled "always to triumph through the Lord," as the Apostle expresses it. And such find no room for bitterness or railing, either against Satan or against any of his servants—Z '01, 331 (R 2895).

St. Stephen is a splendid example of forgiving one's enemies. It is easy to think and to say: "I will forgive my enemies," when one has none. It is quite a different thing to refrain from resentment in the heart toward those who wrong us. It is harder still to cherish no resentment toward people, *while to their and our knowledge, they are doing us wrong*. But the hardest of all things is *to wish and do them good*, while they are in the act of wronging us. Such was the sublime height of character to which St. Stephen climbed. While the rocks and stones were striking him with most painful force, he prayed God to forgive his tormentors. If we would attain to a like character, we must be very self-oblivious, meek, zealous, loving and faithful. These qualities practiced in the small things of life gradually impart to our characters strength that is equal to the demands of our hardest experiences. While failure to meet our daily small trials aright will result in defeat in great crises—P '34, 175.

Parallel passages: Matt. 5:40-48; 6:12, 14, 15; 18:21-35; Luke 6:28; 23:34; Rom. 12:14, 17, 19, 20; Ex. 23:4, 5; Prov. 19:11; 24:17; Eccles. 7:21; Mark 11:25; Luke 6:35-37; 17:3, 4; 1 Cor. 4:12; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13; Phile. 1:10; 1 Pet. 3:9.

Hymns: 190, 132, 290, 101, 113, 165, 166.

Poems of Dawn, 94: *Trust*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 185 (R 5259).

Questions: Have I been forgiving this week? How? Why? What helped or hindered? With what results?

TRUST

"BLESSED ARE THEY WHO HAVE NOT SEEN AND YET HAVE BELIEVED."

CHILD of Mine, I love thee, listen now to Me,
And make answer truly while I question thee.
For I see that shadows do thy soul oppress,
And thy faith so weakens, that I cannot bless.

Thou hast craved My power and presence in thy soul.
Wilt thou yield thee truly unto My control?
Wilt thou let Me ever with thee have My way,
Yield thyself in all things simply to obey?

Though My presence oft times seem to be withdrawn,
Of Mine inward workings not a trace be shown,
Wilt thou count Me present notwithstanding all,
Still believe I'm working ever in thy soul?

When I give to others what I thee deny,
Flood them with My sunshine, wholly pass thee by,
Wilt thou still believe in My strong love for thee,
Yield thee to My purpose whatsoever it be?

When I to thy pleadings seem no heed to pay,
And thy foes grow bolder, claim thee as their prey,
Though toward thee I'm silent, wilt thou stand the test,
On My Word of promise lay thee down to rest?

If to these My questions thou canst answer "Yes,"
Thou shalt be forever one I love the best.
To the inner circle of My favored few,
Thou shalt be admitted, and My glory view.

R5259: INDIVIDUAL CLAIMS FOR RETRIBUTION

"Lay not this sin to their charge."—Acts 7:60.

THE words of St. Stephen on the occasion of his martyrdom, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," must not be understood to mean that he was in any way dictating to the Almighty how to deal with those who were taking his life. Nor are we to think that he was praying for the forgiveness of all the sins of these people. We are to narrow the matter down to the words used—"Lay not *this sin* to their charge."

So far as St. Stephen was concerned, he had no special claim to make upon Justice for retribution. The question then arises, has any one such a claim? The answer is that it would seem that any one who suffers injustice has a claim for retribution. In our common courts, there are some crimes and acts of injustice which are taken up for consideration, though there are others which would never be touched, unless the individual concerned took up a charge.

In St. Stephen's case, we understand that the wrongs done him are charged up against the wrong-doers. They were already tainted with original sin, as members of the human

family; they were already under condemnation to death. The Lord Jesus had already begun the work of making satisfaction for their sins and for the sins of the whole world. In His own time and way, God will judge these sinners. Hence they shall have a just recompense, in proportion as they were guilty of wrong-doing.

Jesus intimates that crimes against any of the members of His Body will have to be expiated. The doing of injury to one of the Lord's people is especially evil in God's sight, and especially punishable; for these are in special covenant relationship with Him, while the world is outside of this protection of Divine Justice, except in a general way.

The words attributed to our Lord, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," given in our Common Version Bible, are not found in the oldest Greek MSS. It would be rather more difficult for Jesus to offer such a prayer than for us to do so; for the Scriptures declare that He knew what was in man. We do not know. Any prayer that we might offer respecting man would be very different from what Jesus would offer. Therefore, we must leave these words out of consideration when thinking of St. Stephen's words.

GENERAL AND SPECIAL RIGHTS UNDER THE LAW

We ask ourselves, to what extent was St. Stephen right and within his privileges in offering such a prayer? If he were one of the Apostles, we should be bound not to make inquiry, but to suppose that he was right. The fact that the words are recorded in Scripture does not prove anything more than if they were from one of us.

In our Common Law, there seems to be this principle—each individual seems to have certain rights in addition to the general rights under the Law. These special rights he may or may not press, if occasion should arise. In St. Stephen's case, we understand that he had a right to waive the claims of Justice, and did so. It is as though he had said, "I put in no protest, and ask for no vengeance on my account."

The question then arises, did he have a right to wish for vengeance on them? We think not. Our Lord's instructions are, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." (Luke 6:36.) But so far as the general principles of righteousness are concerned, we must not interfere. St. Stephen very properly limits his prayer in this sense, as if he were saying (paraphrasing), "Heavenly Father, I am not asking for vengeance on them, but that they may not be held especially responsible for this sin against me."

DEFENSE OF THE INTERESTS OF THE TRUTH A DUTY

We are admonished by our Lord to love our enemies, and to do good to them who hate us, and to pray for them who despitefully use us and persecute us. The question then comes in, Would it ever be right for us to appeal to Justice? Should we always say, "Father, forgive them; I forgive them"? Should we wish that the *courts* should do nothing against them? No! Where the interests of the Lord's Cause are involved, it is our duty to say something in defense of the Truth; but not in a personal matter.

Of course, the world will not understand our motive, for the world does not act except for personal reasons. Consequently, they would suppose that we acted for our own sakes. But we have given up all our earthly rights, in consecration; that is, we covenanted to give up every claim to our just rights in the world. This is the substance of our consecration.

Where the interests of the Lord's Cause are involved, however, it is our duty to act for the good of the Truth, for the reason that certain impressions inimical to the Truth may be stopped. We see illustrations of this principle in the case of the Apostle Paul at court; also when he said to Elymas the sorcerer, "O thou child of the Devil, ... wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? ... thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season." (Acts 13:10, 11.) In these cases, and also in that of Alexander the coppersmith, we may be sure that the Apostle was not seeking personal revenge.

This attitude should also be ours in all the affairs of life. If anything is done in opposition to those who oppose themselves, it should be done in the same spirit that the Apostle showed in the course which he took. We all find that as we grow in grace and in knowledge we develop a spirit of charity—forgiveness. This is as it should be. Greater knowledge of God, greater development in character-likeness of Christ, should make us the more generous, forgiving.

IGNORANCE THE REAL CAUSE OF MUCH INJUSTICE

The Lord blesses us in giving us a clearer knowledge of the Truth. When we come to the knowledge of the Truth, it gives us a sympathetic feeling for the world. We are all fallen. But the Apostle says, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (I Cor. 6:11.) Others, who are not cleansed, not sanctified, not justified, are in the gall of bitterness, so to speak.

When we consider all the evil deeds done in the world, and when we look back through the pages of history, we can see that the majority of those who perpetrated evil did so because they did not appreciate the principles involved in the matter. St. Peter, speaking by inspiration, says that in ignorance Israel killed the Prince of Life. (Acts 3:15, 17.) St. Paul, who gave the authority of the Sanhedrin for the stoning of St. Stephen, tells us that he did these things in ignorance, in blindness; and that he verily thought that he was doing God service.

If this was true of all these cases in the past, may we not think that quite certainly the same principle is operating now—individually, personally? The Lord is able to stop these things, and will do so in due time. He will lift the veil and let the light shine out in due time. But it is not the due time as yet. The Church has not yet completed the sufferings of Christ.

OUR SHARE OF THE CUP OF SUFFERING

We should rejoice in having a share in the sufferings of Christ, and should receive our share in meekness and uncomplaining obedience, realizing that the Father hath poured the cup which we are to drink. If we love our enemies and do not wish to do them harm, but on the contrary wish to open the eyes of their understanding and to do them good, then we have the right spirit. Any desire to do them injury would prove that we are lacking in the Lord's Spirit. Whoever finds that he has a spirit of viciousness will find that he has much to learn. But whoever finds in himself evidence of the Spirit of the Lord in this matter, may rejoice.

By and by, these very ones who are persecuting, slandering, doing evil towards us, will see clearly, and they will be ashamed. As the Scriptures say, "Your brethren that hated you and cast you out for My Name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." (Isa. 66:5.) The time when they shall be ashamed is the time when Christ shall appear and they shall see. "And when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." So, then, our opportunity for revenge will be future, and our revenge will be to do our enemies good. We will do them so much good that they will be thoroughly ashamed of what they are now doing against us.

DECEMBER 14

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy—Matt. 5:7.

All do not know it, but it is a fact that the grandest quality that man can exercise, and the one which brings the largest amount of blessing itself, is the exercise of the God-like quality of *mercy*, compassion, benevolence. The Lord lays great stress upon this quality of mercy, declaring that whatever else may be our attainments of knowledge or of grace, if we have not this one we can never be acceptable to Him—if we do not have mercy upon others neither will our Heavenly Father have mercy upon us. And to insure that we do not consider this mercy to be merely an outward form, an expression of forgiveness and benevolence, our Lord expounds the matter, saying, "If ye do not from the heart forgive one another, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." ... Only the merciful shall obtain mercy; and if we have not mercy at the hands of the Lord, all is lost; for by nature we were children of wrath, even as others, and under just condemnation—Z '01, 332; '00, 70 (R 2895, 2585).

Mercy is possible of exercise amid conditions of evil only; for it is compassion relieving the weak and unfortunate. Weaknesses and misfortunes are along physical, mental, moral and religious lines; and all these lines of weakness and misfortune call upon us to exercise mercy. It is a matter of growth in its refinement of quality. At first, physical weakness and misfortune call forth its exercise; a little later it learns to listen to the cries of mental weakness and misfortune; still later it learns to heed the call of moral weakness and misfortune; and last of all it becomes solicitous of religious weakness and misfortune. In every case it is thrice blessed: it blesses him that gives, him that takes, and him that sees. Usually in his need the merciful man receives mercy from his fellows; but from God he receives mercy in his need always; and usually the Lord gives His mercy along the same lines as the merciful one has manifested it to others—P '33, 177.

Parallel passages: Psa. 18:25; 41:1; Prov. 3:3; 11:17; 14:21, 22, 31; 21:21; Mark 11:25, 26; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12, 13; 2 Tim. 1:16; Heb. 6:10, 11; Jas. 2:13; Matt. 18:35; Mic. 6:8; Luke 6:36; Rom. 12:8.

Hymns: 198, 15, 277, 28, 210, 260, 119.

Poems of Dawn, 146: *Scatter Seeds of Kindness*.

Tower Reading: Z '05, 230 (R 3603).

Questions: What merciful deeds have I done this week? Why? How? With what results?

SCATTER SEEDS OF KINDNESS

LOVING words will cost but little,
Journeying up the hill of life;
But they make the weak and weary
Stronger, braver for the strife.
Do you count them only trifles?

What to earth are sun and rain?
Never was a kind word wasted,
Never was one said in vain.

When the cares of life are many,
And its burdens heavy grow
For the ones who walk beside you,
If you love them, tell them so.
What you count of little value
Hath an almost magic power,
And beneath that cheering sunshine
Hearts will blossom like a flower.

So, as up life's hill we journey,
Let us scatter all the way
Kindly words, to be as sunshine
In the dark and cloudy day.
Grudge no loving word, my brother,
As along through life you go,
To the ones who journey with you;
If you love them, tell them so.

R3603: "FULL OF MERCY AND GOOD FRUITS."

"Wisdom is the Principal Thing: Therefore Get Wisdom."—Prov. 4:7

**"The Wisdom that is from Above is First Pure, Then Peaceable, Gentle, Easy of
Entreatment, Full of Mercy and Good Fruits."—Jas. 3:17**

These heavenly counsels have been in the Lord's Word for centuries, they have been in our hands and before our eyes for years. We know them, we assent to them and yet how many—how few—seem to know how to apply them in the ordinary affairs of life. Surely as the Lord looks down upon us he must say, These people require line upon line, precept upon precept, instruction and repetition continually. Alas that it is so! We all might well be thoroughly discouraged were it not for the assurance we have that the Lord looks deeper than the outward conduct, that he is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and that according to what he sees to be our desires and efforts is his judgment respecting us. The thoughts and intents of our hearts are sometimes short of the standard that we ourselves approve, and O how short of any standard we could approve would be much of our conduct if we could but see ourselves as others see us and especially as the Lord sees us!

We are not writing with a view to discouraging any dear brother or sister who is painfully, laboriously, striving to climb up Zion's hill along the narrow way. On the contrary, we have nothing but sympathy for them, and are assured that the Lord regards

both them and us compassionately—"he remembereth our frame, he knoweth that we are dust." The Lord recognizes that we are imperfect, fallen creatures, and he is not expecting perfection of us. He has made provision for the covering of such of our imperfections as we do not at heart assent to; he has also given us instruction respecting his will, and he is carefully scrutinizing us day by day to see to what extent our love for him and for the principles of righteousness, which he has enunciated and which we have acknowledged, are entering into and controlling the forces and conduct of our lives; for, after all, the words of our mouths are but the echoes of our hearts, and to whatever extent our hearts are clean our words will be pure, and to whatever extent our hearts are loving and gentle and kind our words and conduct will be in accord with these divinely approved qualities.

FIRST PURE, THEN PEACEABLE.

Let us examine ourselves afresh to know the condition of our hearts, remembering the word of the Lord, that if we judge ourselves we would not require that he should judge us, but that if we neglect to judge ourselves he will chasten us, because we put our cause in his hand, because we are his. The word pure has in it the thought of innocent, without deceit; it has in it the thought of virtue and chastity; it contains the thought of clean, true and truthful. We cannot hope that any, either in the Church or out of it, are actually pure in the absolute sense of this word, but we do rejoice that our dear Master gave the key to a proper understanding of the matter when he said, "Blessed are the pure in heart." So long as we are in this present, mortal, imperfect condition absolute purity is impossible; for us to be pure of heart is possible—purity of intention, purity of motive.

When we begin a self-examination to see whether or not we are using our time and talents and influence wisely, this is the first point for scrutiny, Are we pure in heart, in our daily course of life? Are we sincere in the prayers that we utter to the Lord, in our endeavors to please him? In our relationship toward the Father are we candid and honest? Do we love him with a pure love, heartily, fervently, or do we not? Let each decide this point for himself before proceeding to the next. If upon examination we find that our hearts have not been pure in respect to our covenants and relationship to the Lord and his Word and to the Father, let us go no farther until we have asked divine forgiveness and resolve that by the Lord's assisting grace we will be nothing less than pure in heart, pure in endeavor.

If we can assure ourselves that our motives and intentions have nothing of selfishness connected with them, that our purposes are pure in the sight of the Lord, then, indeed, our hearts may rejoice whatever may have been our weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh, in our relationship toward the Lord or the Father or our neighbors or the world.

The next point is, Are we peaceable? Have we thus far in the year been seeking to cultivate peace, or, as the Scriptures put it, "Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"? Have we lived thus far in the year as peaceable, as pure of heart toward God and his Word and his brethren as is possible for us? If so we have cause for rejoicing afresh and being of good courage; if not, here is another lesson and opportunity for going to the throne of grace to acknowledge our fault,

to pray for more of this wisdom from above, which is first pure and then so far as possible peaceable toward all—peace loving, peace disposed.

"EASY OF ENTREATMENT."

How has it been with us so far? Have we been hard-hearted, cold and repulsive, or have we been gentle, kind, sympathetic with those with whom we are in contact, easy to be entreated, willing, yes, anxious to do everything which in our judgments would seem to be in the interest and for the welfare of others—proper, reasonable and right to do? If so, happy are we, but let us not too hastily conclude, not too hastily congratulate ourselves along this line, until we have made close inspection of the pathway of the last six months. Have any appealed to us for forgiveness and been refused? If so ours is a very dangerous position. The Lord declares most positively that while that is our attitude we can expect no mercy from him. He insists upon this—"After this manner pray ye, Forgive us our trespasses as we also forgive those who trespass against us."

Emphasizing the matter, we remember that the Master explained, "Unless ye forgive men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses." What a thought! Do we need mercy? Do we need to have our faults and weaknesses of the flesh covered? Do we rejoice in the privilege of approaching the throne of heavenly grace to obtain mercy? Then, as a condition to those privileges and blessings, we must be in the attitude of heart where we not only will forgive those who trespass against us, but forgive them gladly, freely, heartily. Our Lord specially warns us against a forgiving with the lips which does not include a forgiving from the heart, saying, "Except ye shall from your hearts forgive," etc.—Matt. 18:35.

Let no one deceive himself—mercy is a prime essential to everyone who would be counted amongst the Lord's saints, and who would count himself as having any of the evidences of acceptance with the Lord to a participation in the glorious high calling. If we have been derelict in this matter in the past, let us be the more zealous now to correct matters, and the more on our guard as respects the future that we may not err farther in this same direction.

"FULL OF MERCY AND GOOD FRUITS."

Ah! Here we have the pith of the whole matter: Full of mercy does not signify that we are not wholly without mercy, merciless; nor does it signify that we should have a little tinge or coloring of mercy in connection with our thoughts, words and doings. On the contrary, it does mean that the Lord is very merciful, Love is his name, and that in proportion as we have received his spirit, in that proportion we are full of love and full of mercy. He that lacks mercy lacks the spirit of the Lord, as though when we read, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his," we should substitute the word mercy and say, If any man have not mercy he is none of Christ's. O, Merciful Lord, help us, we pray thee, that we may have more and more of thy spirit of compassion and sympathy and love, that we may more and more become copies of thy dear Son and thus copies of our Father whose mercy endureth forever, and obedient followers of him who said that

unto seventy times seven we should be ready to fully and freely forgive from the heart those who transgress against us and repent!

Full of good fruits! Yes, mercy is one of the good fruits of the Lord's Spirit, but there are others, and it is a consolation that being filled with mercy does not mean that we shall be unable to contain the other graces, but rather that the fuller we are of mercy the more of the other graces of the Lord's spirit we may possess. Mercy is not one of the good fruits, although it is classed high. It is really a negative quality: it signifies merely that we do not resent the evils of others, that we are willing to forgive, to have compassion. Still more is necessary, we must also have the active traits of character that will reach out toward others, not to injure them, not to pull them down, not to slander them, not to backbite them, but to do them good. The fruits of the spirit of evil are anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. Whoever finds any of these lurking anywhere in his heart should both labor and pray to have himself cleansed from the leaven of corruption that he might be completely filled with the fruits of the spirit, good fruits, meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love, that these things might be in him and abound.

If we have mercy towards a dear brother or sister who may have transgressed against us, we are not to feel boastful of the matter, but to realize that we also have been forgiven much and are objects of divine mercy, and we are to go on to cultivate in our hearts and to be filled with the other good fruits. We ought to learn to exercise patience toward a brother, to help him over his natural difficulties and weaknesses in a most kind, gentle, sympathetic manner, remembering ourselves also lest we should be tempted. We should be on the alert to exercise brotherly kindness, not merely toward those whose natural dispositions we admire because like or superior to our own; but rather our love for the Lord and love for the brethren should lead us to sacrifice our natural tastes and inclinations to some degree, that we might give aid and encouragement and assistance in the good way to those members of the body who are naturally less amiable or who have made less progress or whose weaknesses or shortcomings are more apparent.

This will be brotherly kindness, and it will also be God-likeness, for thus the Almighty and our Lord Jesus, while having the common fellowship with the holy in heaven, condescended to us and continually bow down to hear us, to sympathize with us and to assist us. Let us be more and more God-like then in our relationship and dealings with and toward each other, and finally these various elements of love will form in us more and more completely until, by the grace of God, eventually we shall be filled with his spirit, the spirit of love—until we shall have that perfect law in full control of all our words and thoughts and doings, and thus attaining let us stand fast, waiting for the glorious conditions of the first resurrection, which the Lord has promised to all such overcomers of the world and its spirit of sin and bitterness and evil.

DECEMBER 15

The Lord is my shepherd—Psa. 23:1.

The Lord, in calling His people His sheep, chose a very significant emblem of the character He would have manifested in them. The most noticeable characteristics of the sheep are meekness, docility and obedience to the shepherd to whose care they fully entrust themselves. ... The true sheep will carefully listen for the faintest accents of the voice of the Shepherd—*i.e.*, he will treasure up His words in his heart, he will study His providences; and he will cultivate that communion and personal fellowship with the Lord which are his privilege. Those who thus abide in Him can never go astray. "They can never, never lose their way"—Z '02, 365 (R 3116).

Jehovah is our Shepherd, and certainly, as our Shepherd, is good; for He is gentle, loving, active, self-denying, intelligent, strong and constant toward us. And He renders us the service that we as His sheep need; He gives us prenatal care, accompanies us, gathers us, bears us up when weak, calls us by name, gives us food and drink, prepares our course for us, leads us in right paths, restores us to health, eases our hardships, rests our weariness, comforts us in trouble, warns us of, and protects us from, danger, watches over us, guards our surroundings, trains us, washes us from earth's defilements, seeks us when astray, restrains us from injuring our fellow sheep, separates us from the sheep of others, delivers us from hirelings, entrusts us to good shepherds, and causes us to be profitable. Yes, Jehovah, our Shepherd, is good—P '32, 197.

Parallel passages: Gen. 49:24; Psa. 23:2-6; 27:1; 37:25; 56:4, 11; 118:6; Isa. 40:11; Luke 15:3-7; John 10:1-16; Heb. 13:6, 20; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4.

Hymns: 257, 284, 286, 288, 121, 293, 294.

Poems of Dawn, 277: *May Heaven Sustain Thee.*

Tower Reading: Z '14, 198 (R 5490).

Questions: Have I had special Shepherd care this week? How? How did I respond?

MAY HEAVEN SUSTAIN THEE

MAY Heaven sustain thee day by day,
And make thy generous heart of love
Rejoice through all the pleasant way
That God directs thy feet to move,
Inclining thee, just, generous, true,
Nobly thy Christian work to do;
Honored and loved and blessed of God,
O! sweet may be the pathway trod;
May heavenly light around thee shine,
Divinely blessing thee and thine!

R5490: THE GREAT SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP

"The Lord is my Shepherd."—Psalm 23:1

THROUGHOUT the Old Testament the word rendered Lord is in the Hebrew *Jehovah*, and therefore applies to the Heavenly Father and not to the Heavenly Son. The thought presented in our text—as in other Scriptures—is that the great Over-Shepherd appointed His Son to be the Under-Shepherd of the Sheep, even as the Son has appointed under-shepherds in the Church subject to Him. The work of shepherding is not exercised toward the world. The great Under-Shepherd does not shepherd goats or wolves. The only ones who are shepherded are the sheep; and special care is taken of the Flock of God. The great Over-Shepherd looks out for the interests of His sheep, provides for them, leads them into green pastures, as the Psalmist tells us. He also protects them from wolves and other ravenous beasts.

If we would inquire, Who are these sheep? we find that the Scriptures give us good evidence that originally the Jewish nation constituted this flock, and that King David recognized himself as one of the sheep. Israel was not chosen by the Lord because they were better than the rest of mankind; but God made an exception of that people on account of Father Abraham, for whose sake He became the "Shepherd of Israel." Because of Abraham's great faith in God and his implicit obedience under the most crucial tests, the Lord promised to make of his seed a peculiar people above all the peoples of the earth. He promised to bless them, to assume a particular care over their affairs, and eventually to use them in blessing all other nations. So God made the Hebrews His chosen people. In proportion as they were obedient to His commands, He blessed them; and whenever they went astray, He chastised them and brought them back again under His care.

But Abraham was to have another Seed, a spiritual Seed, who were to reign over the natural seed, and to bless all nations and kindreds through the natural seed. The special application of this text, then, we understand to be to Spiritual Israel, just as all the chiefest of God's promises are to Spiritual Israel. Natural Israel were the children of Abraham according to the flesh; but the spiritual children of Abraham are those begotten of the Holy Spirit to a new nature—the spiritual nature. So while the Lord had a care over the affairs of Natural Israel, and still has a care, He has a still more particular care over the affairs of Spiritual Israel.

Hence, we understand that the speaker of this text, viewed from the prophetic standpoint, is primarily the Lord Jesus; and that all His consecrated followers throughout this Gospel Age, all the members of His Body, are also represented in the speaker. All these are likewise privileged to use these words: "Jehovah is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake."

BEWARE OF WOLVES

In this 23d Psalm there is a distinction implied between *sheep* and *wolves*. The world likes to be considered strong and well able to defend themselves and their rights. On their escutcheons we never see a sheep portrayed. We see lions; we see the eagle, with its outspread wings and its sharp claws and beak; we see dragons and bears and serpents—everything to indicate ferocity, rapacity, cunning, desire for conquest. The Lord passes by all these strong, fierce nations—the lion, the eagle, the bear, etc., and has called out a new nation, altogether distinct from any of these.

God has chosen for the members of this nation those—few in number—who are sheeplike in disposition and who desire to come into His Fold. For these He has provided a particular way in which to enter this Fold. He does not have bears in His Fold, nor tigers nor wolves nor birds of prey. God does not recognize such; they are not to be fed and cared for as He cares for His sheep. He is the Shepherd only of the sheep.

If, therefore, we would claim the promise of this beautiful Psalm, we must make sure that we are of sheeplike disposition and desirous of being led of the True Shepherd. We are to be careful to note that there is only one Shepherd who is able to care for our interests and who can be safely entrusted with them. A strange shepherd would lead the sheep astray, would lead them into difficulties, dangers and disaster. For this reason we do not trust everybody who wears the garb of a shepherd. There is but one Shepherd that we can trust.

THE TENDER SHEPHERD'S CARE

The great Over-Shepherd is willing to receive all the straying sheep that long to come back to the Fold. He has appointed as the Under-Shepherd the One who died for us, that He might fully deliver all the sheep from the Evil One—the roaring lion who walketh about seeking whom he may devour. Our gracious Savior left the Courts of Glory and came down to earth, and for thirty-three years He traversed with weary feet this vale of tears. He mingled with the poor and lowly; He wept with the sorrowing and the sinful; He had no place to lay His head. He bore the griefs and sicknesses of those about Him. He suffered and sorrowed; He bore shame and ignominy—and all this even unto death! And why? It was that He might save the "lost sheep." His blessed fellowship with the shining hosts of Heaven was all relinquished during these years of earthly pilgrimage, that the wandering sheep might be found and brought back to the Fold of God.

"There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the Fold;
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off in the dark and cold—
Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

* * *

"But none of the ransomed ever knew

How deep were the waters crossed;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through,
Ere He found His sheep that was lost.
Out in the desert He heard its cry—
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.

* * *

"Then all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There arose a glad cry to the gates of Heaven,
'Rejoice! I have found My sheep!'
And the angels echoed around the Throne,
'Rejoice, for the Lord brings back His own!'"

* * *

How grateful we should be for such a Shepherd! How can we sufficiently show forth His praise! Truly we can never know this side the veil, "how dark was the night that the Lord passed through," that He might redeem us to God. And from the time we become His sheep He tenderly cares for all our interests, shielding us from every foe and the dangerous pitfalls that lie in our path.

MANKIND THE STRAYING SHEEP

All of the race of Adam are this "lost sheep." Soon the great Heavenly Shepherd will have gathered His sheep of the present Age into the Fold beyond the veil, and then He will have another flock—the world in general. "Other sheep I have, which are not of *this* fold; them also I must bring," said the Master. Ultimately, all who become godly indeed will be glad to be counted among the Lord's sheep. They will understand God's great Plan for the salvation of men, and will appreciate the marvelous blessing conferred upon the world by the great Over-Shepherd, in sending His Son to die for all mankind, that they through Him might live.

All who will accept the gracious arrangements and obey the rules and regulations of the Lord's Kingdom, doing their best, will be brought into the sheep-fold. In proportion as they are obedient they will be raised out of degradation up to perfection. Thus all who become sheep in the next Age will be cared for—nothing shall offend or injure them. The Lord will not permit anything to harm them. They shall feed in green pastures and drink of the pure, refreshing waters of Truth. They shall have a goodly heritage.

But the sheep of the present Age, who are to be exalted, and are to do a shepherding work for these sheep of the incoming Age, are given a distinct and peculiar training, to fit them for their future great work. From the time they are accepted to this higher plane, they are dealt with accordingly. This means that they must have certain trials and afflictions, according to the flesh. And if these sheep recognize that these difficult

experiences of the way are necessary, they can well rejoice. If they have full confidence in the Shepherd, they know that He will permit them to have no needless experiences, and none which will be to their injury; but that He will over-rule all their affairs, and will cause all things to work together for their good, because they love Him, because they are the called according to God's Purpose.

These are the Little Flock, sheep of the highest order. They represent only a small portion of mankind—those who have the special qualities of earnestness, humility and love of righteousness. Having come into this Fold of God, we have every reason for confidence in the great Shepherd, and should recognize His constant care over us, His supreme interest in our spiritual welfare. Let us be good sheep! Let us not stray from the Fold, to the right hand or to the left, nor be attracted away from the green pastures and pure waters to go browsing on the thistles and poisonous weeds of some by-path, or to drink of the muddy, polluted waters of human speculation and delusive theories of men.

THE SHEEP CHARACTERISTICS

"My sheep hear My Voice and follow Me," said the Master. If we are the Lord's true sheep, we shall know His Voice. We shall not make a mistake. A stranger will we not follow, but will flee from him; for we know not the voice of strangers. (John 10:27, 5.) In designating His people "The sheep of My pasture" (Jeremiah 23:1), the Heavenly Father chose a very significant and fitting emblem of the kind of characters He is now seeking. The special characteristics of the sheep are meekness, docility, lack of self-confidence, and obedience to the shepherd in whom they fully trust. The true sheep will listen intently for the faintest sound of the shepherd's voice. It will respond quickly to his call; it will watch for his guidance. Let *us* manifest all these most desirable traits of character, and ever keep close to our Heavenly Shepherd and Guide, dwelling under His loving care and watchful eye. Those who thus abide in Christ are safe.

"Trusting Him, they cannot stray;
They can never, never lose their way."

DECEMBER 16

How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, follow him—1 Kings 18:21.

We need to have some touchstone, as it were, some matter which will help us to decide, which will enable the mind to reach a decision quickly. This touchstone should be *God's will*, so that to perceive the Lord's will in respect to any question would be to settle it—as quickly as discerned. ... Ability to decide quickly, and to decide always on the right side, what the Lord's will is, requires some experience and discipline; but the sooner we begin the sooner we shall become proficient. The more energetically we set ourselves to know the Lord's will and to do it, and to show Him by our promptness that we delight to do His will, the better and the more quickly shall we find our characters established on proper lines—Z '02, 42 (R 2950).

To serve Jehovah implies deadness to self and the world and aliveness to God. He serves God who, refusing to obey the flesh and the world, obeys God. By Baal, primarily Satan as the god of this world is meant. To serve Baal implies aliveness to self, the world and the Adversary. More particularly those serve Baal, who, whether knowingly or unknowingly, imitate Satan by grasping for power, or who support others in their grasping for power. Leaders among God's people are Satan's especial targets for temptation along this line; and some of such leaders among them have more or less yielded to this temptation. The special trial of this, the Epiphany period of our Lord's Second Advent, is along this line. Promptly let us herein act—P '26, 173.

Parallel passages: Ex. 22:29; Matt. 6:24; 8:21, 22; 19:16-22; Luke 9:61, 62; Acts 24:25; Josh. 24:15; Isa. 50:7; 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Pet. 1:10.

Hymns: 14, 8, 48, 114, 134, 302, 312.

Poems of Dawn, 26: *Jesus Only*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 296 (R 5322).

Questions: What were this week's experiences that called for a decision? How were they met? What effects did they work?

JESUS ONLY

JESUS only! In the shadow
Of the cloud so chill and dim,
We are clinging, loving, trusting,
He with us and we with Him;
All unseen, though ever nigh,
Jesus only—all our cry.

Jesus only! In the glory,
When the shadows all are flown,

Seeing Him in all His beauty,
Satisfied with Him alone;
May we join His ransomed throng,
Jesus only—all our song!

R5322: A GOD-FEARING BAD MAN

Numbers 22:1 — 23:10.

"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."—James 1:8.

AFTER the Israelites had entered Canaan and were fully recognized as God's holy nation, it would appear that all dealings between God and the Gentiles were discontinued. Before that, apparently men of faith in God were more or less recognized by Him—for instance, Abraham, Job, Melchizedec and Balaam—the latter constituting the central figure of today's lesson. Balaam lived on the Euphrates River, in the country which Abraham left when he came to Canaan. He was known far and near as one whose messages either for good or for evil were sure to come to pass. In other words, he was considered an oracle.

When the king of the Moabites perceived the Israelites conquering all with whom they battled, he greatly feared them, even though they had not molested the Moabites. He conferred with the ruler of the Midianites, and then sent messages four hundred miles to the Euphrates to get Balaam to come to pronounce a curse against the Israelites. A considerable reward was offered.

The Prophet Balaam inquired of the Lord whether or not he should go on this mission. The reply was, No; Israel was blessed of the Lord, not cursed. Balaam gave the decision, and the messengers returned. Balak was all the more insistent and sent fresh messengers of higher station, intimating higher rewards. Balaam knew the mind of the Lord on the subject, but was a money-lover and somehow hoped for a chance to get some of the rewards of unrighteousness. In response to this second inquiry, whether or not he could go with the men, he obtained permission to go.

It was on this journey that Balaam was reproved by his ass. An angel of the Lord stood in the pathway, in a narrow place where the ass, seeing the angel, could not pass him. Balaam's eyes not being opened, he saw not the angel. The ass, being beaten, remonstrated. Even this miracle did not stop Balaam's money-lust. He coveted the wealth, and would do anything in his power to obtain it—merely stopping where he must.

Balaam was received by Balak, king of Moab, with honor. He directed that altars be built and sacrifices be offered to God. He would have a form of godliness, even while desiring to do contrary to the Divine will, which he already knew. The sacrifices offered, he began his prophecy, which the king hoped would be a curse, but which was really a blessing, the words being Divinely inspired. As wrote St. Peter, "Holy men of God spake

as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:21.) The king complained that instead of a curse would come a blessing. Balaam remonstrated that he had said from the beginning that he would be powerless to utter anything except the Divine message.

The disappointed king, fearful of Israel, sought the exercise of black art in some manner against them. He took the Prophet to another viewpoint and urged the curse of at least this many of the host. Altars were built again; sacrifices were offered again. And again the hoped-for curse instead of blessing did not come. Getting desperate and angry, the king insisted that at least a portion must be cursed, and led the Prophet to another standpoint, from which a still smaller wing of the host of Israel was visible. But here again the results were blessings, not curses—for the third time.

A DOUBLE-MINDED MAN

The double-mindedness of the Prophet, Balaam, was abundantly manifested by his course, as we have examined it. He wished to be a Prophet of the Lord and to speak His Word in His Name; but he also wished riches, and the honor which would accompany them. He wished for what God's providence had not seen best to give him. Right and wrong—God's way and the way of riches—both were before him. Which would he choose with all his heart? He chose neither one. He tried to have both—to be a servant and mouthpiece of God, and to gain the rewards of an opposite course.—2 Peter 2:15, 16.

Alas, how many in every age have had the Balaam spirit! Jesus warned against this spirit, saying, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." How many have found the Master's words true! How many have found that the Lord would reject from His counsels and His fellowship those who regard iniquity in their hearts; and who, if they would not love to serve it, at least would love its rewards. Let us remember that God looketh upon the inward parts—the heart. Let us remember how it was written of Jesus: "Because Thou hast loved righteousness and hast hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—Psalm 45:7.

In God's dealings with our Redeemer, He has exemplified the principles of His righteous Government. A double-minded man is unreliable in every way—not pleasing to God, not acceptable to Him.

THE HEART WITH THE TREASURE

The Master said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Those who set their affection chiefly upon earthly things can with difficulty avoid the snares that go with them. Balaam's only safe course was in heart loyalty to God. Knowing the mind of the Lord on the subject, he should have delighted himself therein, and should to the fullest have rejected every overture looking in an opposite direction. The nobles who took King Balak's second proposition should have been kindly, but firmly, told that the Divine will was the law of Balaam, the Prophet; that he would not for a moment consider anything to the contrary of the Divine will; that money, wealth and honors as

inducements to a course of opposition to God's will would be an insult. Let us each apply this lesson in life's affairs. Let God be first in our hearts, as well as in our words and acts.

But if, overtaken in a fault, Balaam had gone so far as to start on the journey with the hope of somehow gaining the evil reward, he should have been thoroughly aroused by the incident of the ass. Even an ass knew better than to attempt to go contrary to the Higher Power. Evidently the greater reasoning power and courage of humanity above that of the brute may be used to great advantage.

We see that Balaam's heart was wrong. He still continued to be a Prophet, but was ceasing to be a holy Prophet every minute that he toyed with the tempting wealth, the reward of unrighteousness. Alas, how his mind was debased, debauched, by the love of money! While outwardly he still remained loyal to God in that he would not utter a false message, yet inwardly his harmony with God was gone. The infection, from being a mere speck of a wish for the money, spread rapidly until it swallowed up everything noble and true in the man. The rot or blight which started in his heart, like the blight at the core of a beautiful apple, spread until nothing remained but the outward form.

The professed man of God groveled in the mire of sin in his desire to obtain Balak's proffered wealth. He said to the king, The reason I am not permitted to curse Israel is that they are blessed of the Lord; but I will explain to you that the Lord's blessing is with them because they are His consecrated people, in covenant relationship with Him, seeking to obey His Law. The only way in which you could bring a curse upon Israel would be by tempting them to disobedience to God.

Guided by Balaam, King Balak communicated with the leading people of the Midianites, and urged that their wives and daughters should apparently fall in love with the Israelites, and introduce them to the sensuous religious rites practised by Midian. In proportion as they would succeed in ensnaring the Israelites into sin and idolatry, in that proportion the curse of Israel's Law would fall upon Israel. How sad it is, and yet how true, that knowledge is a dangerous thing to those who misuse it! How true it is today that none can make so successful tools of Satan as those who have some knowledge of God!

GOD PERMITTED THE LESSON

God could have hindered all those evil machinations, as He could hinder evil deeds and evil plans today. But He allowed matters to take their course, and a great lesson thus to be taught—for then as well as for now and intermediately. The scheme was successful. Some of the leading wives and daughters of the Midianites attracted some of the leading men of Israel to adultery, and to idol worship and orgies. Forthwith a plague started amongst the Israelites, according to their Covenant with God at Sinai, Ebal and Gerizim.

God's Covenant with Israel was that while they would be loyal to Him and His Law, their enemies could not prevail against them. They should be His people. They should be blessed in their every temporal interest. But if they would neglect His statutes and engage in idolatry, He would bring upon them various plagues. This course not only would

punish them for their wrong doings, but serve as a lesson, a warning, to restrain them from excesses such as were common amongst the heathen.

We must remember that the death of thousands of Israelites on such occasions was the whole penalty for their sin. They did not drop into a hell of eternal torment, but merely fell asleep, to await the better Day of Messiah, the Antitype of Moses, when they will be awakened from the sleep of death and be brought to full, clear knowledge of those things which, at very most, they then enjoyed only in a typical way.

Not only did God punish the Israelites according to the terms of their Law Covenant, but He also punished the Midianites and Balaam. Under Divine direction Moses called for a thousand armed men out of each of the tribes. This army completely wiped out the Midianites as a nation, including Balaam, the Prophet, who, to secure the rewards of his nefarious advice, had evidently remained to oversee the work of iniquity.

Our glorified Redeemer, in His last message to the Church, foretold that some of His followers would imitate Balaam and, for earthly advantage, put a stumbling-block in the path of the brethren. The intimation is that the harlotry and false worship would be on a higher plane than that which stumbled Natural Israel—even as everything in this Christian Dispensation is antitypical.

BALAAAM'S WONDERFUL PROPHECY

Several passages in Balaam's prophecy are very striking in their fulfilment. For instance:

"For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I behold him;
Lo, it is a people that dwell alone
And shall not be reckoned amongst the nations."

* * *

"Blessed be every one that blesseth thee
And cursed be every one that curseth thee."

* * *

"I behold Him, but not nigh;
There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob,
And the Sceptre shall rise out of Israel.
And One out of Jacob shall have dominion."

Surely we see fulfilled the declaration that Israel shall be separate from all other nations. What other nation of that day remains a people of preserved identity?

How true the statement that those who have cursed, or injured, Israel have brought injury upon themselves! As we scan the whole field of the world, we find that every nation which has dealt harshly with Israel has received severe chastisement or blight. On the contrary, Great Britain and the United States, nations which have blessed the Jew, have in turn received great blessings.

The lines referring to Messiah's Kingdom are equally true. The Sceptre did rise out of Israel. The One who is to have the dominion of earth is of Jacob's posterity, according to the flesh. As the bright and morning Star, He is leading on to a glorious sunrise—the dawning of the Messianic Day, which is to scatter earth's night and to bring blessings instead of the curse.

DECEMBER 17

Beloved ... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure—Phil. 2:12, 13.

It was God that provided for us the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and it is God who has drawn us unto Himself and who has promised us all needed grace to walk in the paths of righteousness; and more, even to follow in the footprints of Jesus in the way of self-sacrifice. While, therefore, with fear and trembling—with great *carefulness*—we endeavor to work out our salvation, it is our privilege always to realize the promised grace to help in every time of need, and to be confident that our best *efforts* toward righteousness are acceptable to God when presented through the merit of the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us by faith—Z '97, 147 (R 2154).

To work out our own salvation means to fulfill the terms of our consecration, *i.e.*, to remain dead to self-will and world-will, while sacrificially using up our human all unto death for God's cause, and to remain alive to God's will in meditation, watchfulness, prayer, witnessing, character development and endurance according to God's Word. The issues, persons and results involved require that we do this with that fear and trembling which characterize reverence for God; for in the work of our salvation—our deliverance from Satan, the world and the flesh—God works in us by His Spirit and Word, whereby He, as we co-operate with Him, makes us to will and do in overcoming evil and in developing good. Therefore, it behooves us to co-operate with Him with that fear and trembling that mark reverence for God in all things—P '36, 166.

Parallel passages: John 3:27; 6:27-29; Heb. 4:1, 11; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Pet. 1:5-8; 2 Pet. 1:10; Heb. 6:11, 12; 2 Cor. 3:5; Eph. 2:8, 9; Prov. 10:16; 16:1; Jer. 32:39; Heb. 13:20, 21; Isa. 26:12.

Hymns: 130, 191, 13, 95, 8, 192, 208.
Poems of Dawn, 71: *Have Faith in God*.
Tower Reading: Z '16, 54 (R 5854).

Questions: How did I this week co-operate with the Lord in working out my salvation? What helped or hindered therein? How was I affected by this co-operation?

HAVE FAITH IN GOD

WHEN the stormy winds are blowing,
And the angry billows roll,
When the mighty waves of trouble
Surge around thy stricken soul,
Have faith in God,
Who reigns above;
Yea, trust in Him,
For He is love.

When the way is rough and thorny,
Danger all along the path,
When the foe is ever planning
How to crush thee in his wrath,
Have faith in God;
His loving care
Shall keep thee safe
From every snare.

When thine eyes are dim with weeping,
And thy heart is full of woe
For the loved that now are sleeping
In the silent grave so low,
Have faith in God;
The dead shall rise
And meet the Savior
From the skies.

Art thou filled with eager longing
For the night to pass away?
Art thou weary of the watching
For the dawning of the day?
Have faith in God;
He is our stay;
Soon, soon will come
The perfect day.

Art thou hoping, waiting, praying,
For the presence of the Lord?
Art thou waiting for the Kingdom,
And the glorious reward?
Have faith in God;
Our King is here,
And soon His glory
Will appear.

R5854: HOW WE OUTWORK OUR GREAT SALVATION

"Beloved, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."—Philippians 2:12, 13.

IN THIS chapter from which our text is taken, the Apostle Paul pays a beautiful tribute to the Church at Philippi. He refers in tender and loving terms to their obedience

always to his instruction and counsel, not only when he was present with them, but likewise in his absence. He urges them to continued faithfulness and earnestness in this good way. He desires that they make still further progress in the Master's likeness, working out in themselves through humility and obedience the character-development necessary, with fear and trembling, doing their own part in the attainment of the salvation to which they had been called in Christ.

This exhortation of St. Paul is designed likewise for the sanctified in Christ Jesus of today. He reminds us, as he did the Philippian Church, that we are to *work out* our salvation. Elsewhere the Scriptures inform us that our salvation is by grace—that "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by *His mercy* He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." (Titus 3:5.) These Scriptures are not contradictory. Our salvation is "not of ourselves, lest any man should boast." The Father has appointed the Lord Jesus to be our Savior; and it is through Him that our salvation is to be accomplished.

We cannot work out our own justification; but being justified by the blood of Christ and being called with the Heavenly Calling, we can do our share in this great work of our own preparation for our future station and glory. We do this by giving heed to the instructions of our Lord, by following the example which He has set us. We can never attain perfection in the flesh; but from the beginning our heart, our intention, must be wholly loyal, and day by day this heart intention must become more and more crystallized, fixed, in the way of righteousness. We must continue the work of bringing our body into subjection, and enlisting in the service of the Lord.

HOW WE BECOME SONS OF GOD

It is encouraging for us to know that this warfare is not one which we must wage alone. All the powers of Heaven are enlisted on our behalf. Our God has led us thus far in the willing and the doing of His good pleasure, and He will continue thus to lead and help us and work in us by His Word of Truth, if we continue to give heed to His counsel. The Gospel is the "power of God unto salvation unto every one" who accepts it; and no greater stimulus can be found than the exceeding great and precious promises given unto us, that by these we might become "partakers of the Divine nature."

Our salvation is a salvation from death to life, from sin to righteousness. Moreover, it is a transformation from human nature to Divine—our "*so great* salvation!" The initiatory step to our salvation was the work accomplished by our Lord Jesus at Calvary. "He died for our sins." This dying for our sins was first necessary; for there was no one on earth who could pay the penalty of Adam's sin. The Law of God required "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a man's life for a man's life." There was no man perfect; hence God arranged that His Only Begotten Son should meet this death penalty upon man. The Father could have arranged it otherwise, but He did not; therefore we know that this was the best way.

The *death* of Christ, however, was not all that was necessary. "He *rose* again for our justification." His death was for the cancelation of our sins; but it could not effect our justification while He was still in the bonds of death—not until He had risen—and more, not until He had ascended up on High—and more, not until He had presented His merit on our behalf—on behalf of the Church. Still more than this, our justification is not accomplished until, in each individual case, the necessary steps of faith and full consecration have been taken, as a result of which the merit of our Redeemer is imputed.

This merit of Christ has not as yet been presented for the world, because their time has not yet come. Thus far it has been presented only for the Church—those who are called to be joint-heirs with Christ, and who accept the Call. When Jesus appeared in the presence of God for *us*, there was an arrangement then effected by which we might become justified. There are certain inflexible conditions upon which God is willing to impute this merit of Christ's death. It is those only who wish to turn away from sin, to be justified from sin, and to serve God, to whom this favor is offered. Only these can now become sons of God.

Whether these steps take years or days or a few minutes, all these steps must be taken before we are in the place where we can be accepted of Christ and presented by Him to the Father. When our Redeemer imputes to us His merit, covering our blemishes, this brings us to the place of vital justification. We have done nothing to accomplish this justification. We have merely presented ourselves that we might become servants of righteousness. We have merely placed ourselves in the position of readiness to receive the blessing. When our Savior's merit was thus imputed, all our past was forgiven, our blemishes covered, the Father accepted the offering, and our High Priest sacrificed us as justified human beings. At that moment we were begotten of the Father by His Holy Spirit, "to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us." (1 Peter 1:4.) We became embryo New Creatures, who were then to grow and develop day by day until, in due time, we would be born as spirit beings on the Divine plane, if faithful unto death.

THE MARVELOUS GRACE OF GOD!

This is a wonderful work, a marvelous transformation! Selected from a race of bondslaves of sin, beings of a fleshly nature, depraved, death-stricken, sin-cursed, we are lifted out of the miry clay; we are washed, cleansed, from our pollution, our soiled rags of unrighteousness, and a new nature has been begun in us. Then our earthward tendencies are gradually bent Heavenward. We are transformed day by day, rising *up*, UP, until, our resurrection completed, the work of transformation fully accomplished, we are exalted to heights unimaginable—passing the nature and rank of angels, of cherubim, of seraphim, and every name that is named, and seated upon Messiah's Throne, beside the Infinite Son of God, partakers of His glorious nature—the nature of Jehovah Himself—the Divine nature!

Can mortal man conceive so marvelous a glory? The very thought of such a Calling should cause us to bow our hearts in the dust before our God, realizing our great

unworthiness of such stupendous grace—of bliss so transcendent! What can we render unto the Lord that can fittingly demonstrate our gratitude, our thankfulness, for so unspeakable a favor? Surely, the most faithful service we can give is but a very feeble return to Him who has so loved us, so blessed us, so honored us!

We are joint-heirs with the Lord of Glory to this wonderful inheritance, if only we are faithful unto death and keep our garments white. To us "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." As old creatures we had no standing with God; we were feeding on the beggarly elements of the world. We were dead in trespasses and in sins. It is only as New Creatures that we have any standing, that we can please God, that we can work for Him. It is this New Creature that the Apostle is addressing in our text.

OUR GREAT RESPONSIBILITY

As we have made a consecration of ourselves to God, our sins are all under the blood, and the new life has begun in us. We are under a solemn contract to see that the work of transformation steadily progresses. When the Father accepted our offering and our vows to Him, and granted us His Holy Spirit, He did not give us the full consummation of our hopes, but merely an "earnest of our inheritance." Our agreement was to be dead to the world, dead to earthly things, and alive toward God. It is therefore for each of us to demonstrate in our words, in our actions, in our thoughts, that everything in this contract is bona fide on our part—that we *meant* every word of it. When we become children of God, our one ambition should be to prove our loyalty to God, our loyalty to our Covenant of Sacrifice. Was it not so with our Lord Jesus?

Our Lord came into the world to be our Redeemer. But He was not the Redeemer when He was born, nor when He was thirty years of age, until He made His consecration. He was called the Savior from His birth, only in a prospective sense. He became our Redeemer in the real, the official, sense when He was baptized of John in Jordan, and the Holy Spirit came upon Him in begetting power. Then it remained for Him during the three and a half years of His active service to work out that consecration. Every act of life during that crucial period was the fulfilling of His Covenant of Sacrifice. He had covenanted to sacrifice His human nature with all its conditions and possibilities, in order that He might carry out the Father's purpose. For this cause He came into the world, and He faithfully fulfilled His Covenant. His glorious reward was the Divine nature and the authority to execute all the Father's great Program.

OUR COVENANT IDENTICAL WITH CHRIST'S

And so it is to be with us, His followers. We come in under the same arrangement, our weaknesses and imperfections being covered by our Redeemer's robe of righteousness, which constitutes our "wedding garment." Thus we stand before the Father complete in the Beloved. And His Word to us is, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9.) All the children of God who are true to their covenant are working out their salvation from day to day. It is a work of sacrifice, a daily work of crucifixion of the flesh. From the beginning of our consecrated life we are

reckoned as being fully "crucified with Christ"; but the actual crucifixion is a slow, painful, lingering process, and ends only with the completion of our sacrifice in death.

"Gather my saints together unto Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice," is the command of Jehovah. (Psalm 50:5.) To what extent are we performing this work of sacrifice in ourselves? And to what extent are we seeking to assist in the work of gathering the saints of God unto Him? Are we faithful to the extent of our ability and opportunity? Are we sure that we are careful to *note* the opportunities, great or small, that are within our reach? If we do not see our opportunities, the Lord will use another to do the work that might have been ours; and we shall lose the blessing and the reward of the service that we might have rendered. How careful, then, we should be!

"PAY THAT WHICH THOU HAST VOWED"

But this is not a matter in which we are to judge one another. It is not for me to say to you that you are not sufficiently earnest in your sacrificing. Neither can you properly say to me that I am not faithfully fulfilling my sacrifice. To his own Master each one stands or falls. It is for the Lord and ourselves to settle this important matter in our individual cases. And we may not fully judge even ourselves. We are to strive to do our best, and then leave the results for the Lord's determining. The Father will apportion to each faithful member of our Lord's Body his own place in the glorious Temple.

The brethren may give a word of suggestion to each other along these lines, but that is all. The Lord alone is to decide whether or not we are each living up to the terms of our covenant. He expects faithfulness in each one who has taken His Covenant upon him. It were far better that we never covenant to sacrifice our earthly life and its interests than that we take this vow upon us and then fail to pay that which we have vowed. (Ecclesiastes 5:4-6.) This is a most solemn matter, and the Lord will certainly require of us the fulfilment of our vows. If death is not voluntary, He will destroy our flesh. If we resist this, it will mean the hopeless death of our being.

OUR FAITHFUL, UNCHANGEABLE GOD

"It is God who worketh in you," declares the Apostle Paul. We did not begin this work ourselves. It would never have occurred to us, uninvited, to endeavor to obtain a share in the glory, honor and immortality of the Lord Jesus. It would have been the height of presumption for us so to do without an express invitation. It is God who planned the whole matter. He has been working in us by His promises, by His providences in our daily experiences, and by all the instructions, warnings and counsels of His Word, and we rejoice in this. There is no changeableness with God; and when once He made this proposition, He meant it to the full. It would never mean anything else. He never makes an arrangement which He would wish to abrogate or amend.

We are assured by the Apostle Paul that "He who has begun the good work in us will complete it, unto the Day of Jesus Christ." The only condition is *our own* faithfulness. *God* will never fail. "We are His workmanship." He is really doing the work. We are

submitting ourselves that God may work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He is the great Master Workman. Thus the work of grace goes on in our hearts and lives, making us ready for the exalted position to which we are called. And it is only if we are negligent of these great privileges granted to us that God will take them from us and give them to others.

Those who are constructing a fine building need special power to accomplish the work—to hoist the great steel frames, the blocks of stone, the brick, etc. Now God purposes to furnish the power by which we may accomplish the work on our character-building, this wonderful structure we are setting up. But the Lord will not accomplish this great work in us unless we diligently cooperate with Him. He gave us the calling, the inspiration, and furnishes all the necessary assistance day by day; so we are to persevere in the building of this character which is essential and which He purposes shall be in all those whom He will make joint-heirs with His Son.

"DO ALL THINGS WITHOUT MURMURINGS"

In following in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus, we are not to *murmur* by the way, finding fault with its difficulties and its narrowness; nor are we to dispute how or where we are to be led, nor to seek to have any other way than that which Divine providence marks out for us, realizing and trusting that the Lord knows exactly what experiences are necessary to our development in the character-likeness of Christ. We should realize also that if obedience were possible while our mouths are full of complaints and dissatisfaction with the Lord and with our lot, which He has permitted, it would indicate that we are out of sympathy with the spirit of His arrangement.

Such an obedience, if it were possible—and it is not—would not meet the Divine approval nor gain us the prize. Hence, as the Apostle exhorts, we should "do all things without murmurings and disputings, that we may be the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom we shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of Life."

HOW WE ARE TO FEAR AND TREMBLE

In the expression of our text—"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"—we are not to understand that the Lord wishes His children literally to tremble with fear before Him. We should exercise the same judgment in interpreting the words and expressions of Scripture that we would in reading any other book, or in understanding the words of our friends. One called to a position of great responsibility will sometimes say afterwards, "I accepted that position with fear and trembling." He would not mean that he actually quaked with fear; but this is an expression used to indicate that one feels the need of great carefulness—that he realizes his great responsibility and his liability to fail to meet all the requirements without the most earnest attention. It means that one realizes that the matter is not one to be taken up lightly, as if it were a mere bagatelle, but that failure in it would bring serious consequences.

Just so when we read this Scripture, we are not to think that we should tremble with fear before our God; but we believe the Apostle's thought to be that in this great work that we have undertaken—of walking in the footsteps of Jesus that we may attain the prize of our High Calling—*so much* depends upon our faithfulness, our diligence. We have not undertaken a light thing. It is a very heavy responsibility. Our eternal interests are in the balance—the issue of life or death. Those who win the prize will be heirs of God to the highest honors and glories which have ever been offered—to a glory and honor beyond human power to imagine! We believe that no such offer will ever again be made.

The Son of God holds the position next to Jehovah, and can never have but one Bride. Surely, then, there is need that we work out our salvation with fear and trembling—with great carefulness, with great earnestness, in respect to everything in connection with it! We should be keenly appreciative of the fact that it is the most wonderful thing in all the Universe of God! We believe that if we do not make our calling and election sure and win in this fight within a very brief time now, the opportunity will be gone forever. No amount of wailing and gnashing of teeth will then avail. When the door is shut, it will never open again. Like Esau, those who fail will find "no place for repentance," though they seek it "carefully with tears." The glorious birthright will have slipped from their grasp forever.

But, beloved fellow-laborers, who are earnestly striving day by day to "so run as to obtain," "we are persuaded better things of you, though we thus speak." But it is well that we have our "pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance," that we may keep our eyes upon the Heavenly City and the prize set before us. The wearisome march will, we believe, soon be ended. At most it is only a *little while*. And so, with steadfast hearts, let us run with patience and perseverance to the end of our course.

"Joyful through hope, thy motto still must be—
The Dawn is here!
What glories does that Dawn unfold to thee!
Be of good cheer!
Gird up thy loins; bind sandals on thy feet!
The way was dark and long; the end is sweet."

DECEMBER 18

The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me—Heb. 13:6.

To have the proper course in life, to be able to meet the trials and difficulties of life as they come to us, and to meet them in the proper spirit which the Lord directs—in the spirit of rejoicing in tribulation, and counting such experiences all joy—it is necessary that all fear of man, which brings a snare, shall be removed. And it is our Lord's direction that we shall fear Jehovah, and not fear our mortal fellows. The righteous are bold as a lion, as well as gentle as a dove, and meek as a lamb. This peculiar combination should be found in every Christian, and we doubt if it will be found elsewhere—Z '02, 45 (R 2951).

This verse contains one of the precious assurances from the Lord to us amid the oppositions of men to the course of the faithful. At most men can but kill the body; they cannot destroy the new heart, mind and will; it will come forth in the resurrection awakening. Moreover there are metes and bounds placed by the Lord upon their opposition to us; for to them the words apply: "so far and no further." The Lord will permit them to do nothing to us except what will, if we are rightly exercised, do good to our new heart, mind and will. The Father has repeatedly demonstrated this in His helping us against and amid their opposition, whether this opposition has had to be met in church, state, capital, labor, family or society. Sometimes His help has seemed long delayed; yet it has always come in due time in harmony with the assurance of this text. This assurance, backed by God's providences in our lives, causes us to be courageous amid "the contradiction of sinners against" ourselves—P '30, 184.

Parallel passages: Psa. 3; 27; 28:1; 29:2-5; 56:1-11; 118:5-16; 8:2; Isa. 51:12, 13; Dan. 3:17, 18; Matt. 8:26; 10:28; Rom. 8:15, 33-39; 2 Tim. 1:7; 1 Pet. 3:13, 14; 1 John 4:4, 16-18.

Hymns: 56, 63, 124, 197, 313, 331, 333.
Poems of Dawn, 72: *Courage! My Soul*.
Tower Reading: Z '14, 88 (R 5424).

Questions: How has God helped me this week? Has man sought to make me fear? How? How did God's help affect my fear of man?

COURAGE! MY SOUL

LET nothing make thee sad or fretful,
Or too regretful—
Be still;
What God hath ordered must be right;
Then find in it thine own delight,
His will.

Why shouldst thou fill to-day with sorrow
About to-morrow,
My heart?
One watches all, with care most true.
Doubt not that He will give thee, too,
Thy part.

Only be steadfast, never waver,
Nor seek earth's favor,
But rest;
Thou knowest that God's will must be
For all His creatures—so for thee—
The best.

R5424: LET US GO ON "IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH"!

"Having an High Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."—Hebrews 10:21, 22.

THE Apostle Paul is here drawing to the attention of the Church, and especially to those familiar with the Jewish arrangements of that day, the fact that the Aaronic priesthood was only a typical one, designed for a time to illustrate greater things; that God's real Plan was not to be carried out by the Aaronic priesthood from the House of Levi, and that their sacrifices of bulls and goats could not take away sins; but that from year to year this arrangement merely shielded God's typical people—typically covered them—through their Covenant. The Apostle points out that there is to be a greater Priesthood, after the Order of Melchizedek; that our Lord is the Head of this Priesthood, and that the Gospel Church are His members, the under-priesthood. He then asks, why should a better priesthood be needed than the one that God provided in Aaron and his sons? The answer is that they were sinners, and could never really cancel sin; and the blood of those animals possessed no real merit. Those priests themselves never really got back into favor with God. They merely had access into a typical Holy and Most Holy.

But now we have Christ as the Head of this new Order of Priesthood; let us realize our position as under-priests of this order. Our High Priest has entered into the true Most Holy. The evidence of this came in the Pentecostal blessing showing that the Father was well pleased with the sacrifice made by our Lord, and that all things were then ready to permit us also to come near to God, sharing our Redeemer's experiences, that we might later go to Him beyond the veil and share His glory. Seeing that God has thus made all these gracious provisions, and has accepted us as the House of God to take the place of the House of Aaron—and so much greater than his House—let us enter into the real Holy and Most Holy, "with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."

The under-priests were permitted to enter into the Holy, and after the Day of Atonement into the Most Holy. All, in this Gospel Age, who have made consecration to

God, and have been begotten of the Spirit, are in the first Holy. Aaron and his sons were a *type* of the true Priesthood; but we are not of the order of Aaron; we are not members of the Aaronic priesthood, but of the Melchizedek Priesthood, under its great High Priest. "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9.

LET US COME WITH TRUE HEARTS

Seeing, then, that we have confidence that God has made this arrangement, confidence to take the proper steps, and have presented our bodies living sacrifices, have gone through the antitypical consecration, and received the begetting of the Holy Spirit, let us begin at once the work of the new Order of Priesthood. There are great things to be accomplished: let us fully enter in with Him—let us become full participators in this work—in everything that God has for us to do. Let us come with true hearts, however, realizing how wonderful are our blessings, how precious is the provision of the covering of our Savior's merit. Let us be true and loyal to this Covenant into which we have entered with God.

The Lord's call under this Covenant is, "Gather My saints together unto Me, those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5.) This call, or invitation, has been going forth during the entire Gospel Age. And all the holy ones, all who have entered into this Covenant, are privileged to have a share in the sacrifice of Christ and to co-labor with Him.

Let us come with full assurance of faith in the sense that we shall have no doubt whatever that God's promises are true and *for us*. The world sees no cause for sacrificing in the present life, and they count us fools all the day long, as the Apostle says. But nevertheless in full assurance of faith, let us go on! Let us loyally press forward unto the end of the way, until we shall be joined to our great High Priest, and enter into His rest!

ANOINTED IN HIM

The anointing of the high priest in the type represented the Divine appointment to office. Aaron was thus anointed of God. The Apostle Paul says that "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron." Even Christ took not this honor upon Himself. God appointed Him, saying, "Thou art a Priest forever, after the Order of Melchizedek." (Hebrews 5:4-6.) God's direct dealings were with the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the One acceptable to the Father. God gave His Holy Spirit to our Lord in fullest degree. Jesus Himself tells us that God gave not His Spirit by measure unto Him, because He was able to receive the Holy Spirit in full measure. Those who are counted as His members are not able to receive the Spirit in full measure, because of their imperfection. The less fallen man can receive more of the Spirit, and the more fallen man can receive less.

When Christ appeared in the presence of God for us, and applied His merit for those who would offer themselves to become members of His Body, to be associated with Him in the glorious Kingdom work, He received Divine approval and sanction, which was manifested by the begetting by the Holy Spirit of those who had presented themselves in consecration, the Holy Spirit being first given at Pentecost. The Apostle Peter says that God fulfilled His promise to Jesus by granting Him the Holy Spirit to shed forth upon His disciples. (Acts 2:33.) It is *of* the Father, and *by* the Son.

It was not necessary that the Heavenly Father should pour out His Holy Spirit upon each individual member of the body. We understand that the picture given in the type is quite complete. The Holy Spirit being poured out upon the Head of the great High Priest, and flowing down over the skirts of His garments, all His Body is thus anointed. We each receive our share of the anointing when we come into the Body, and under the Robe.

FULL ASSURANCE BASED ON KNOWLEDGE

Speaking to those who are privileged to come to God in prayer, the Apostle says, "Let *us* draw near in full assurance of faith." He is speaking to the *House of God* class. Natural Israel were of the House of God, too, but they were servants. The servants belong to the House, of course, but not in the very special sense, as do the children. We have the suggestion given us that Moses was faithful as a servant over his House, but that the Church of Christ are a House of Sons, and that Christ is Head over this House. It is this House of Sons that may draw near to God. The assurance with which these may rightly approach is dependent upon certain conditions here indicated. They must have a *true heart*, and are not to be double-minded. Entire heart loyalty must be theirs; they must fully demonstrate that they meant what they said when they gave their lives to God. Then they may come to the Lord with holy boldness, in full assurance of faith. All the steps of God's true people are steps of faith, of realization of His care. But there is a *full* assurance of faith in contrast with a *lesser* faith. A faith that is only partial will bring us somewhat near to God. A faith that is strong will bring us nearer. But a *full assurance* of faith is that faith which, if retained, will bring us off "more than conquerors," and make us at last members in full of the Royal Priesthood—in glory.

This full assurance of faith cannot be attained in a day. It requires quite a degree of information. And God has provided this information by instructing us in His Word as to what Christ did for us, and what He is *willing* to do; why He died for us, etc. All this is furnished us as a basis for faith. Then to further strengthen our faith, we have all the exceeding great and precious promises, and His daily providences over us. Therefore this fully consecrated class may draw near, and have the full assurance that they may attain all the glorious things to which God has invited them—to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

FULL ASSURANCE NECESSARY TO GOD'S APPROVAL

The Apostle intimates that without this full assurance of faith the child of God cannot come close to Him. Only those who trust the Father as a little child would trust its earthly parent, can expect to make good progress in the narrow way and have the courage and confidence which it is the privilege of all who are His to have, and without which we cannot have the perfect peace and rest of heart promised. "According to your *faith* be it unto you," is the promise. The desire to draw nearer and nearer to God must be in *our heart*; else we shall fail to go on and attain our privilege in Christ. Such a desire is a manifestation of our hunger and thirst after righteousness, which the Lord expects to see before He makes good to such His engagement that they shall be *filled*.

There are definite conditions specified in the Word as necessary to continued progress along this line. As we cannot draw close to the Lord except through this full assurance, neither can we *have* the assurance unless our hearts are kept "sprinkled from an evil conscience," or a consciousness of evil; for, as the Apostle also declares, "If our own heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." (1 John 3:20.) We may be sure that if our course as New Creatures in Christ is condemned by our own conscience it would also be condemned by God.

Therefore, if the child of God would draw very near, and would have the blessed realization of the Father's smile of approval continually, he must seek to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men—a conscience which can truthfully say, I am striving to do that which would be pleasing to the Lord, that which is in full harmony with my Covenant of Sacrifice; and I am striving also to do that which would justly have the approval of righteous men. Nothing short of this is at all permissible in those who have consecrated themselves to be members of the Royal Priesthood, to sacrifice their lives in the Lord's service that they may reign with Him.

CAUSE AND REMEDY FOR LACK OF FAITH

He who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. (Philippians 1:6.) But how few children of God, comparatively, have this "full assurance of faith" which is our glorious privilege! How few can say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and *I shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever!*" Surely, by God's grace I shall ultimately gain the Heavenly Kingdom and the glorious things which He has promised to those who love Him. The few who can thus enter fully into sympathy with the Apostle Paul and the Prophet David in their expressions of confidence have therein a great joy, a great blessing, a great rest of heart which none others possess.

Let us therefore inquire why it is that the number who thus enter into the rest of faith is so small. What are the hindrances to others, and how can these hindrances be removed? How can each one of the children of God enjoy fully this, his blessed patrimony? Many say, or *think* if they do not *say*, Oh, that I could feel sure that God's goodness and mercy would continue with me to the end! Oh, that I could remove my doubts of gaining the Kingdom, of being ultimately "more than conqueror"!

What is the difficulty with these? Why do they not have the "full assurance of faith" of their acceptance? We answer that their difficulty is a lack of trust in God; and such a lack is not pleasing to Him, for "without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He *is*, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6.) Moreover, this lack of faith is a constant hindrance to their overcoming; as it is written: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our FAITH." (1 John 5:4.) The Christian who has not the shield of faith, and a *large* one, is continually at a disadvantage before the Adversary, and all the hosts of evil.

Then let each one who realizes a lack in this direction pray earnestly, as the Apostles of old, "Lord, increase our faith!" And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, let such a one cultivate such faith in his or her own heart. (1) Let him refresh his memory continually with the precious promises of the Word, becoming very familiar with these. (2) Let him seek more and more to remember that, having made a covenant with the Lord, these promises are *his*; and in his *heart* and with his *lips* let him claim them as *his* before the Throne of Grace, with thanksgiving. Let him claim them in his *thoughts*, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

When trials or difficulties arise, he should call to mind these precious promises, remembering that they *belong to* him, because God has given these promises to such as love Him and have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5; Malachi 3:17.) He should resolve that henceforth he will trust the Word of his Heavenly Father implicitly. If some seeming accident befall him, let him call to mind the promise, "All things work together for good to them that love God, who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28.) Let him thus assure himself that the *seeming* accident could not have occurred had God not seen a way to make it the channel of a needed lesson or blessing to him.

Let us never forget that He who has begun this good work in us *changes never*, and that if we keep our hearts in harmony with Him, if our faith is still firm and clear in the great Atonement made for our sins, and we continually renew our consecration to Him, keeping our all on the altar of sacrifice, letting the Lord consume it in His own way, seeking not our own will, our own way, but *His will alone*, we have every reason to have full confidence that this good work in us will be finished, that we shall enter with joy into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord, and shall hear His blessed words of approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

DECEMBER 19

Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off—1 Kings 20:11.

The test of endurance is certainly one of the severest tests of faithfulness to which the elect Church is subjected. It is the test which gauges and registers the strength of every other virtue and grace, and no soldier of the cross will be crowned with the laurels of victory who has not stood this test. ... In the battle of this day, as in all other battles, the effort of the enemy is to surprise and suddenly attack and overwhelm the Lord's people; and the only preparation, therefore, that can be made for such emergencies is constant vigilance and prayer and the putting on of the whole armor of God—the Truth and the Spirit of the Truth—Z '94, 155 (R 1656).

While the Lord's people may and do glory in the Lord, it is unseemly for them to boast; for that is nothing less than self-laudation. There may be some justification to speak at times of our past achievements modestly, but never boastingly. Much less is it in order to boast of future acts whose performance is uncertain. Such boasting exalts self, usually disparages others, and almost invariably insults God. The boaster not only usually fails to make good but also usually achieves disaster. There is no room for boasting in ourselves. What have we that we have not received? Should the beggar boast of the alms that he receives? Is not the good that we have attained of the Lord's grace? Let us, therefore, be zealous to give Him the glory for our place and attainments, and to think of ourselves as the objects of His unmerited goodness and love—P '35, 172.

Parallel passages: Prov. 27:1; Isa. 10:15; Psa. 49:6-9; 52:1; 94:4; Rom. 3:27; 11:17-21; 1 Cor. 1:17-31; 4:6, 7; 2 Cor. 10:12-17; Eph. 2:8-10.

Hymns: 184, 13, 15, 63, 123, 135, 291.

Poems of Dawn, 236: *Deeds, Not Words*.

Tower Reading: Z '94, 155 (R 1656).

Questions: Have I boasted this week? How? Why? With what results?

DEEDS, NOT WORDS

THEY do the least
Who talk the most,
Whose good designs
Are all their boast;
Let words be few.

They do the most
Whose lives possess
The sterling stamp
Of righteousness;

For deeds are true.

R1656: THE TEST OF ENDURANCE.

"Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."

—1 Kings 20:11.

THE test of endurance is certainly one of the severest tests of faithfulness to which the elect Church, the body of Christ, is subjected. It is the test which gauges and registers the strength of every other virtue and grace, and no soldier of the cross will be crowned with the laurels of victory who has not stood this test. The Christian life is a warfare, and the above words of one of the kings of Israel to a boastful enemy of the Lord's people are applicable, not only to every new recruit in the Lord's army, but similarly to all who have not yet finished the good fight of faith.

The first gush of enthusiasm in the Lord's service, much as we may and do appreciate it, may be but the hasty production of the shallow soil of a heart which immediately receives the truth with gladness, but having no root in itself, endures but for a time; and afterward, when affliction and persecution ariseth, immediately they are offended. (Mark 4:16, 17.) Such characters cannot stand the fiery tests of this evil day, whereof it is written—"The fire [of that day] shall try every man's work, of what sort it is."—1 Cor. 3:13.

Therefore, says the Apostle Peter, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you." All of the elect Church must be so tried; and blessed is he that shall endure unto the end. The sure word of prophecy points to severe conflicts and great trials in the closing scenes of the Church's history. Elijah, a type of the body of Christ, finished his earthly career and went up by a whirlwind in a chariot of fire—strong symbols of storms and great afflictions. John, another type of the Church, was cast into prison and then beheaded. And we are forewarned of the great necessity of the whole armor of God, if we would stand in this evil day.—M. DAWN, VOL. II., Chap. 8.

It therefore behooves every one who aspires to the prize of our high calling to brace himself for the severer conflicts and trials of faith and patience that may suddenly and without a moments warning be sprung upon him. In the battle of this day, as in all other battles, the effort of the enemy is to surprise and suddenly attack and overwhelm the Lord's people; and the only preparation, therefore, that can be made for such emergencies is constant vigilance and prayer and the putting on of the whole armor of God—the truth and the spirit of the truth.

"In your patience possess ye your souls." No other grace will be more needed than this in the fiery ordeals of this evil day; for without great patience no man can endure to the end. All along the Christian's pathway, ever and anon, he comes to a new crisis: perhaps they are often seemingly of trivial importance, yet he realizes that they may be turning

points in his Christian course. Who has not realized them? There comes a temptation to weariness in well-doing, together with the suggestion of an easier way; or there springs up a little root of pride or ambition, with suggestions of ways and means for feeding and gratifying it. Then there comes, by and by, the decisive moment when you *must* choose this course or that; and lo, you have reached a crisis!

Which way will you turn? Most likely you will turn in the direction to which the sentiments you have cultivated have been tending, whether that be the right way or the wrong way. If it be the wrong way, most likely you will be unable to discern it clearly; for your long cultivated sentiments will sway your judgment. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof is the way of death." (Prov. 14:12.) How necessary, therefore, is prayer, that in every crisis we may pass the test successfully. Nor can we safely delay to watch and pray until the crisis is upon us; but such should be our constant attitude.

The life of a soldier ever on the alert and on duty is by no means an easy life; nor do the Scriptures warrant any such expectation. On the contrary, they say, "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ;" "Fight the good fight of faith," etc. And yet many Christian people seem to have the very opposite idea. Their ideal Christian life is one without a breeze or a storm: it must be one continuous calm. Such a life was indeed more possible in former days than now, though the world, the flesh and the devil always have opposed themselves, and always had to be resisted by every loyal soldier of the cross. But now the opposition is daily becoming more and more intense; for Satan realizes that his time is short, and he is determined by any and every means to exert his power against the consummation of the Lord's plan for the exaltation of the Church.

Consequently we have had within this harvest period many and severe storms of opposition, and still there are doubtless more severe trials to follow. But those who, with overcoming faith, outride them all—who patiently endure, who cultivate the spirit of Christ with its fruits and graces, and who valiantly fight the good fight of faith, rather than withdraw from the field, such will be the overcomers to whom the laurels of victory will be given when the crowning day has come.

DECEMBER 20

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth—2 Tim. 2:15.

There is much significance in that word "*study*"; and only the studious find the narrow way to the Divine approval and acceptance. *Study to show thyself approved—study the doctrine; study your course of conduct, to keep it in harmony with the doctrine. Study how to promote the peace and prosperity of Zion, and how to shield yourself and others from the missiles of error and from the poison of an evil, worldly spirit. Study to perform the duties of a faithful soldier of the cross—the seemingly insignificant, as well as the bravest and noblest deeds—Z '02, 318 (R 3096).*

God's children, especially those who are teachers, should not accept with blank, unquestioning minds any opinions offered them. They are to study and test them as to their harmony or disharmony with themselves, Bible passages and doctrines, God's character and Christ's Ransom, facts and the designs of the Bible Godward, Christward, Churchward and Worldward. Only such things as are proven to be in harmony with these seven things, should the Lord's people accept. Such study, testing, is necessary, if we would be workmen approved unto God, and will result in our never having to hang our heads with the shame of defeat and controversy with gainsayers, and will enable us more and more rightly to distinguish one feature of the Word from another, giving us clear and correct views of the separate doctrines, precepts, promises, exhortations, prophecies, histories and types of the Bible, and giving us ability to use them—P '34, 175.

Parallel passages: Josh. 1:8; 2 Chron. 29:11; Isa. 40:9; 52:11; 57; 14; Jer. 1:7, 8, 17-19; Ezek. 2:6-8; 3:8-10, 17-21, 27; Matt. 7:6; 10:7, 11-13, 16, 25, 27, 28; 20:25-28; 28:19, 20; John 21:15-19; Acts 20:28; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 4:1, 2; 9:16, 17; 2 Cor. 1:24; 4:1, 2, 5; 1 Tim. 1:3, 4, 11, 18, 19; 4:6, 7, 12-16; 2 Tim. 4:2, 5.

Hymns: 22, 49, 70, 116, 164, 210, 309.

Poems of Dawn, 5: *Great Truths*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 232 (R 5511).

Questions: Have I this week served the Truth? How? Why? Under what circumstances? What helped or hindered? With what results?

GREAT TRUTHS

GREAT truths are dearly bought. The common truth,
Such as men give and take from day to day,
Comes in the common walk of easy life,
Blown by the careless wind across our way.

Great truths are dearly won; not found by chance,

Nor wafted on the breath of summer dream;
But grasped in the great struggle of the soul,
Hard buffeting with adverse wind and stream.

Sometimes, 'mid conflict, turmoil, fear and grief,
When the strong hand of God, put forth in might,
Ploughs up the subsoil of the stagnant heart,
It brings some buried truth-seeds to the light.

Not in the general mart, 'mid corn and wine;
Not in the merchandise of gold and gems;
Not in the world's gay hall of midnight mirth,
Nor 'mid the blaze of regal diadems;

Not in the general clash of human creeds,
Nor in the merchandise 'twixt church and world,
Is truth's fair treasure found, 'mongst tares and weeds;
Nor her fair banner in their midst unfurled.

Truth springs like harvest from the well-ploughed
fields,
Rewarding patient toil, and faith, and zeal.
To those thus seeking her, she ever yields
Her richest treasures for their lasting weal.

R5511: INSTRUCTIONS FOR GOD'S WORKMEN

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."—2 Timothy 2:15.

GOD'S approval should be the highest aim of every one who professes to believe in Him as the Creator, and especially of those who accept Him as their Father and who claim to hold the precious relationship to Him of children. His will should be their highest law, and it should be a part of their daily and hourly pleasure, as it is their privilege, to seek to *know* His will and to *do* it. This implies *study, consideration*—not a mere formality of thoughtless reading, or perfunctory worship, but the diligent use of every available means to learn what is His will.

The Apostle Paul gives Timothy the advice contained in our text, and urges him to be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." And the intimation is that the ability rightly to divide the Word of God is to be gained by the study of His Word. The truth of astronomy might give us some knowledge; yet we see that some who have devoted their entire lives to astronomy have lost sight of God, and have become atheists. Guided by the Word of God, any study may be helpful. But it must be viewed, considered, received, from the standpoint of the Revelation of God.

The word *workman* suggests the thought of being engaged in service. This injunction of the Apostle applies to all who belong to the Church of Christ. We are God's servants. A great work is going on; this work is the calling out of the Church class from the world. The Church that is called out is said to be the Temple of God, whose "living stones" are being chiseled and polished and made ready for their places in the building. *We* are the *workmen*. We are seeking to prepare ourselves for God's presence, for God's Kingdom. This preparation is our first duty; we are to prepare ourselves and to help to prepare others.

TRUE CAUSE OF MUCH FAILURE

The fashioning of these "living stones" is the development of their character. Each one thus engaged is working out his own salvation. We are God's laborers in doing this work in ourselves. But if we would have Divine approval, we must have the Divine wisdom—"which cometh down from Above," and which we learn from the Word of God.—James 3:17.

Apparently a great many professing Christians, after they have given much time to the cultivation of their brain—spending years in seminaries—will eventually find that they have failed both to have the Lord's ideal accomplished in themselves and to do much good to others. This seems to be the result of a failure rightly to divide the Word of Truth. In that Day many shall say, Lord, Lord, we have prayed and taught and done many marvelous things in Thy name! Some of these the Lord says He will not recognize as His Elect. He may have a place in which He will use some of them, some day, yet for this special place He wishes those who are anxious to know and to do His will rather than to know how they may please men, or how they may receive large emoluments or honor of men. Those who are anxious to know His will are most sure to have His will done in them.

MISAPPLICATION OF SCRIPTURES

The expression, "rightly dividing the Word of Truth," implies that the Word of Truth may be studied, may be handled. We see many ways of handling, or dividing, the Scriptures. Many Scriptures applicable long ago are quoted as appropriately due now, and vice versa; and those which belong to the future are quoted as applicable now, or in the past. There is a general liability to error in not discerning how to divide them aright.

Rightly to divide the Word of Truth, then, is to make such a prayerful study of it as will enable us to place things where they belong. For instance, if we fail to distinguish between the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and the quickening of the Holy Spirit, and our spirit birth, and get these all confused, we shall do harm. It is not merely the seeking to show a variety of doctrines, but the seeking to make clear what we give to others, that is the part of wisdom. The Apostle was showing Timothy that, as an Elder of the Church of Christ, he might present the different features of the Truth in such a way as to confuse his hearers, who then would not know what they believed. Thus they would be in just the

condition to accept whatever teaching any one brought them, especially if that one should happen to ridicule their belief.

This seems to be the condition of many today. Evidently there are many who have been serving or attempting to serve God, who have not been giving out "meat in due season," but who have been giving out truths in a very confused way. It is for us, then, to be on guard and seek carefully to follow the instruction of the Apostle, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." Do not mind so much what men may say or think, but seek the approval of God first.

It is proper for us to seek the approval of the holy, of the saintly; but God's approval should have the precedence. We must be *workmen*, not idlers and drones; for these will not have any place in the Kingdom. God is calling to service *now* those who are willing to serve under disadvantageous conditions. We are, therefore, to remember that we are to be servants; and that unless we find the proper service, we cannot have a place in this company which God is training. If we wish His approval, as expressed in His Word, we are to see that the conditions as there outlined are fulfilled in our case. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." We are told to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." (1 John 2:15.) We are not to set our hearts upon these things. Our hearts are to be set upon the doing of the Lord's will.

The Lord intimates that those who will be faithful to Him will have the opposition of the world. "If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." Therefore, if we have no opposition, we lack this evidence of acceptability with Him. We are to rightly divide the Word of Truth, and to see that our lives are in harmony with it. At the same time we are to seek to present God's Word to others, that they may enjoy the same privileges and blessings.

DECEMBER 21

Who is worthy?—Rev. 5:2.

Let us, dearly beloved, as we realize that thus far God has counted us worthy to look upon the scroll of His Plan which has been unsealed for us by our blessed Lord Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, prove our worthiness to continue to look therein and to read the wondrous things of His law, by faithful obedience and loyalty to it in all things. Let us not undervalue our great privilege in being counted worthy to have some part in the blessed ministry of reflecting the light of Divine Truth; let us prove ourselves jewels of rarest value, diamonds indeed, heartily receiving and beautifully transmitting to others the light of Truth, and faithfully enduring the severest pressure that God may permit to come upon us; for, if faithful in these small things we shall in due time be counted worthy also to be with Christ in power and great glory—Z '02, 333 (R 3103).

The question of our text is with reference to who was worthy to become the Interpreter and Executor of God's Plan. The strong angel that asked the question represented the Law Covenant, which found none during the Jewish Age worthy to become the Interpreter and Executor of God's Plan; and the God-fearing of that and of this Age grieved at the Law-proven sinfulness of the human family. But blessed be the grace of our God, who has found for us a fountain of Life through the Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power operating in and by Jesus Christ, the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world! The Strong One among the leaders of God's people has not only fulfilled every demand of Justice in keeping perfectly its every precept, and in meeting its sentence against Adam and his race, but also has fulfilled every suggestion of Love in fully meeting every occasion of sacrifice. He is worthy! Yes, He is altogether lovely!—P '33, 177.

Parallel passages: Rev. 5:6, 9-14; Psa. 45:2; Isa. 11:5; 53:9; Mic. 5:4; Matt. 12:41, 42; 27:3, 4; Luke 3:16; 23:41; John 1:14; 5:30, 34, 41; 7:18; Acts 13:28; 1 Cor. 1:24; 2 Cor. 4:4; 5:21; Col. 1:19; 2 Tim. 2:13.

Hymns: 167, 10, 59, 155, 157, 190, 268.

Poems of Dawn, 34: *Jesus*.

Tower Reading—Z '16, 252 (R 5943).

Questions: What has Christ been to me this week? How? With what results?

JESUS

THE gently sighing of the wind among the pines,
The joyous singing of the lark at break of day,
The rippling of the water-brooks through cooling shade,
The patter of the softly falling rain at night,
Are sounds less sweet by far than His most precious name.

No art can show a form so gracious and so fair,
No master's hand hath drawn a smile so sweet,
Nor could depict the majesty of that pure brow;
No canvas ever glowed with such a holy light
As shines from His most radiant image in my heart.

The dearest earthly friend may fail in time of need,
The sweetest and the loveliest grow cold at heart,
The nearest may not heed the throbbing heart's sad cry,
The gayest throng may hold the loneliest solitude,
But Jesus, Jesus never fails my call to hear.

Oh, may the music of Thy name more clearly fall
Upon my ears attuned to catch that sweetest sound!
Oh, may Thine image in my heart so bright become
That I by gazing may be changed into the same;
Oh, blessed Jesus, let Thy presence ne'er depart,
Oh, come and reign forevermore within my heart!

R5943: THE DIVINE SCROLL—WHO IS WORTHY TO LOOK THEREIN?

"Who is worthy?"—Revelation 5:2.

THE words of our text are a part of the proclamation represented as being made throughout Heaven: "Who is worthy to open the Book [the Scroll], and to loose the seals thereof?" The Book in this case seems symbolically not to represent the Bible, but the Divine Plan, with its times and seasons. The Bible is indeed a record, but God had the Plan before the Bible was written. He had this Plan from the very beginning. He had not disclosed it to the angels—not even to the Logos. Nor did He disclose its time features fully to our Lord Jesus while He was in the flesh. And after His resurrection Jesus spoke of these times and seasons as things "which the Father hath put in His *own* power."—Acts 1:7.

The fact that God had a Plan relating to the fallen race had been intimated to Abraham. God had declared to Abraham unconditionally that He would bless the world of mankind. He also pointed out later in the types and shadows of the Law certain features of the way by which He would bless the world. He declared that there would be a Redeemer; but who the Redeemer would be was kept a secret. Although both angels and men desired to know they were not permitted the knowledge. The Prophets spoke by inspiration some things concerning this Redeemer, but they knew not the meaning thereof.

In due time the Logos was sent forth. He was a loyal Son before He was sent. He undertook to do the Father's will, not yet knowing what it would cost to be the Messiah; for God had kept these things secret. He manifested His faith, His trust. He delighted to do the Father's will, even to the taking of a lower nature. And so He humbled Himself

from the glorious condition in which He was and took upon Himself the human nature, became a man—a *perfect* man, not a *sinful* man. Our Lord did this in order to carry out the great Program which the Father had in His own mind and which He had not revealed to any other.

When Jesus reached the age of thirty years, the earliest age at which He could present Himself to God, under the Law, He went to Jordan and made a consecration of Himself with the determination to do everything that was in the Father's Plan—everything that typically and prophetically had been written in the Holy Scriptures concerning Himself. "Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God"; "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy Law is within My heart," were His heart expressions, as recorded.—Hebrews 10:7, 9; Psalm 40:6-8.

This was our Lord's consecration. His *human nature* became His sacrifice. He laid down His life. He did not finish laying it down at Jordan; but so far as His will was concerned, it was given there. He there became the Priest, the great High Priest, His flesh being typed by the bullock of sin-offering, sacrificed on Israel's yearly day of Atonement. During the three and a half years of His ministry He carried out this sacrifice satisfactorily. And everything that the Father had given Him to do was finished at the Cross.

THE DEEP THINGS UNFOLDED AT JORDAN

Our Lord Jesus received the anointing of the Holy Spirit when He came up out of the water at His baptism. Then the heavens were opened unto Him. The higher things which He had not previously understood became clear. The Scriptures were unfolded to His view. He knew that He was going up to Jerusalem to be crucified. He knew that He would be betrayed by one of His chosen disciples, and He knew which of them would be the betrayer. He knew these things because He had been begotten of the Holy Spirit and accepted of God as a Son on the Divine plane.

During these three and a half years He was the Messiah, the Sent of God. He was the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. He had sacrificed His will, but this was not sufficient. God wished Him to sacrifice not only His will, but actually to lay down His human life. And God purposed to prove Him by certain crucial tests. So He was "tempted in all points like as we are; yet without sin." When all His testings were completed at His death on the Cross, God gave Him a name to which all should bow, both in Heaven and in earth.

Here the words of our text find their answer. The inquiry compassed the period from before Jesus came into the world up to His resurrection from the grave. God had given the most honorable One of all the host of Heaven the first opportunity to prove His worthiness to loose the Scroll of God's great Plan, and to fulfil its provisions. He was given this opportunity because, as the First-born of Jehovah, He had the right to the first privilege of service. And He did not allow the privilege to go by. He accepted it. He was faithful. He humbled Himself to human nature, and thus He became the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, of which tribe He was born as a man. He did not have this title in His position

as Logos. It was as the Son of Mary that He was the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David.

PROCLAIMED WORTHY BY THE ANGELS

Our Lord's worthiness was not then proven. It was not until He cried with His dying breath, "It is finished!" that the demonstration was complete. All the way down from Adam to Jesus no one had been found worthy to open the great Scroll. But Jesus was now found worthy. Speaking in vision of the three and a half years during which our Lord is represented as slain, John the Revelator says, "I beheld and lo, a freshly slain Lamb!" And the voices of myriads of angels were heard proclaiming, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!"—Revelation 5:12.

Jesus had not proven Himself worthy of this great honor when He made His *consecration*, but when He had finished His course in death He was then worthy to receive glory, honor and power. After His resurrection and ascension the Scroll was given into His hands to be opened. This means that the Divine Plan as a whole was here made known to Him—for He already had knowledge of much of this—but *all things* were given Him to unloose. There had been some things that our Lord did not know. He had said, "Of that day and hour [of His Second Coming] knoweth no man; no, not the angels in Heaven, *nor the Son*, but My Father only." (Mark 13:32.) A part of the Plan was written on the outside of the Scroll, and a part was written on the inside. The things that were sealed were not proper to be understood by our Redeemer until He had received the all-power, after His resurrection. The execution of God's Plan was then given into His hands.

GRADUAL OPENING OF THE SEALS

The opening of the seals has progressed during all the Gospel Age. The whole Plan of God is represented in this Book—the Scroll. It has required all of the present Age and will require all of the next Age to complete the Plan. The Plan of God includes the "Restitution of all things spoken." We are now able to see these wonderful things and to tell about them, because each of the seals as it has been opened has made the Plan a little clearer. We may suppose that the Lord Jesus was made aware of all its features after His ascension to the presence of Jehovah. We who are God's people are seeking to know these things more and more fully. The Master declared that as the Father revealed them unto Him, so would He reveal them unto us; but this revelation has been gradual, as the successive seals have been broken.

Brethren, beloved in Christ, realizing that our God has hitherto counted us worthy to look upon the wondrous Scroll of His great Plan, which has been unsealed for us by Jesus our Lord, let us continue to prove ourselves worthy to look therein and to comprehend the glorious things of His Word, by faithfulness, obedience and loyalty to this Plan in everything! Let our appreciation continually increase for our wondrous privilege in being

permitted to share this blessed ministry of bearing Divine Truth to other hungry hearts,
that they also may rejoice in the Lord and in the power of His might!

DECEMBER 22

If a man therefore purge himself ... he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work—2 Tim. 2:21.

If a man desire honor from God, let him not fail to seek it in God's appointed way—along the pathway of humility; for the Lord gives His favors to the humble. If you would be a vessel fit for the Master's use and a vessel of honor, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and He will exalt you in due time. Do not be in a hurry about it either; but "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," beginning and ever continuing to cleanse your earthen vessel, that it may be fit for the Master's use—Z '02, 319 (R 3096).

The things from which we are to purge ourselves are those that constitute the filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. This implies that we rid ourselves of evils that root not only in our bodies, such as uncleanliness of person, tobacco, liquor and drug habits, gluttony, unchastity, *etc.*, but that root also in our minds and hearts, such as error, unbelief, despair, irresoluteness, impatience, impiety, unbrotherliness, selfishness, pride, vanity, cowardice, laziness, strife, hatred, insincerity, covetousness, *etc.* A leading part of our Christian warfare is our fight against sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, whereby we overcome evil and purge ourselves. Such purging is done by the activity of the holy Spirit and strengthens this Spirit. It makes us honorable before God, sets us apart to Him, fits us for His service, and prepares us for every good word and work. To all of us, especially to the Pilgrims and Elders, the charge applies: "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord"—P '32, 197.

Parallel passages: Lev. 21:6; Isa. 6:5-8; 52:11; Jer. 15:19; Matt. 20:25-28; Rom. 2:21-23; 1 Cor. 5:1-8; 6:9-20; 11:28-32; 2 Cor. 6:3-7, 16—7:1; 13:5; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:3, 4; 1 Tim. 3:1-15; 6:11; Jas. 3:10.

Hymns: 105, 44, 20, 125, 130, 229, 267.
Poems of Dawn, 181: *The Master's Touch*.
Tower Reading: Z '02, 318 (R 3096).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences in line with this text? How have they been met? What have been their results?

THE MASTER'S TOUCH

IN the still lute the music lies unheard;
In the rough marble beauty hides unseen:
To make the music and the beauty, needs
The Master's touch, the Sculptor's chisel keen.

Great Master, touch us with Thy skillful hand;
Let not the music that is in us die!

Great Sculptor, hew and polish us; nor let,
Hidden and lost, Thy form within us lie!

Spare not the stroke! do with us as Thou wilt!
Let there be naught unfinished, broken, marred;
Complete Thy purpose, that we may become
Thy perfect image, Thou our God and Lord!

R3096: "A VESSEL UNTO HONOR, SANCTIFIED."

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and made meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."—2 Tim. 2:21.

IT IS IMPORTANT to notice that this instruction is given, not to the world, but to the Church—to those who are believers in Christ and who are consecrated to him and desirous of being used in his service. If the counsel were given to worldly people, no such incentive would be held out; for such have no ambition to be in the Lord's service. The world can better appreciate such maxims as, "Honesty is the best policy," etc.; for temporal good is all they seek. Yet it is indeed a good thing for worldly men to purge themselves of evil dispositions and practices. Moral reforms are always commendable as steps in the right direction, and we are always glad to see worldly men trying to break away from the bondage of bad habits—from the drink habit and from lying, profanity and other vices.

But such purging from the filth of the flesh can never render such vessels fit for the Master's use. With all their efforts at cleansing they are still unclean; and the Lord desires clean vessels for his use. It is only when, by faith, we are plunged in the cleansing blood of our Redeemer that we are clean and acceptable to God.

"There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

But having been thus reckonedly cleansed from sin, and clothed in the pure robe of Christ's righteousness, it is all-important that we strive to make this reckoned righteousness an actual thing to the extent of our ability; for only so can we prove ourselves worthy of the imputed righteousness. It is purely of divine grace that we are *reckoned* of God as righteous, before we have actually become so. Seeing in us the desire to be righteous and the effort to be so in his appointed way, God, accepting the will for the deed, reckons us righteous now, and treats us as sons, since we have been redeemed from the curse and have accepted this gracious provision for reconciliation.

If, however, after being thus reconciled to God and reckoned righteous, our course of conduct proves that we no longer love righteousness; if we do not endeavor to make the reckoned righteousness an actual thing by a constant endeavor to purge out the old leaven of sin; if we are content to let it remain and to work in us, and if we neglect to strive against it, then we are proving by such a course that our love of righteousness is growing weaker, and we are proving our unworthiness of the Lord's gracious reckoning in our favor. But if, on the contrary, we are striving daily to purge out the old leaven of sin, if we are not merely working it down occasionally and allowing it again and again to ferment and disturb the whole spiritual being, endangering its complete souring and spoiling (but purging it out by constantly resisting it) cleansing our thoughts, words and deeds with the truth, and cultivating the blessed fruits of the spirit of love, joy and peace,—then, indeed, as the Apostle affirms, we shall be vessels meet for the Master's use.

And not only so, but the Lord can honor such vessels because they honor him; they fairly represent him and his cause. If they are meek and humble-minded, not inclined to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, but to think soberly, the Lord can exalt them to positions of trust and honor without injury either to themselves or to the cause; and thus they are more and more sanctified and prepared for every good work.

Let as many, therefore, as would be honored and used of the Master now and hereafter—as many as have this hope in them—seek to purify themselves, to purge out the old leaven of sin. In the language of another forceful illustration, let us endeavor to war a good warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil. And be assured that in these duties we have the work of a lifetime; and even at its close we will still find the necessity for the robe of Christ's righteousness to cover the remaining deformities of our character.

While the purging here spoken of refers to the general cleansing from all sin and uncleanness, the Apostle had special reference on that occasion to purging from a disposition to hearken to the false doctrines of those who would subvert the faith of the Church. His counsel is to avoid foolish questions and strife about words to no profit; to shun profane and vain babblings which increase only unto more ungodliness, which savor more of bombast and self-exaltation than of truth and godliness, and, on the contrary, to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.—2 Tim. 2:15.

There is much significance in that word "*study*"; and only the studious find the narrow way to the divine approval and acceptance. *Study* to show thyself approved—study the doctrine; study your course of conduct, to keep it in harmony with the doctrine. Study how to promote the peace and prosperity of Zion, and how to shield yourself and others from the missiles of error and from the poison of an evil, worldly spirit. Study to perform the duties of a faithful soldier of the cross—the seemingly insignificant, as well as the bravest and noblest deeds. A soldier has many seemingly trivial duties to perform, and he is as really doing his duty as a soldier when he is polishing his armor, foraging, cooking his meal, cleaning camp, clearing the way or building bridges for the army to pass as when he is fighting the enemy. All such necessary incidental work is entirely compatible

with his commission as a soldier, and is not to be considered "entanglements" or hindrances. And these things cannot be avoided or carelessly done without a measure of unfaithfulness.

So with the Christian soldier. The routine of life, house-work, daily toil, any and everything incidental to a proper and honest provision of "*things needful*" for ourselves and those dependent on us for support, as well as provision for the prosecution and care of the Lord's work,—all this is a proper part of our engagement as soldiers of the Lord. The Apostle Peter was as truly serving the Lord when catching the fish from whose mouth he got the coin wherewith to pay the Lord's taxes and his own, as when proclaiming, The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. The Apostle Paul was as truly a soldier of the cross and doing his proper work as such when making tents (rather than be chargeable to any) as when, at Mars hill, he preached Jesus and the resurrection. *Whatever* is done with a view to the glory of our Lord, the Captain of our salvation, or for the benefit of any of our fellow-soldiers, or for our own preparation for this warfare, or in the discharge of obligations which our Captain has recognized and approved,—this is proper work for us as soldiers, and not *entanglement* in the affairs of this life.

But the Christian soldier must study to perform even the commonest duties in a manner creditable to his calling. Nor must he permit himself to become entangled with other things which do not relate to his duties as a soldier, and thus to be side-tracked. For instance, if a soldier knowing how to repair watches were to divert his attention from his regular duties, neglect his camp and battle duties, and the commands of his Captain and the proper work of a soldier to acquire some extra compensation by this means, he would be an unfaithful soldier. And so the Christian who turns aside to seek some *personal*, temporal advantage, to the detriment of his duties as a soldier, is likewise, to some extent, an unfaithful soldier and likely to be drawn out of the ranks entirely.

Study to show thyself approved. Study the Word. Study yourself that you may become well acquainted with yourself—that you may know your talents for service and in what directions they lie, and your weak points and how they may be guarded against; that you may know both your abilities and your shortcomings. Then study to avoid error and to shun all foolish questions and profane and vain babblings. Remember that only the foundation of God standeth sure, and that all other foundations are worthless and all other theories must come to naught. But "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."—2 Tim. 2:19.

And if any man desire honor from God, let him not fail to seek it in God's appointed way—along the pathway of humility; for the Lord giveth his favors to the humble. If you would be a vessel fit for the Master's use and a vessel of honor, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and he will exalt you in due time. Do not be in a hurry about it either; but whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, beginning and ever continuing to cleanse your earthen vessel, that it may be fit for the Master's use.

DECEMBER 23

A word spoken in due season, how good it is! A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver—Prov. 15:23; 25:11.

We are to remember, when talking with those who have an ear to hear and are inquiring the way to the Lord, that there are great crises in the lives of men, momentous occasions, in which one word may be more valuable, more potent, than would be a hundred words or a thousand words at another time, under different circumstances; and we are to be instant in the Lord's service, whether seasonable or unseasonable to ourselves, gladly ready to lay down our lives for the brethren. ... We are to distinguish, however, between out-of-season to ourselves and out-of-season to others; and to be willing to serve others at any time, however out-of-season to ourselves, if it be in season and opportune for them. We are not to intrude even the Gospel itself at inopportune times, however convenient the occasion may be to ourselves—Z '02, 381, 382 (R 3122).

There are times for silence and times for speech. There are things to be said and things to be left unsaid. He who speaks when he should be silent, who says what should be left unsaid, and who withholds what should be said, is unwise and injurious. But he who is silent when silence is in order, who suppresses unsuitable and injurious remarks, and who utters in the right spirit and manner the thing that the time, place, occasion and person require, is wise and helpful. The ability to say the right thing in the proper spirit and manner, at the right time, occasion and place, to the right person, is a grace of rare attainment, value and fruitfulness. Let us study more carefully to select the things of which we speak, the spirit and manner in which we speak, the times, occasions and places at which we speak, and the persons to whom we speak. Then more and more will our words be good, because in season—P '26, 173.

Parallel passages: Psa. 37:30; 39:1; 119:13, 46, 172; 141:3; Prov. 12:18-20; 15:1, 2, 4, 7; 16:21, 23, 24; 31:26; Eccles. 12:9-11; Eph. 4:25, 29; Col. 4:6; 1 Pet. 3:15, 16; Rev. 14:5.

Hymns: 260, 116, 272, 275, 22, 49, 16.

Poems of Dawn, 106: *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 245 (R 5517).

Questions: How did I use my tongue this week? What were the effects?

WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS

"WHAT a friend we have in Jesus,"
Sang a little child one day;
And a weary woman listened
To the darling's happy lay.

All her life seemed dark and gloomy,
All her heart was sad with care;
Sweetly rang out baby's treble,—
"All our sins and griefs to bear."

She was pointing out the Savior
Who could carry every woe;
And the one who sadly listened
Needed that dear Helper so!

Sin and grief were heavy burdens
For a fainting soul to bear;
But the baby singer bade her
"Take it to the Lord in prayer."

With a simple, trusting spirit,
Weak and worn, she turned to God,
Asking Christ to take her burden,
Owning Him as her dear Lord.

Jesus was her only refuge,
He could take her sin and care,
And He blessed the weary woman
When she came to Him in prayer.

And the happy child, still singing,
Little knew she had a part
In God's wondrous work of bringing
Peace unto a troubled heart.

R5517: CONTROL OF THE TONGUE A NECESSITY

"I say unto you, that every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment."—Matthew 12:36.

OUR LORD was addressing some of the Scribes and Pharisees who were trying to "catch Him in His words"—to take advantage of technicalities of language. In their endeavor to oppose Him, those Scribes and Pharisees were doing everything they could to discomfit or vanquish Him in His reasoning, even going to the extent of using arguments which they did not really believe. This is a very dangerous procedure. No matter how just we think our cause to be as a whole, we are not to resort to any misuse of language to uphold what we believe to be the Truth.

Possibly those Pharisees might have said amongst themselves, "We must use strong arguments to keep ahead of that Nazarene. He uses strong language Himself. We must

hold up our end of the controversy, and not show the white feather." But this position did not justify their conduct. Since Justice is the foundation of the Throne of God, any attempt to take advantage of another in any manner whatever will surely bring its own punishment.

From our Lord's comments at various times on the subject of the *tongue* we realize that in His day there must have been some seriously wrong condition prevailing amongst those with whom He came in contact. The Scribes and Pharisees attributed evil power to Him, and declared that He was the tool of Satan—that Satan was speaking through Him, etc. At first our Lord told them in a general way that they deceived themselves. Later, He reproved them severely and showed the fallacy of their arguments. In connection with our text He declared that by their words they should be condemned—be dealt with, corrected in righteousness and brought to true reformation, or else perish in the Second Death.

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

Human beings are the only earthly creatures that can talk—whether orally or in writing or otherwise. More and more the people of God realize the wisdom of the Apostle James' statement that although the tongue is a little member, yet it is the most dangerous of all, because it has the widest influence. If a man sin not with his tongue, he is a perfect man. (James 3:2.) We cannot estimate the possible results of our words. This influence may reach even to the ends of the earth. Therefore we are to consider carefully what we may say, in order to determine whether our words will glorify God or whether they will dishonor Him—whether they will stir up good thoughts and impulses in the minds of others or whether they will stir up that which is evil.

In His Wisdom God has seen fit so to create us that our conduct of today has much to do with our character of tomorrow. Thus we are either making or breaking character continually. It is well that all should know this fact. Not only worldly people, but Christians also, should understand this principle; for Christians are now on trial for glory, honor and immortality. Therefore by neglecting to weigh carefully their words they might lose the great prize for which they are striving.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

By way of emphasis our Lord declared that every idle word—every unprofitable utterance—must be accounted for in a day of reckoning. With the Church, we understand the Scriptures to teach that this day of reckoning is this Gospel Age. Daily are we to go to our Heavenly Father and say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us." Not only must we render up our account daily, but at the end of our course there will be a general summing up. By this we do not understand that at the end of our race course we shall be lined up and questioned about every word of our experience, but that each one who comes into contact with the Truth is either building up character or else breaking it down, and that his character at the end of his probation will determine his reward. As a pupil daily learns his lessons and prepares himself for the final examinations at the end of the year, when there is a general testing of his knowledge, so with the pupils

in the School of Christ. Day by day our Master deals with us; but at the end of our course there is to be a summing up.

Doubtless there are in every one of us some things that are disapproved of the Lord; for we all have the treasure of the New Mind in earthen vessels and therefore cannot do as we would. But we have pledged ourselves to serve the Lord and to be loyal in doing His will. Therefore He is dealing with us *now*. In so doing, He warns us that the tongue is a very important member of our body, and that we are to be careful how we use it; for it will have a bearing upon the final decision in the end of this Gospel Age, when the returns are brought in. Then it will be determined whether we are worthy of the highest honor—joint-heirship with our Savior—or whether we shall be servants to that class or whether we shall be unworthy of life upon any plane of existence.

OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF SLANDER

But there is also a reckoning with us now. Our Lord declares that the tongue is so important a member that it represents our hearts more accurately than does anything else. The hand might do a good deed, yet the heart might be very different from the hand. In fact, the hand might not express the real sentiment of the heart at all. But the tongue is sure to give utterance to what is really in the heart. Therefore by our words we are daily either building up or tearing down character.

There is a spirit which shoots out bitter words. From the standpoint of the Lord, this is MURDER. Thus at the end of the Jewish Age the Scribes and Pharisees criticised and slandered our Lord. Although from their knowledge of the Law they knew that they would be accountable for their actions, yet they did not appreciate the fact that they would be judged by their words.

So will it be in the world's Judgment Day—the Millennium. Mankind will be held responsible for the work of their tongues. But they will have a more favorable opportunity than if judged now; forces will then be at work which will give them a more prompt judgment; and therefore they will learn their lessons quickly. They will have a responsibility for their words. Those that "knew not will be beaten with few stripes"; but those who "knew and did not" act according to their knowledge, "will be beaten with many stripes."

SPECIAL BRIDLES FOR THE TONGUE

Under stress of sudden temptation the Lord's people, who are now on judgment, might impulsively say that which is not pleasing to the Master. But we must *learn* not to speak thoughtlessly; we must learn to weigh our utterances. Since we are servants of God, we should ever take heed to our ways, in order to render the best possible service. We are not merely to have a good will to do that which is right; we are to seek to bridle our tongues. Whatever vows or resolutions or restraints we may seek to put upon our tongues may be considered as bridles, by which we are determined to bring ourselves into full subjection to the will of God.

So long as Satan and his demon host are at large, the Lord's people will do well to take heed to their ways, that they sin not with their tongue. Satan and his angels are seeking to subvert those who have given themselves to the Lord and to catch them in their words. So while we are in their presence we must be especially on guard, that they may not entrap us. As the Psalmist says, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked [One] is before me."

AN IMPORTANT LESSON FOR ALL

Although our Lord declared that men should give account for every pernicious word, yet He referred to the thoughts behind the words. It was the attitude of heart that distressed Him. He knew the attitude of heart displayed by the Scribes and the Pharisees would bring injury upon them.

Amongst the Lord's people there is nothing more important than that they should learn to be very just. While it is right to be loving, kind, generous, yet *justice* is the very foundation of character. All love and kindness not based upon justice are neither satisfactory nor pleasing to the Lord. In dealing with others, a child of God will not think, What will my fellow-men let me take from them? but, What are the rights of others, and what would my Heavenly Father have me do?

It is very natural for one to recognize his own rights in any matter, but the fallen nature does not so quickly perceive the rights of others. Therefore one of the most important lessons for the Lord's people to learn is to do unto others as they would have others do unto them—simple justice.

We fear that many of the Lord's dear people have not fully realized that obedience to the rules which govern the New Nature means absolutely the "Golden Rule" on their part toward all others. They must not do to others what they would not have others do to them. It is the duty of the New Creature to bring the body into such subjection that justice shall rule in every act and word, and so far as possible in every thought. One must be just in his thoughts before he can properly be just in his dealings. Whoever thinks unjustly will act unjustly in spite of endeavors to the contrary.

THE TREASURE STORED IN OUR HEARTS

As we reflect that the Church is standing before the Bar of Divine Judgment, under the personal inspection of our Lord, and that in His estimation our words are a criterion of judgment, we cannot weigh too carefully the underlying principles upon which His decision will be made. Our Lord's words, as recorded in Matthew 12:34-36, indicate that both the heart and the mouth are under special scrutiny. How necessary therefore is a right condition of heart, in order that the words of our mouth may be acceptable to our Lord and Redeemer!

In our Lord's statement, the heart is *representative* of the character, and the mouth is the *index* of that character. The word *heart* is sometimes used in Scripture with the force of the word *mind*. Out of the abundance of the mind the mouth speaks. A good man brings forth good things out of the treasure of his mind. But all mankind are by nature sinners; therefore all are by nature evil to some extent. God does not approve of any who are under the sentence of death. Nevertheless there are those of the condemned race of Adam who are relatively good—those who, despite the imperfections under which they were born, the blemishes of their fallen nature, are desirous of being in harmony with the One who is all-good.

We find nothing in Scripture to support the doctrine of total depravity—to imply that there is nothing whatever of good in humanity. Even though no one is perfect, nevertheless, there are some who have at least a good will, good intentions. Such superior characters of past Ages were represented in the Ancient Worthies—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the Prophets of Israel, etc., who fully demonstrated their obedience to God and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness.

THE CLASS APPROVED OF GOD

During this Gospel Age also there are some who are good. Amongst the heathen, as well as in Christian lands, there are those who are well-meaning, well-intentioned, those who are not malicious, not striving to do wrong, but endeavoring to do right. In order to have the Divine approval in this Age, however, one must be of those who come unto the Father through Jesus; for none others are accepted of God. The Father will not receive any one whose heart is not sincere, who does not have good intentions, who does not manifest loyalty to Him and to the principles of righteousness.

Therefore any whom we have reason to believe are accepted of God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, are no longer to be counted as "children of wrath, even as others," but as of the Household of Faith. Despite the frailties of their flesh, they are good at heart; else God would not accept them. With these there is a constant conflict between the New Will and the desires of the flesh.

When we come to consider those who are good at heart, we find that all of them have imperfect bodies—some more so than others. Shall we give up the struggle for the prize because we cannot do perfectly? No! The Lord assures us that He looks at the heart, not at the flesh; that He has made a very gracious arrangement through our Lord Jesus by which the imperfections are cleansed away. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Therefore all His children may come with courage to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, there to obtain mercy and help in every time of need.

CHIPS OR APPLES—WHICH?

The good things brought forth from the treasure of a good man's heart will be those things which he has stored up from time to time. As the Psalmist says of the godly man, "His delight is in the Law of the Lord; and in His Law doth he meditate day and night."

And of himself he declares, "Mine eyes prevent [anticipate] the night watches, that I may meditate in Thy Word," Law, precepts—the spirit, the purpose of that Law, not merely the outward form. So should we meditate upon the spirit of the Law of God. The sentiment of our heart should be the desire to get the Divine Mind as nearly as possible on every subject. All who are eager to be in harmony with God and to attain His character-likeness will think upon things that are good, pure, holy.—Psalm 1:2; 119:148; Philippians 4:8.

As one thinks upon things that are good, the mind becomes stored with good. Wherever there is a mouth disposed to speak upon things that are evil, there is an evil disposition—a mind in which evil has been stored. Whatever one has stored up in the mind will be *topmost* and sure to be spoken. An evil treasure will show itself, despite all endeavors to hide it; and likewise a good treasure will manifest itself; for the mind can hold only a certain amount.—Luke 6:45.

A father saw his son reading a novel. He knew that his son was in the habit of reading along this line. Calling the boy, he said, "John, I wish you to empty the apples out of that basket, and then take the basket to the woodshed and fill it with chips." The son did as he was directed. When he returned the father said, "Now put in the apples." The son replied that he could not do this, because there was not room enough in the basket for both chips and apples. Then the father said, "That is just what you are about to do with your mind. You have been filling your mind with chips; and when you try to put in apples, there will be no room." Thus it is with all of us. If we fill our minds with jokes, foolish sayings, etc., we shall not be able to fill them with the things of the Holy Spirit.—Ephesians 5:1-7.

Many of the Lord's people find that, while their hearts are good, there is in their flesh a tendency for certain things that are not good. Thus there is a continual struggle between the flesh and the spirit as to whether the treasure stored up shall be chips or apples, so to speak. It is for each New Creature to decide which shall fill his mind—what kind of society he will choose, where he will go, what he will read, what kind of influences he will come under, what kind he will resist, etc. If in the past he has to any extent treasured up evil things, he should now try to rid himself of them. If his mind has been filled with jokes and levity, things not proper to the child of God, he should seek to put these away.

HOW CHARACTER IS BUILT

Finally, there is a relationship between this laying up of a good treasure in our minds and that of which our Lord spoke when He said, "Lay up for yourselves treasure in Heaven." In laying up treasure in our minds and hearts, we are building character. Whoever goes into a man's house and sees what he has gathered in the way of treasures can easily perceive the direction in which that man's mind is bent. His preferences demonstrate his character. Thus it is with us all; the things which we cultivate are an index to our character.

When we come to render up our account as New Creatures, character will decide whether we shall be esteemed worthy to be of the Lord's elect Little Flock. Only those

who have laid up the treasure of a character like that of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Pattern, will be fit for an inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. Our eternal destiny therefore will be decided by the way in which we now use our minds and the thoughts which we now accumulate. Whoever cultivates good thoughts will receive a blessing, not only in the present life, but throughout the future.

Our first concern, then, must be for the heart—that its affections and dispositions may be wholly under the control of Grace Divine; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, meekness, self-control, faith, brotherly-kindness, love, supreme reverence for God and for Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles are established in the heart, we shall have no difficulty in controlling our tongue; for out of the good treasure of our heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace.

DECEMBER 24

Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins—Matt. 1:21.

The noting of those little incidentals by which Divine providence prepared for our Savior's birth and for the sending forth of the Gospel message, is strengthening to the faith of the Lord's people. Realizing God's care in the past over even the little things, gives a foundation for confidence in His wisdom and provision for the features of His Plan which are yet future—the fulfillment of all the exceeding great and precious promises which centered in Him who was born in Bethlehem. And so also a realization of the Divine providence in the larger affairs of the Divine Plan stimulates faith also in the Lord's providences as respects the personal and more private affairs of His people—Z '00, 8 (R 2555).

Names given to Biblical characters, *etc.*, are significant of the character, work, office, experience and typical relations of the person or thing involved. This accounts for the name selected for the Messiah by God. *Jesus* is the Latin word for the Hebrew word *Joshua*, or *Jeshua* (*Jehovah is salvation*), and signifies the office work of our Lord. His people are all that in this and the next Age approach God by Him. The race is under the condemnation, power and effects of sin. His merit, now imputed on behalf of the consecrated, delivers them from the condemnation of sin. By the Lord's Spirit, Word and providence, He gradually delivers them from the power or rulership of sin, and ultimately in the resurrection will deliver them from all the effects of sin. Later, by the application of His merit, He will deliver the world from the condemnation of sin; and by His Priestly, Mediatorial, Kingly, Legislative, Judicial, Prophetic and Paternal office, will deliver all who obediently become His people from the power and effects of sin. Hallelujah, what a Savior! He is mighty to save!—P '36, 167.

Parallel passages: Gen. 49:18; Job 33:23, 24; Psa. 72:4, 12-14, 17; 80:17; 89:19; Isa. 28:16; 40:10, 11; 42:6, 7; 53:10-12; 62:11; Zech. 9:9; Matt. 15:24; 18:11-13; Luke 1:68-77; 2:11, 30-34; Acts 16:31; Rom. 3:24-26.

Hymns: 132, 260, 144, 345, 342, 116, 347.

Poems of Dawn, 23: *Our Master*.

Tower Reading: Z '09, 375 (R 4534).

Questions: What does the name Jesus mean to me? Why? How? What does it effect in me?

OUR MASTER

NO fable old, nor mythic lore,
Nor dream of bards and seers,
No dead fact stranded on the shore
Of the oblivious years;—

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He,
And faith hath still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

The healing of His seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.

O Lord and Savior of us all!
O blessed Christ Divine!
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine.

We faintly hear, we dimly see,
In various phrase we pray;
But, dim or clear, we own in Thee
The light, the Truth, the Way.

Our Friend, our Brother, and our Lord,
What may Thy service be?

Not name, nor form, nor ritual word,
But simply following Thee.

To do Thy will is more than praise,
As words are less than deeds,
And simple trust can find Thy ways
We miss with charts of creeds.

R4534: THE BIRTH OF THE SAVIOR

—Matt. 2:1-12.—

Golden Text:—"Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. 1:21.

NOT until some time after Pentecost was the "middle wall of partition" between Jews and Gentiles broken down, as St. Paul explains. For more than eighteen centuries previous all of God's favors and promises were made to the Jews exclusively and only through their prophets did he speak and only to them. Only their kings and priests were in any sense recognized by the Lord. This was not because there were not noble minds amongst other peoples, but because, in the working out of the great Divine Program the

seed of Abraham was specially selected—although declared by the Lord to be a crooked and perverse people. Because they had no special revelation from God, the nobler minds amongst the other nations gave special study to the starry heavens along the lines of astronomy or astrology. The stars were charted and certain lessons were said to be learned therefrom bearing upon humanity's welfare.

At the time of the birth of the Savior, God made some astrological sign of the momentous event, which the wise men of the East, described in our study, understood. Reverentially they followed the guiding star from their home in the East, possibly Persia. How the star led we are not informed, but apparently its leading discontinued when they reached Judea, and naturally they went to the palace of King Herod inquiring for "him that is born King of the Jews." The mistake was quite reasonable. It required some time for us to learn that Divine favors and blessings are not always to the rich and the great, but oftenest for "the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom." (Jas. 2:5.) The filled, the rich, the satisfied, are frequently less interested in the Savior than are the poor, because they do not realize so great need for him and for the Millennial Kingdom of righteousness and blessing which he is to establish. For that matter, however, only the comparatively few were interested at our Lord's First Advent, as the Scriptures intimate that comparatively few will be longing for his Second Advent and the establishment of his Kingdom.

Herod affected an interest with the wise men in their search, but merely that he might thwart the Divine purpose by destroying the Child, that thus the Kingdom of Israel might be preserved to his own family—as it was through his six successors who bore his name, Herod. As the announcement of Jesus the Babe troubled the great at that day, similarly, we may be sure, any announcement of Jesus as the King of Glory to take over the dominion of the world, if corroborated, would cause consternation amongst the rulers of earth today—financial, political, etc. All have unfinished plans more or less selfish, and all instinctively realize that the inauguration of a reign of absolute righteousness would interfere with the business and schemes and trusts and corners, grafting and trickery, which are getting such a hold upon the highest civilization of our day.

The prophecies were searched and it was learned that the humble city of Bethlehem would be the honored place of our Savior's birth. The crafty Herod feigned reverence and his desire to worship the Heaven-appointed King, but only that he might subsequently destroy him—as a little later he attempted to do in causing the slaughter of the innocents from two years old and under. But how foolish was his endeavor to thwart the Almighty!

The wise men who sought the Babe of Bethlehem with worship and gifts, symbolized, perhaps, the great fact that those are truly wise who ever since have sought the Divinely appointed King and who bring to him the incense of their devotion, and as gifts all their talents and powers. Such lay their very lives at the Savior's feet, as St. Paul explains: "living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God."—Rom. 12:1.

The name Jesus is the Greek form for Joshua, signifying Savior; and in the Syriac, Savior signifies life-giver. Therefore, the Babe that was born to be King of the *Jews* was

to be the Savior, the Life-Giver of the *world*. He has not become the Life-Giver yet, nor the King. His great work is still future. It will be at his Second Coming that he will appear in his glory and become the King of Israel—on the spirit plane. Then, too, as the out-working of that glorious Empire which he will establish, he will be the world's Life-Giver, its great physician, and all mankind will be blessed with the glorious opportunity of becoming "Israelites indeed." The Empire of Sin will be overthrown and the darkness, ignorance and superstition connected therewith will be dissolved in the glorious light of Truth and grace which then will overspread the world.

True, in a certain sense, Messiah's Kingdom, rule, dominion, may be said to be already begun—begun at Pentecost. In a similar sense his work of saving sinners may be said to have begun there. But as respects the world's salvation, what has been accomplished during the past nineteen centuries is merely preliminary work to that which Jesus will accomplish when "he shall take unto himself his great power and reign" at the beginning of the Millennial Age. Those who now become his people are the favored few, "not many great, not many wise, not many learned," a "little flock" altogether. These he deals with on the basis of faith. They have sickness, pain, trouble, sorrow, as other men, but they believe God and act accordingly, and have the Spirit's testimony that they are children of God, called out from the world to be joint-heirs with their Savior. Their salvation begins now in the sense of reformation and rest in the Lord's promises, but, as the Apostle declares, they are not saved actually, but "*saved by hope*." For the actual salvation they must await the Second Coming of the Redeemer in the end of this Age to gather them as his jewels and to actually save them from sin and from death, by granting them a share in the First Resurrection.

Neither can it be properly said that Jesus reigns over the Church, his "members," his "espoused," soon to become his Bride. Toward her his attitude is that of teacher, Elder Brother, Lord, Head. His promise to her is that when he shall take his great power and establish his Throne of Empire over earth, she shall sit with him in that Throne as his Bride and Joint-heir. She shall be associated with him in judging or disciplining the world, incidental to its uplifting to human perfection—to more than Adam possessed and lost and that Jesus redeemed. Ah, yes, there is a depth of meaning in this word Jesus—Savior. Only with the conclusion of this Age and the experience of the resurrection "change" will the Church enjoy the promised reward that shall be brought unto her at his revelation. And only at the conclusion of the Millennial Age will the full meaning of Savior be appreciated by the world. By them the willing of earth's millions will have become "his people," saved from their sins, while the incorrigible will be utterly destroyed in the Second Death.

DECEMBER 25

Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord—Luke 2:10, 11.

Although we cannot agree that this is the proper day for celebrating the birth of our dear Redeemer, but must insist that it was about October first (*Studies*, Vol. 2, p. 54), nevertheless, since He did not intimate His desire that we should celebrate His birthday, it is quite immaterial upon what day that event, of so great importance to all, is celebrated. Upon this day, so generally celebrated, we may properly enough join with all whose hearts are in the attitude of love and appreciation toward God and toward the Savior. The habit of giving little remembrances one to another at this time of year seems to us specially appropriate. God is the Giver of every good and perfect gift. He is continually giving; and we are continually receiving from Him; but among all His gifts the One of greatest importance to us is the Gift of His Son to be our Redeemer—Z '03, 457 (R 3289).

The good tidings of great joy for all people announce blessings consisting of a number of things, *i.e.*, the forgiveness of sins, resulting in the awakening of all the dead; an accurate knowledge of the Truth; the race being placed amid conditions inconducive to sin and error, and conducive to truth and righteousness; a favorable influence Christward operating on all; bringing every knee to bowing to, and every mouth to confession of, His Lordship; the offer of the holy Spirit to all and the privileges of the Highway of Holiness for all. These are the blessings that the Oath-bound Covenant assures "the seed" that it will administer to mankind. The Ransom-price, a perfect human being, had to exist before it could be given as the basis of all these blessings. Therefore the human birth of Him who was to be both Lord and Christ had to take place. And it having taken place the Angel could in announcing it as an embryonic event tell of the blessed growth that had its roots in the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem, and its fruit in man's restitution—P '30, 184.

Parallel passages: Gen. 12:3; Psa. 22:27-29; Isa. 9:6; 29:18, 24; 35:5, 6, 10; Luke 2:30-32, 34; John 1:9; 12:32; Rom. 14:9; Phil. 2:9-11.

Hymns: 342, 345, 347, 246, 144, 16, 15.

Poems of Dawn, 259: *Coming By and By*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 376 (R 3700).

Questions: Has the Gospel been good tidings to me this week? Why? How? How did it influence my conduct?

COMING BY AND BY

A BETTER day is coming, a morning promised
long,
When truth and right, with holy might, shall over-
throw the wrong;

When Christ the Lord will listen to every plaintive
sigh,
And stretch His hand o'er sea and land, with justice
by and by.

The boast of haughty tyrants no more shall fill the
air,
But age and youth shall love the truth and speed it
everywhere.
No more from want and sorrow shall come the hopeless cry
But war shall cease, and perfect peace will flourish
by and by.

The tidal wave is coming, the Year of Jubilee;
With shout and song it sweeps along, like billows of
the sea,
The jubilee of nations shall ring through earth and
sky;
The dawn of grace draws on apace—'tis coming
by and by.

O! for that glorious dawning we watch and wait and
pray,
Till o'er the height the morning light shall drive the
gloom away;
And when the heavenly glory shall flood the earth
and sky,
We'll bless the Lord for all His works and praise
Him by and by.

R3700: THE GLORIOUS PROCLAMATION.

—Luke 2:1-20.—

Golden Text:—"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord."

THE message of the angels to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains sounds more and more precious to each child of God in proportion as he grows in grace and knowledge. As his eyes and ears of understanding open more widely to the lengths and breadths of God's great plan of the ages, that prophetic message is the more highly esteemed as an epitome of the entire Gospel. Nor can our attention be too frequently called to the great event which lies at the foundation of that message—our Savior's birth.

It matters not that December 25th is not the real anniversary of the Savior's birth, but probably the anniversary of the annunciation by the angel Gabriel, the anniversary of the Virgin Mary's conception, our Lord being born nine months later on the calendar, or about October 1. One so great, whose birth, death and resurrection from the dead means so much to the human family, may be remembered and celebrated any day, every day, by all who appreciate what he has done for our race. Since, then, the majority of Christian people have become habituated to the celebration of December 25th as our Lord's birthday, we need make no protest, but join with all in celebrating that day with rejoicing of heart, giving gifts and remembrances one to another, thus copying divine favor, which gave to mankind the Son of God as a gift of mercy and love for our redemption.

For four thousand years and more the promises of God, clothed in more or less of obscurity, had been given to mankind, intimating that ultimately the great curse of sin and death which had come upon the world through father Adam's disobedience in Eden would be rolled away, and instead of a curse, a blight, would come a blessing of the Lord with life-giving refreshment. In various types, figures and shadowy promises this lesson had come down through the ages to the time of our Lord's birth, especially amongst the Jews, who were the divinely favored and covenanted people. And since the Jews were of a commercial spirit, many of them were to be found in all parts of the civilized world; and thus amongst every people the faith in the one God and the hope of Israel through a Messiah were more or less made known, so that at the time of our Lord's birth we read, "All men were in expectation" of a soon-coming Messiah. Doubtless this expectation was built upon the interpretation of Daniel's prophecy, which we now see clearly marked the year of our Lord's majority, when he was thirty years of age and made his consecration to his work and received the begetting of the holy Spirit, his anointing as the great antitypical High Priest and as the great antitypical King over Israel and the world.

FROM BETHLEHEM TO NAZARETH

In olden times there were honorable cities and mean cities. Nazareth was generally recognized as one of the latter, while Bethlehem was distinctly one of the former—the City of David, Israel's beloved king. The Scriptures explain to us that Mary, our Lord's mother, and Joseph, her husband, were both of the lineage of David, and that in a seemingly accidental manner the prophecy was fulfilled which foretold that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.—Micah 5:2.

The Roman empire at that time bore rule over the whole world, the Jews being subject to it, but waiting expectantly, restlessly, for the coming Messiah, who would deliver them from being subject people and make of them the ruling caste in his Kingdom, the dominion of the world. Rome's great emperor, Caesar Augustus, was in power at this time, and had sent forth his decree for a polling or census of the whole world for purposes of taxation, etc. Luke informs us that it was in response to this royal decree that Joseph and Mary went up to their native city to be enrolled, and that thus it was that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and on account of the great concourse of people at the same time and for the same purpose, accommodations being scarce, the stable of the inn, or khan, was used by some as a lodging. Joseph and Mary, being of the late comers, were forced to

occupy these humble quarters, and thus it was that the King of glory, whose Kingdom is by and by to rule the world, was in the time of his flesh born in a stable and cradled in a manger.

THE ANGELS AND THE SHEPHERDS

Noble shepherds those must have been to whom the Almighty sent the angelic message respecting the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, which has rung down the ages and reached our ears—the message which thrills us the more in proportion as we are able to grasp its meaning. First a single angel appeared to the shepherds and allayed their fears, saying, "Fear not; behold I bring you good tidings." It would appear that fear is one of the dominating impulses of the human mind, especially in conjunction with any revelations from the Lord. Men realize—even the best of the race—that they are imperfect and that the Almighty and his laws are perfect. Instinctively the world seems to realize that a curse or condemnation of the Almighty rests upon it, and instinctively it fears a further curse and further condemnation, realizing its continual and increasing sinfulness. The same is true today with all except the comparatively few who are well informed respecting the divine character and plan. Thus the subject of religion is generally obnoxious to the world in general—a subject which they prefer to avoid, because of a feeling of guilt and a dread of further knowledge and condemnation.

It is for the true children of God today, as it was for the angels at that time, to assure the world that God is better than all their fears—that God so loved the world as to redeem them from the just sentence of death, the curse that came upon all as inheritors of Adam's imperfection and sentence.

"Good tidings" is another translation of our word "gospel." How beautiful the thought that the gospel is really and truly good tidings. Alas, for the misrepresentations of God's plan, under which so many of his professed people misrepresent his character and his Word, and apply the term "gospel" to their various messages from the dark ages, teaching purgatory and eternal torment as the portion of the race. Let us get away from this false thought and get the truth that the gospel is good tidings. The angel elaborated, saying that his message was good tidings of great joy, which should be unto all people. Ah, thank God, his plan is wider and deeper and higher and grander than anything we had ever conceived. The gospel message is not merely to be good tidings to the comparatively few that now have ears to hear and eyes to see its beauties, but in God's due time it is to be good tidings of great joy to all people.

As every member of Adam's race shared in his fall and in the curse of death which came upon him as a result, so every member of the race was included in the great redemptive sacrifice which our Lord Jesus offered and which was finished at Calvary. God's plan in Christ, as it is being worked out and shall ultimately be accomplished, will mean great joy for all people, and the tidings of this were given at the very moment of our Lord's birth, because he was the one through whom all the glorious things of the divine purpose and plan shall ultimately be accomplished.

THE CAUSE, THE LOGIC, OF THE MESSAGE

The message took cognizance of the fact that it was to reasonable people, who would want to know why the unchangeable God, who had once pronounced a curse, should at any time so amend and alter matters as to supplant the curse with a blessing. The messenger states the philosophy of the divine plan, "Unto you is born this day a Savior, which is Christ [Messiah] the Lord." There we have the key to the entire Gospel statement of how God could be just and yet be the justifier of sinners who accept Jesus. The word "Savior" here signifies life-giver, and how beautiful is the thought that as death is the wage of sin, the curse upon the race, this Messiah who was born is to be the one who will rescue the race from the sentence by giving them life again. The explanation of how he would give life was not given, nor was it necessary at that time; but now, in the light of developments, and with the explanations furnished through the Spirit in the New Testament, we see how that our Lord's voluntary sacrifice of his life, dying the just for the unjust, settled the claims of divine justice against Adam and thus incidentally against all who shared his sentence.

Truly the more we see of the divine plan for our salvation, which began to take shape in the birth of Jesus, the more we feel like shouting with the angelic choir praises to the God of heaven, thankfulness for his mercy to the children of men. It mattered not that the babe born in Bethlehem was the Savior only in prospect, that he could not even be anointed to do his work until he reached manhood's estate thirty years later; it mattered not that even then it would be necessary for him to lay down his life gradually through three and a half years of his earthly ministry, to be finished at Calvary; it mattered not either that the resurrection was still three days after that, and his ascension forty days later, and that the blessing in general would be deferred for nearly nineteen centuries thereafter. As the angels could sing and rejoice at the first budding of the divine plan of salvation, so also can all who have faith in the ultimate outcome rejoice with joy unspeakable and give praise to God in the highest and to his Son our Lord.

"SAVED BY HOPE"

Although nearly nineteen centuries have rolled away since that angelic message was delivered, it has not yet been fulfilled except in a limited measure by faith to those who have the eye of faith and the ears of faith, in all a "little flock." But the tidings of great misery for nearly all people has been spread abroad in the name of Christ, much to the discredit of the divine plan and to the dishonor of the divine character. Instead of carrying joy the message has very generally carried grief and sorrow, especially to the kind hearted and more generously disposed. Indeed we may say that no message of the Lord Jesus, either true or false, has ever reached all people. Even today, after nineteen centuries of propaganda, only a comparatively small portion of the human family have ever heard of the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved—"nor is there salvation in any other."—Acts 4:12.

What, then, shall we say of the salvation which is come to those who have truly accepted Christ as their Savior, and who are today rejoicing in him as such, and who by

faith are seeing the salvation of God begun in their own hearts and yet to be fully accomplished under the whole heavens? This the Apostle calls the salvation by hope. His words are, "We are saved by hope." (Romans 8:24.) We are not saved actually; we are still surrounded by sin, pain, sighing, crying and dying; the curse is not yet rolled away. All that the best of the Lord's people have received is salvation by hope, by faith. Yet this anticipation of the future salvation, of the resurrection from the dead, of a participation in the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature promised to the faithful, is so strong, so clear, that those who possess it are enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even in the midst of trials and difficulties and weaknesses and unfavorable conditions incident to the curse which still rests upon the race.

A PROPHECY OF GOOD THINGS

Yes, the angelic message was a prophecy of good things to be accomplished for the Church and the world during the Millennial age. The Church is to have the first blessing. The first resurrection is to be composed only of the blessed and holy who shall live and reign with Christ during the Millennium, the thousand years in which Satan shall be bound, and when the good influences of truth and righteousness shall enlighten the whole earth. The declaration of the Scriptures is that the deliverance of the Church will come early in the morning of that Millennial day, as the prophet declares, "God will help her early in the morning."—Psalm 46:5.

But much as we rejoice in the glorious hopes of the Gospel set before us who now see, who now believe, who now rejoice with joy unspeakable, we are glad that the divine mercy and love are of such lengths and breadths and heights and depths as to encompass the whole world of mankind, and to provide a blessing for every member of Adam's race through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

It will be during the Millennial age that this prophecy of the angel will have its fulfilment, and the great Savior who has already redeemed us by his sacrifice will stand forth as the King, the glorified Messiah, and establish his dominion of righteousness in the world for the blessing and uplifting of every member of the race. In harmony with the words of the Apostle, those will be times of refreshing, "times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21.) If the Lord had based the hope of the world upon some works of merit or righteousness of the world's doing, then indeed we might have feared—indeed the more we know of the world the less hope we would have. But, on the contrary, the Lord has based the entire proposition for the future blessing, not upon our worthiness, but upon the worthiness and sacrifice of his Son—To you is born a Life-giver, which is Messiah the Lord.

How it adds to our enjoyment of the coming age blessings to know that the trials and difficulties of this present Gospel age are subject to the divine supervision in the interest of the little flock that is now being gathered in advance from amongst men—the "elect," the Church. We see how the present trials and difficulties are the chiselings and polishings necessary to our development in the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit in the character-likeness of God's dear Son, our Lord, our Hope, our Bridegroom. How joyful

the thought that soon the elect number called from the world to be the Bride, the Lamb's wife, will be completed and enter into her glory. How precious the thought that then they shall be privileged with their Lord and Master to extend the divine favor of blessing and uplift to the world. What higher honor or privilege or blessing could possibly come to any?

THE ANGELS' SONG

It was after the giving of the message of good tidings and great joy by the heavenly one that a host of angels appeared to the shepherds, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." This, too, is a prophecy. It is not yet true, but will be fulfilled in every particular in God's due time, which we believe is now nigh, even at the door. Not yet does God receive glory in the highest, not yet is there peace amongst men. Quite to the contrary. God's name is blasphemed, not only by those who vulgarly and in ribald jest take the divine name in vain, and not merely by the heathen who worship devils and think they are gods, but even by Christian people God's name is blasphemed every day. For be it known that blasphemy is any dishonorable misrepresentation of another. God be merciful to us, for at some time or other every one of us doubtless has blasphemed the holy name in this manner—by misrepresenting the divine character and divine plan, by picturing the God of love and mercy and justice and truth as the originator, the planner, the perpetuator of the eternal torment of the great mass of his creatures, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, born to sin as the sparks to fly upward.

But the Lord had mercy upon us because we did it ignorantly. And we also should have compassion upon others who still ignorantly misrepresent our God, and our energies should be continually bent to their assistance, that the eyes of their understanding might open more widely to perceive the lengths and breadths and heights and depths and know the love of God which passeth understanding.

Noting that peace on earth and good will to men have not followed the Savior's birth thus far, and discerning that this is a prophecy of what is to be accomplished during the Millennium, many have been inclined to change the translation of this verse so as to have it read, "On earth peace amongst men, in whom he is well pleased." However, by thus changing it the statement would not be true, for even the Lord's people have no peace on earth. Whatever peace they have is in their hearts, and based upon their faith in the Lord and in the glorious things which he has promised. Our Lord himself and the apostles testified to this, assuring us that whosoever in this present time would live godly should suffer persecution, that a man's foes would be they of his own household, etc. (2 Tim. 3:12; Matt. 10:26.) Let us not confuse ourselves nor abridge the testimony of the Word, but with the eye of faith look forward to the day of Christ in which all these glorious things shall have their fulfilment, in which peace shall indeed fill the whole earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, bringing divine favor and rolling away the curse from the entire groaning creation, as pointed out by the Apostle.—Rom. 8:22.

Not even with the inauguration of the Millennium will this prophecy be fulfilled: not until its close, when the human family shall have been lifted by the Kingdom regulations out of sin, sickness, pain, sorrow and death, up, up to all that was lost in Adam—not until then will there indeed be glory to God in the highest, not until then will there be peace amongst men. Nor are we to understand that the entire race will be appreciative of the divine love and favor even after they have fully seen the righteousness of God in Christ manifested. On the contrary, the Scriptures seem to clearly teach that there will be a class who will then prove unfit for life eternal, unappreciative of the divine favor, and it is with pleasure that we learn that all such shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people in the Second Death. Thus eventually, by the close of the Millennium, Satan and all wilful wrongdoers having been destroyed, the time will come as declared in the Scriptures when all voices in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall be heard praising God, him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb forever and ever. Hosanna! Glory to God in the highest! Peace and good will to men! will be the final shout of a redeemed race when the great plan of salvation shall have been fully outworked according to the divine plan set forth in the Scriptures.

FROM GLORY TO A MANGER.

The time of our Lord's birth is quite clearly fixed. We have gone into the subject in detail in "Dawn" Vol. II., and will not here repeat. The notable census made by order of Caesar Augustus included the civilized world of that day, and according to Jewish custom each family and tribe were enrolled therein. Both Joseph and Mary, being of the Davidic line, went to the city of David—Bethlehem. The city is a small one on a hillside. Nearly all of it appears to good advantage in the cut on preceding page.

The inns or hotels of that land are very different from ours: they are neither hotels nor drinking saloons, but entered from a court-yard, as in the cut. Various large unfurnished rooms are at the service of the traveller, who carries with him his wraps, in which he sleeps, and his food and utensils for such light housekeeping as he may choose to do. Stalls for horses, camels, etc., are provided on the ground floor, and in the event of a crowd, as on such a census occasion, it is no uncommon thing for people, finding the upper large rooms all crowded full, to make themselves nearly as comfortable in the stabling department. Thus it came that the Lord was ushered into the world, which as the Logos he had made (John 1:2), in a most humble manner.

It was there that the shepherds found the babe, as predicted by the angels, and went forth proclaiming the fact; but Mary made no boasts but waited for God's due time.

DECEMBER 26

Be thou strong and very courageous—Josh. 1:7.

"Be strong and of a good courage." There are different kinds of courage; one sort is begotten of egotism and self-reliance; another kind is begotten of a recklessness which fails to take into account the difficulties of the situation; but the courage which the Lord inculcates, and which all the spiritual Israelites are to seek to possess, is the one which, while coolly and calmly discerning the trials and difficulties of the way, and while humbly realizing its insufficiency for the occasion, is supported by a faith in the Lord—a trust in the Divine promises which enables them to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might—Z '02, 285 (R 3079).

Courageous strength does not merely mean physical power and bravery; but also mental, moral and religious power and bravery, born of faith in God, hope for victory, delight in, and obedience to, Divine principles. It, therefore, consists of self-control, patience and bravery. It is necessary because of the untoward times in which we live; because of the issues Godward, Christward, Truthward, Churchward and Worldward involved; because of the foes that oppose us, as principles consisting of error, sin, selfishness and worldliness, and as persons, consisting of Satan, self and the world; because of the work that we have to do, each for himself, for the Church and for the world; because of the victories to be gained; and because of the final rewards to be attained. Such courageous strength cannot be developed by idleness or mere wishing. It can be gained by no other way than by a faithful use of the Lord's Spirit, Word and providences amid our daily experiences and conflicts, small and great—P '35, 172.

Parallel passages: Josh. 1:5-9; Deut. 5:32, 33; 31:7, 8; Isa. 35:4; 41:10-14; Rom. 8:31, 37; 1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:10-16; Psa. 27:1; 46:1, 7; 119:42; Prov. 2:7; Judges 6:14.

Hymns: 272, 13, 44, 71, 183, 184, 266.

Poems of Dawn, 196: *Sometime We'll Understand*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 179 (R 5705).

Questions: Have I been strong and courageous this week? Why? Where? What helped or hindered? With what results?

SOMETIME WE'LL UNDERSTAND

PERHAPS 'twill be in coming years,
It may be in the better land,
We'll read the meaning of our tears,
And thus, sometime, we'll understand.

We'll catch the broken threads again,
And finish what we here began;
Heav'n will the mysteries explain,

And the, ah! then, we'll understand.

We'll know why clouds instead of sun
Were over many a cherished plan;
Why song hath ceased when scarce begun.
Ah, yes! sometime, we'll understand.

Why what we longed for most of all,
Eludes so oft our eager hand;
Why hopes are crushed and castles fall—
Some day, sometime, we'll understand.

God knows the way, He holds the key,
He guides us with unerring hand;
Sometime with tearless eyes we'll see;
Yes, there, beyond, we'll understand.

Then trust in God, thro' all thy days,
Fear not, for He doth hold thy hand;
Tho' dark thy way, still sing and praise;
Sometime, sometime, we'll understand.

R5705: OUR CONQUEST OF THE ANTITYPICAL CANAANITES

"Be thou strong and very courageous."—Joshua 1:7.

JOSHUA records these words of Jehovah God, spoken to him at the time when, after Moses' death, he took command of Israel. The Israelites had then had their forty years' experience in the wilderness, and were just about to cross the Jordan and take possession of the land of Canaan. Joshua had become Moses' successor. The people had learned many lessons in their wilderness experiences; and now that Moses was dead, they looked to Joshua as their leader.

Joshua expressed his inability to serve in the place of Moses, through whom God had signally manifested Himself. But the Lord assured Joshua that He would bless him all the days of his life, even as He had blessed Moses. Joshua had been found faithful in all his experiences. He was one of the two survivors of the wilderness experiences who, when starting out from Egypt, were over twenty years of age. Because of the faithfulness of Joshua and Caleb, the Lord had promised them that they alone of all the adults who left Egypt should enter the Promised Land. The others had died in the wilderness, save Moses and Aaron, Aaron dying in Mount Hor and Moses a little later in Mount Nebo, before the people crossed over Jordan.

The Lord's exhortation for Joshua to be strong and very courageous was in connection with the instruction that the Israelites were to take possession of the land of Canaan and

destroy the inhabitants of the land. This command of God has been a stumbling-block to many. They have supposed that the Bible could not be of God when it bears such instructions. They have felt that it would be an act of injustice for the Israelites to go in and possess Canaan. What right, they say, had Israel to kill those people and take possession of their land? It belonged more to the people who already possessed it than to anybody else. To invade their country, destroy their lives and confiscate their lands and their possessions would be very unjust. The course of Israel is held up as an illustration of the "land-grabbing" disposition of the natural man, which has seemed to grow stronger century by century, notwithstanding the increase of civilization and his professed appreciation of justice.

This is the view that many take, and much to their own injury; for they do not understand the matter they discuss. When we say that they do not understand the matter, we do not mean that they are people of inferior mind, but that they have not taken God's viewpoint. From any other than the right viewpoint, the whole course of Israel in this matter must seem to be unjust and ungodlike. From the right viewpoint, however, the matter is seen to be reasonable, just and righteous altogether. The sins and abominations of these Gentile people were such that their destruction was a very desirable thing. God had a great surprise in mind for this land of Canaan, which they inhabited. Moreover, the Jewish Age was an Age of Types. Both Israel and these corrupt Gentile nations were typical.

CHRISTIANS TO BE NON-RESISTANT

In the present Age, the Lord's people are not to take possession of either the persons or the property of others. They are not to destroy life under any circumstances. They are not to battle with any kind of carnal weapons. They are to be non-resistant. We are not of those who would defend the course of the professed Christian nations of modern times along these lines. As Christians, guided by our Master's example and instruction, we should seek to do good to all men as we have opportunity, and to leave them in peaceable possession of their homes, their property and their liberties. There is a great difference between the Divine Law of Love, which is the motive power operating in the true children of God today, and the law of selfishness, under which the masses of mankind—including the vast majority of nominal Christendom—still operate, and will continue to operate until the New Dispensation shall be fully ushered in by Divine Power.

Nevertheless, seeing that the true Church is separate from the world in the Lord's Plan and His dealings, we can look with comparative equanimity upon the overriding of justice and equity by the kingdoms of this world, and may realize that the Lord, especially at the present time, is taking advantage of their natural disposition toward warfare and conquest and empire-building. He will cause the wrath of man thus to work out certain features of His Plan which will prove later on to be for the blessing of the whole world, those now in their graves as well as those yet living.

Not being able to see behind the veil into all the gracious purposes of our Heavenly Father, and not being wise enough to know how these purposes could be carried out, the

peoples of the earth are groping on in darkness, thinking they are managing their own affairs, not knowing that a Mighty Hand is so directing the affairs of nations that His own glorious designs shall be outworked in all things, not knowing that nothing can thwart His purposes. The Lord's people occupy largely the position of spectators in respect to the course of this world—its policies, politics, conquests, its frantic efforts to carry out its selfish projects.—John 17:16.

Were we to take a hand in the affairs of the world, on either side of the great questions with which they are grappling, we would surely be working contrary to the Divine Program. The Lord does not purpose to give the victory now to either party in the strife. We are to be separate from the world and to give our thought and attention, our sympathy and interest, to the affairs of the Heavenly Kingdom; and while our voices, if ever raised at all on such questions, should be raised on behalf of justice, mercy and peace, yet we can view with great composure whatever events and changes may take place in the world, knowing that our Heavenly Father has all power to overrule these matters to His own praise and to the ultimate good of mankind.

A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW

But the world tells us that we are too peaceable. They say that mankind could not get along without a certain amount of warfare. We answer that no one can understand God's methods except as he is guided by His Word, by the Spirit of the Truth. God's dealings are different in different ages and for different purposes. These seemingly conflicting presentations of God's will are perfectly reasonable and harmonizable from the proper viewpoint.

Let us see. Back in Eden, the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die," was pronounced upon Adam because of wilful disobedience to the Divine instruction that a violation of God's command would bring death. After the fall, mankind gradually became more and more estranged from the Lord. Many of the angels, who then had access to earth with powers of materialization, fell from their holy estate. Mankind became a prey to these angels who "lusted after strange flesh." (Genesis 6:1-4; Jude 6, 7; 2 Peter 2:4, Diaglott.) This condition of things was finally overthrown by the great Deluge of Noah's day.

But in time the world again became very sinful. Then God made selection of one man from amongst mankind; namely, Abraham. He promised that if Abraham would walk in His ways, He would guide Abraham's affairs to his good and make of him a great nation and would bless his seed. And so we have Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God's special servants. The descendants of Jacob, God took into covenant relationship with Himself during the days of Moses. Under Moses as their mediator, God promised to be their God and to recognize them as His people. If they would be loyal to Him, He would bless them. If they should be disloyal to Him and go over to the idolatry of the neighboring nations, then He would punish them for their sins and give them chastisements; but He would not forsake them.

The peoples of Canaan were in a very degraded condition morally. They had progressed so far in sin that it was no longer advantageous that they should continue in possession of Canaan. The Israelites were to drive out these peoples—and they were to be destroyed when necessary. There were certain nations which God especially commanded Israel to utterly destroy.—Deuteronomy 20:10-18.

When thinking of this command of God, we are to rid our minds of the superstitions of the past. These people who were to be slain did not go into eternal torment, but into death, into Sheol, Hades, the tomb. This would be an unconscious sleep. Those who perished by the sword are still asleep; they are not in pain, not in anguish of any kind. They are merely cut off from life until the general awakening time; for God has made a provision whereby those people may return to life, may be called forth from their sleep. All the blessings of everlasting life God has made provision for through Messiah. Messiah is to have a Kingdom; and this Kingdom is to rule the world in righteousness (see Psalms 96, 97, and 72), blessing not only the living, but also those who have fallen asleep in death. (Isaiah 25:6-9; Hosea 13:14; Romans 14:9; 8:20, 21, Diaglott.) Many Scriptures declare this in unmistakable terms. Indeed this is the tenor of the entire Word of God. The Divine Plan runs like a golden chain through the whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments.

This great Messiah, who is yet to bless all the race of Adam, must needs be their Redeemer, and thus the Owner and Deliverer of the people, as the Scriptures declare. Through His sacrifice for man He has obtained the "keys of Hades and of death," as He tells us. (Revelation 1:18.) He gave His life as the offset to Father Adam's life. This purchase price has not as yet been applied for the world in general, but will be applied, we believe, in the very near future. The Millennial Kingdom of Christ is for the very purpose of giving all of Adam's children, not previously enlightened, as well as Adam himself, a full opportunity for everlasting life, after having had experience in the nature and results of sin.

From this broad viewpoint, we see that with these peoples of ancient Palestine—the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, etc.—it was a blessing that they died at the time they did. Vile and debased in morals, they were no benefit to themselves or to others. It was all the same whether they died by some kind of disease—consumption, pneumonia, cholera—or in some other manner.

Should any one ask, Why did God choose to have these ancient peoples die in battle instead of by disease? The answer is that the peoples inhabiting the land would be a constant menace to the morals of the people of Israel. They were not only idolatrous, but practised licentious rites, divination, etc. Furthermore, God purposed that the land should be put to a far different use. He had a great Plan, in which it was His design that Canaan should play an important part. The land and its inhabitants were to be typical of God's dealings with Spiritual Israel in the Gospel Age. The type in which the land of Canaan was designed of God to figure could not be carried out without the expulsion of these heathen, or their destruction.

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL EXPELLING THE CANAANITES

Is it asked what type was here shown? We believe that the expulsion and destruction of these sinful nations by Israel was a type of how the people of God today, Spiritual Israel, are to take possession of their human bodies. We are, as New Creatures, to conquer, to destroy, these tendencies of the flesh which would enslave us. If we do not overcome and destroy them, they will overcome and destroy us. We are to vanquish the evil propensities, evil habits, vices, thoughts, desires, which have inhabited our minds, and are by our new wills to take entire control and fill the place of the former occupants with holy, pure thoughts, desires, ambitions, purposes, habits.

These human bodies are now the property and possession of the Spiritual Israelites, the New Creatures in Christ. There is to be no peace between the New Creature and his flesh. We are to take warning from Natural Israel in this respect. Failure on their part to drive out and destroy their enemies completely, as God commanded, was a source of constant trouble and ensnarement, and a cause of much idolatry and sin to Israel. And their experiences "were written for our admonition." Our warfare against spiritual foes must result in the utter destruction of the fleshly mind, and will also mean the death of the human body.

This warfare of Israel against their enemies may also be a picture of conditions in the Millennium. During the Millennial Age the world, under the guidance of Christ and the Church, will be brought into a condition which will fit them to have possession of the whole earth. Satan will be bound for a thousand years. Sin and the curse of Adamic death now resting on the world will be destroyed, together with everything contrary to righteousness. All these things belong to the reign of that "strong man" who has so long oppressed the world. Christ, the Antitype of Joshua, will then be in control, and will show man how to exterminate these things of sin and thus eventually come into possession of the earth, the Eden of God, and each man be a king, a sovereign.

While the Natural Israelite was to be a man of battle and to take possession of the land of the enemy, we are not to see in this fact anything that was not in it. For instance, it was not the Israelites who were to say that they would go up and possess the land of Canaan. It was God Himself who was to give them possession. Nor are we to think that God was negligent of the real interests of these Gentile peoples. He declares that their iniquity had come to the full. It was no longer profitable at that time that their lives should be prolonged. Thus we see that justice was not infringed upon in giving the Israelites that land for an everlasting possession. This had been previously foretold by the Lord; but the testimony of the Lord, at the time the promise was made, was that it would not then be an appropriate time for its fulfilment, but that there should first be a dark time, until the iniquity of those nations had come to the full.

BATTLE OF SPIRITUAL ISRAEL TODAY

Coming down to the Gospel Age, we see that the Spiritual Israelites have had a great conflict. It is a warfare against the whole world—no warfare so mighty and so

momentous has ever been waged. Yet the conflict fought by the Lord Jesus and His followers has not been a fight with guns or other carnal weapons. We have today millions of people in great camps intent upon destroying one another. They are being goaded on by their rulers. There may be here and there a Christian among them, one who has truly given his heart to God; but these are the exceptions. The great mass of the world acknowledge that they have taken no such step as consecration to the Lord. Yet they are instructed by their rulers that they are God's people and are fighting His battles.

According to the Bible, only the saintly, only those who have taken the specific steps laid down by the Master for His disciples, are Christians at all. All others professing to be Christians are merely imitations—"tares." Through a study of the lives of saints of olden time true Christians are enabled to see more clearly the mind of God, the will of God, for themselves. They gain from the lives of Moses, Joshua, the Prophets, and other faithful ones of past ages lessons of faith, of courage, of zeal. They are instructed that all these Scriptural records are meant as types and as admonitions for the Gospel Church; and they are thereby warned, strengthened and encouraged.

The Lord's people should not feel strong in themselves nor boastful, but, on the contrary, very humble and very insufficient—just as Joshua did. All of God's children are to realize their insufficiency in their own strength. They should feel that God has called them to a great work, and that they would make an utter failure unless the Lord gives His blessing. They are to look to the Lord and to receive His promises into good and honest hearts, believing that these promises are theirs, so long as they are loyal and true to Him. Thus doing, they may be strong, very strong; they may be very courageous.

SHINING EXAMPLES OF THE PAST

We have noted the courage of our Lord Jesus Himself, with a whole nation against Him! It has been thus with all His faithful followers—most of them the poor of this world, who have had very little wealth or influence or honor of men. The true people of God throughout the Gospel Age have been a humble class, yet they have been very strong and courageous. The people in the days of the Apostles "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus" and had learned of Him. Those disciples of Jesus had seen His readiness to lay down His life in the Father's service. They had seen His courage when He was facing death of the most cruel kind, when He said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" And so we who have followed the Master since then have taken note of the spirit which our dear Lord manifested at all times, under the most trying and crucial experiences; and it has proven a wonderful inspiration to us.

The faithful ones have all along as a rule been little known in the world. They have not usually been of the great, the learned, the rich. In the past there may have been some prominent ones, some of noble birth, who were saints of God, living up to what light they had in their time; but they were the exceptions. We know that there have been many true saints who have lived quiet, uneventful lives, yet who have seemed to live up to all the light they possessed and to walk with God until they fell asleep in death. The world has generally ignored these saints of God, even when they were not actively persecuted. We

cannot surely know who are entirely loyal and sincere at heart; but we may be sure that "the Lord knoweth them that are His."—2 Timothy 2:19.

COURAGE IN THIS "HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

Coming down to our own day, there never was a time when more strength of character and more courage were needed than just now. The iniquities of the whole world, and especially of so-called Christendom, have now about come to the full; and all present governments are about to be swept away, to make room for the glorious Kingdom of God under the whole heavens—the glorious Reign of the King of kings. All the ecclesiastical systems of today, calling themselves the Church of Christ, are arrayed on the side of error and are battling against the Truth and its advocates. So we need to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Whoever starts out to battle in his own strength against this stronghold of error will be sure to be defeated. But if he goes in the strength of the Lord of Hosts, and has Divine direction as to what he shall do or say, he may well be of good courage. Many earnest hearts are now asking for the Bread of Life, they are captives in Babylon or are famishing out in the "field," the world. These need our assistance.

Our strength will be tried—our hold upon God and upon the Truth, and our courage in defending the Truth. These will surely be put to the test; for Babylon is opposing our way. God will not have any in the Kingdom who have not faithfully endured. Yet in meekness let us seek to instruct those who oppose themselves to the Word of the Lord; and let us look for the hungry and thirsty ones.

We do not know in what form some of our trials and tribulations will come. But we who are living in this "evil day," yea, in the very close of this day—in the final "hour of temptation"—surely need to have on the whole armor of God. We need to have our loins girt about with *Truth*; we need the helmet to protect our minds, our intellects, from the shafts of error; we need the breastplate of righteousness; we need the Sword of the Spirit—the broad two-edged Sword; we need the sandals of "preparation of the Gospel of Peace." We need all these to overcome the Canaanites in our own breast, and to overcome all the surrounding obstacles.

Thus armored and furnished, we may indeed come off "more than conquerors" in the great conflict, which is daily increasing. We shall conquer "through Him who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood." Let the promise of the Master be our daily inspiration: "To him that *overcometh* will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."

"Arise, then, O Army of Gideon!
Let him that is fearful return;
Jehovah wants only the zealous,
Whose hearts with the love of Truth burn!

"Your sword is the 'Sword of the Spirit';

Your lamp is the light from His Word;
Your pitcher, this poor earthen vessel
You break at the voice of your Lord.

"Is your light burning bright in your pitcher?
Doth your trumpet give forth certain sound?
Soon the Sword of the Lord and of Gideon
The enemy's host will confound.

"For sure is the victory promised,
And great is the peace He awards;
Then 'stand' in your place, all ye faithful—
The battle's not yours, but the Lord's!"

DECEMBER 27

Little children, keep yourselves from idols—1 John 5:21.

We are not to put our trust in leaders, but in the Lord. This does not signify that we are not to trust leaders, and not to acknowledge leaders, for all the history of the Lord's dealings with His people, the typical as well as the antitypical, shows us that He is pleased to use human agencies as His representatives in the teaching and leading of His people from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge. The lesson to be learned is that the Lord is thoroughly competent to manage His own work, and that while we may look for His leading through human agencies, our trust is not in them, their wisdom, their strength, but in the Lord's wisdom and strength, guiding them and us through them—Z '02, 284 (R 3077).

Idols are not always gross physical images. They are all physical, mental, moral and religious objects other than Jehovah to which people bow down and render supreme devotion. That to which one renders supreme devotion is his God; and if this be not Jehovah, it is an idol. Thus viewed, we see that some make idols of their creeds, denominations, sects, themselves, their ambitions, appearance, clothes, ease, education, position, popularity, safety, opinions, rights, appetites, home, property, families, titles, friends, country, leaders, the opposite sex, *etc.* It is these idols that are alluring to us who refrain from serving the gross idols of the heathen; and it is especially from these idols that the Apostle exhorts us to keep ourselves. To indulge in such idolatry, means to go back on our consecration—whereby we vowed to be dead to self and the world and to be alive to God—and to become servants of sin, error, selfishness and worldliness at the behest of Satan—P '34, 175.

Parallel passages: 1 Cor. 10:7-14; Ex. 32:23-26; 2 Cor. 6:17; Ex. 20:3-6; 1 Sam. 15:23; Psa. 16:4; 44:20; Josh. 24:23; Jonah 2:8, 9; 1 Cor. 6:9; Rev. 9:20; 21:8.

Hymns: 4, 197, 172, 192, 312, 224, 47.

Poems of Dawn, 95: *My Hymn.*

Tower Reading: Z '13, 253 (R 5297).

Questions: Have I kept myself this week from idols? How? Under what conditions? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

MY HYMN

I CANNOT think but God must know
About the thing I long for so;
I know He is so good, so kind,
I cannot think but He will find
Some way to help, some way to show
Me to the thing I long for so!

I stretch my hand: it lies so near.
It looks so sweet, it looks so dear!
"Dear Lord," I pray, "oh, let me know
If it is wrong to want it so!"
He only smiles; He does not speak;
My heart grows weaker and more weak
With looking at the thing so dear,
Which lies so far and yet so near.

"Now, Lord, I leave at Thy dear feet
This thing which looks so near, so sweet;
I will not seek, I will not long;
I almost fear I have been wrong.
I'll go and work the harder, Lord,
And wait till by some loud, clear word
Thou callest me to Thy loved feet
To take this thing so dear, so sweet!"

R5297: THE GOLDEN CALF

—Exodus 32:15-20, 30-35.—

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols."—1 John 5:21.

THE Israelites experienced a severe trial of faith and obedience soon after they had entered into covenant relationship with God. In their trial they failed utterly. The Covenant was broken. However, after punishing them, God renewed the Covenant with them. This constituted a fresh manifestation of Divine Mercy.

The circumstances of this testing are a part of this lesson. Moses, by Divine direction, after the making of the Covenant, went up into Mt. Sinai, taking with him Joshua as his servant. He was gone forty days—a comparatively long period, under the circumstances. The Israelites felt themselves very much like children in the hands of Moses. To them he was God's representative in a very special sense. His prolonged absence gave room for the cultivation of faith, patience, trust.

They remembered the trying experiences through which they had passed. The Egyptians and slavery were behind them; the Amalekites, who already had attacked them, were still their enemies and might renew the attack. What would they do in the absence of Moses whose upheld hands had brought them God's favor and prosperity in battle?

Here worldly wisdom came in. Aaron, the high priest, the brother of Moses and his representative in leadership, was perplexed as to how to keep the people from utter discouragement, fear, etc. They seemed to need and to call for a representative of God

visible to their eyes. They apparently were unable fully to trust to the God whom they could not see, after His special representative, Moses, was out of their sight.

The leaders of the people took counsel together and determined that they would make a representation of Jehovah—an image which the people, looking upon, could use as an instrument of worship. We are not to suppose that the Israelites recognized the golden calf as their God Jehovah, but used it merely as a symbol, or representation, just as the heathen use idols as representatives of their gods, and just as some Christians consider it proper to use the crucifix as a representation of Christ—not to worship, but merely to assist the faith and to hold the attention.

Today's lesson seems clearly to indicate that God was greatly displeased with their symbolical representation of Himself. This was one of His commands given to the Israelites: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness" of God, or of anything, to bow down before it and worship it as a symbol of God.

MAKING THE GOLDEN CALF

We are not to suppose that the calf was made of solid metal. It is not at all probable that all the jewelry of all the Israelites, gathered together, would have been nearly enough to make a calf of any size of solid metal. The supposition is that, after the manner of that time, the calf was made either of clay or wood and then laminated, or covered over with the molten metal—the gold which had constituted the jewelry of the people. This in turn doubtless was graven, or tooled. Having made the idol, the people rejoiced in it as an evidence of God in their midst. They gave themselves up to a season of frolic—singing, dancing, feasting.

This was the condition of things at the end of the forty days spent by Moses in the mount with God. As he came down from the mountain with the tables of the Law, he heard the shouts of the people, and then beheld them worshiping the golden calf and offering sacrifices and incense to it. Moses was angry. He was the mediator between God and Israel—the representative of both. He had a right to be angry; for he was charged by God with the responsibility of that nation, and he realized that a serious crime against the Divine Covenant had taken place during his absence.

Moses dashed the tables of stone—the tables of the Law—into fragments, indicating that the Covenant was broken. He went down to the people, angry against them, as God's representative. Armed with Divine authority, he let fall upon them a just penalty for their departure from God and rapid retrogression into sin.

Still, as the representative of the people, Moses was a patriot of the highest order. He went to God in prayer, and besought that if the penalty of this sin was the casting off of his people he might be blotted out instead. This was in response to God's proposition that Moses alone seemed to be loyal, and that God would make of him the nation who should inherit the promises made to Israel. Such patriotism as Moses here evinced has surely not

often been equalled. It meant loyalty to his work as Israel's representative and mediator, and at the same time loyalty to God, whom he also represented.

"KEEP YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS"

Let us now apply the lesson to Spiritual Israel. After the Christian has left the world, the slavery, the sin, after he has passed the bitter experiences of Marah, after he has had manifestations of God's favor, after he has partaken of the Bread from Heaven, after he has entered fully into Covenant relationship with God—there comes a time when he must walk by faith, and not by sight. He is being proved by the Lord. If he fails in this lesson, as the typical Israelites did, it will be a serious matter for him.

We are not meaning to suggest that any Christian would be liable to make a golden image literally. We do mean to say, however, that this matter of making images, and of allowing them to divert and absorb our worship of God is one of the greatest trials and tests which comes to Spiritual Israelites. The golden calf which some set up to worship is business. They give themselves wholly to it, sacrificing their time and energy. They treat it as a god. The love of money and of the things which money can procure leads into idolatry, and thereby breaks their covenant with the Lord.

Others idolize the opposite sex, and give all that they possess for its favor and fellowship. They worship the creature more than the Creator, as the Apostle explains. They are making a great mistake. Jesus declared this, saying, He that loves father, or mother, or children, or self or any other creature more than Me is not worthy of Me.

Still another idol is to be noted—the idol of sectarianism. St. Paul warned against this idol, saying, "One of you says, I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos; another, I am of Peter." (I Cor. 1:12; 3:4.) Then he inquires, Is not this reverencing of men a form of idolatry? putting it, "Are ye not carnal?" The same principle we may apply to ourselves today, and guard ourselves against sectarian worship. If one says, "I am of Calvin"; another, "I am of Luther"; another, "I am of Wesley"; etc., are not these evidences of carnality? And worse than this, is there not danger of worshiping the human institutions which bear these human names, and thus of having something to come between the soul of the Christian and his God? We believe that there is a serious danger along this line. We urge Spiritual Israelites that they cease to worship the creed idols, and that all God's children turn from idols of every kind, and worship and reverence God alone.

The tendency to formulate and reverence the creeds instead of the Bible has been manifest ever since the first one was made—the Nicene creed—A.D. 325. Every creed tends to take the place of the Bible, just as the Talmud does with the Jews. Jesus spoke against this, saying, "Ye do make void the Word of God through your traditions."

The creeds of Christendom are our Christian traditions respecting the Truth. God's intention evidently was that His people should have no creed except the Bible as a whole. They were to believe all of the Word of God and to search the Scriptures daily, to ascertain its teachings. Thus God's people were to grow in grace and knowledge, as

would not be possible were creed idols to be set up and divert the attention of the Lord's people in various directions.

DECEMBER 28

He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head—Psa. 110:7.

We want to ask the Lord, our Master and Head, that He will bless us more and more, as with fresh zeal we shall endeavor faithfully and rejoicingly to drink of the brook of life's experiences, and gain wisdom therefrom that will fit and prepare us for His service by and by; and which will the better fit and prepare us for His service also in the present time, and enable us by His grace to show forth His praises in all the trying circumstances and vicissitudes of life so as to glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which are His. Let us, as we drink of the brook, take a lesson from the little birds, which when drinking, repeatedly lift the head as though giving thanks to God. Let us continually give thanks to our Lord for every taste of life's experience, for every lesson, for every trial, appropriating them all to our spiritual development—Z '02, 14 (R 2935).

The brook of this text represents the Word of God and life's experiences. The picture is that of a journey over a road along which the clear waters of a brook flow. From it the thirsty travelers may drink and quench their thirst. Our dear Redeemer found the brook of the Word flowing for His refreshment along His entire journey; and from it He drank and was refreshed. Like Him, let us, as we journey toward the Heavenly Zion, drink from this cooling, refreshing brook whenever in need of its reinvigoration. Likewise from the brook of life's experiences Jesus drank, learning new lessons, preparing Him for new experiences. Life's experiences will also teach us new lessons helpful for future experiences. Only the dullest pupils fail to learn from experience, the most thorough of teachers. Not being of this class, let us learn both from the Word of God and from the experiences of life the lessons which the Lord teaches us—P '33, 177, 178.

Parallel passages: Luke 22:27; Acts 8:32, 33; 2 Cor. 8:9; 10:1; Phil. 2:5-8; Isa. 50:5, 6; Matt. 26:51-54; Heb. 12:2-14; Ezra 7:10; Psa. 78:2-8; 143:8, 10; Prov. 23:12.

Hymns: 63, 9, 10, 22, 67, 154, 315.

Poems of Dawn, 213: *From Glory Unto Glory*.

Tower Reading: Z '02, 12 (R 2935).

Questions: What have I this week learned from the Word and from experience? How? With what results?

"FROM GLORY UNTO GLORY"

"FROM glory unto glory!" Thank God that even
here
The starry words are shining out, our heavenly way
to cheer!
From "glory that excelleth" all that human heart

hath known,
Our "onward, upward," shall begin in the presence
of the throne.

"From glory unto glory" of loveliness and light,
Of music and of rapture, of power and of sight;
"From glory unto glory" of knowledge and of love
Shall be the joy of progress awaiting us above.

"From glory unto glory" that ever lies before,
Still wondering, adoring, rejoicing more and more;
Still following where He leadeth, from shining field
to field,
Himself the goal of glory, revealer and revealed!

Then let our hearts be surely fixed where truest joys
are found,
And let our burning, loving praise yet more and more
abound;
And gazing on the "things not seen," eternal in the
skies,
"From glory unto glory," O Savior, let us rise!

R2935: DRINKING AT THE BROOK

**"He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."
—Psalm 110:7.**

OUR TEXT refers directly to our Lord Jesus, and secondly to all the members of the church, his body, each one of whom must share his experiences—walking in his steps and drinking of the same "brook," if they would in due time share with their Lord in his exaltation, to glory, honor, and immortality; this exaltation being represented in our text by the expression, "lift up the head." In ancient times as at present, human language was full of figures and symbols, water representing truth, and drinking of water representing appropriation of the truth, namely, wisdom (See Prov. 18:4); and lifting up the head, exaltation.—See Gen. 40:13.

Our text is given as the reason for the glorious blessings and honors predicted of the Christ and described in the preceding verses of the same psalm. Let us notice these. The first verse is directly applied to our Lord by the Apostles (Acts 2:34; Heb. 1:13; I Pet. 3:22), and our Lord applied the same to himself. (Matt. 22:44.) A figure of speech is again employed, descriptive of our Lord's relationship to the Father in Glory; he is not literally seated beside him at his right hand, but he has been honored with a superior station, a position above all others—he specially is at the right hand of divine power. Nor does his second coming hinder or change this relationship; at his second coming he will

still be at his Father's right hand as he himself, declared (Matt. 26:64.) At the Father's right hand during the Millennial Age, the Father, through him, shall subdue all things to himself—put down all opposing authority and insubordination; blessing those who come into heart-harmony with his kingdom of righteousness, and destroying from the earth all who after fair knowledge of good as well as evil, choose the evil. These will be considered as followers of Satan instead of followers of God, and the second death, we are specifically told, is for the Devil and his messengers, servants.—Matt. 25:41.

The description of the Millennial Kingdom is continued by the Prophet, who declares, "Jehovah shall send the rod of thy strength out of (or through) Zion"—primarily the Church, the "Bride," the "body" of Christ; the rod or sceptre or authority shall be exercised through the Church, by the Lord Jesus the Head of the Church, under the divine commission,—"Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." This is not in any measure fulfilled yet. Jesus when in the flesh did not rule in the midst of his enemies, and the Church has not thus ruled; on the contrary, both he and his followers have been subject to the powers that be, and the violent have taken the kingdom by force and have despitely used the Head and the body members. (Matt. 11:12.) The enemies are not yet made the footstool of the Lord, Zion has not yet been glorified, and Messiah's sceptre or authority has not yet gone forth therefrom. On the contrary we are still in "this present evil world," we still wait for the completion of the elect Church that together she may be glorified with her Lord—enter into His glory—when he, the due time having come, "shall take unto himself his great power and reign;"—then the nations will be angry, etc., (Rev. 11:18) and divine wrath will come upon them; and following that "day of wrath" shall come the promised blessing, upon all who shall demonstrate under the good opportunities of that Millennial Kingdom, that they love righteousness and hate iniquity.

This latter class—those who during the Millennial age, during that day of his presence, shall become the Lord's people (I Cor. 15:23)—are referred to by the Prophet when he says,—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The day of his *power* is not yet here, as the poet declares: "Wrong and evil triumph now." The "Prince of this world" still rules and is "god of this world" as the Apostle asserts; because our Lord has not yet taken to himself his great *power* nor begun his reign. The people who shall be willing in the day of his power are not, therefore, the saints of this Gospel age: these latter are only the "first fruits unto God of his creatures" and are willing *before* the day of his power—willing to hear the Shepherd's voice and to follow him; willing to sacrifice all and to lay down their lives in his service, for the brethren.

Evidently, therefore, those referred to as "Thy people" who shall be willing in the day of Christ's power, the Millennial Age, are those whom our Lord represents as his "sheep," in the parable of the sheep and the goats. They are those who after the Son of Man shall be seated on the throne of his glory, and after his Church is seated with him in his throne, and after the judgment or trial day for the nations, the world, is ended,—after the knowledge of the Lord has filled the earth, after it has gradually proved the savor of life unto life, or death unto death to the world, shall be found truly "his people,"—willing, nay, glad to serve him when they know him and understand his will. As his sheep they will desire to follow in the way of righteousness, truth and holiness; as his people they

will not need to be coerced further, but learning the truth in the day of his power, when the adversary is bound and when the eyes of their understandings are opened, they will be *willingly* his people. And all who shall not then become willingly his people will be esteemed his enemies, "goats," angels or messengers or servants of the adversary, and be destroyed with him in the Second Death.

"In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth." That is to say, as morning after morning comes forth fresh and vigorous as its predecessor, as the sun grows not old and feeble, so with Messiah, and so also with those accepted as the members of his body, they will have perpetually the freshness and vigor of youth,—glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature—this is part of the blessing that is promised, and which will result, our text tells us, from drinking of the brook in the way.

Having told us of the kingly power and authority of Messiah, it is appropriate that the Lord through the prophet explains to us that Messiah's priestly office is to be also of a higher type than the earthly,—that his priest and kingly offices are to be blended and united as was typified in Melchisedec, who was both king and priest. Our Lord when on earth was not of the Aaronic priesthood, nevertheless, Aaron was his type, and the sacrifices which Aaron performed were typical of the "better sacrifices" performed by the antitypical priest, in the laying down of his own life and in the consecration and sacrifice also of all those who are his during this Gospel age, who thus "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." By and by our High priest will have completed all that was illustrated in the Aaronic type, he will have finished the Day of Atonement sacrifices, and then the glory promised will follow,—instead of a suffering priesthood there will be "a royal priesthood"—a reigning priesthood.—I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:10.

Then follow assurances that this glorious priest-king will prosper, that his reign of righteousness will be successful; the assurance being that God will be at his right hand supporting him and bringing matters to a successful issue,—smiting down kings and wounding the heads over many countries, and subduing all things mightily. The great day of trouble coming is very generally referred to as "the day of Jehovah," the day of His wrath, although it will be under the direct supervision of our Lord Jesus, for the purpose of introducing and establishing his Millennial dominion.

These, foregoing, descriptions of the greatness of Messiah and his kingdom, lead up to our text; and it, as before suggested, is given as the reason why so great blessings, honors, and dignities and authority are conferred. "He shall drink of the brook in the way; *therefore* shall he lift up the head—[be exalted.]"

LEARNING OBEDIENCE BY THE THINGS SUFFERED.

As we look into the Word for testimony upon the subject, we find that our dear Master did indeed learn certain lessons of experience; as the apostle declares, he "*learned* obedience in the things which he suffered." Not that he had ever been disobedient to the Father's will, but that his testing at the time that he came into the world to do the Father's will was of a character and of an intensity such as never before had been brought to him

nor any other creature. His obedience attested his love to the Father, attested his faith in the Father's love and justice; and in all these things he fully approved himself of the Father; he overcame every trial, he drank frequently of the brook of wisdom, in connection with these lessons. Moreover, it was expedient that he, to be the great High Priest of mankind, should be touched with a feeling of their infirmities, and therefore that he should be tempted in all points like as his followers are tested—along the line of personality, of self will; along the line of worldly ambition; along the line of faith and trust; along all the lines of obedience to God's plan. He drank deeply of the cup, and rejoicingly said, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"—John 18:11.

And now we come to a point of special interest in our text; for we perceive that if it was necessary for our glorious Lord from the heavenly courts to drink of the brook of experience, and gain wisdom by the things he suffered, endured, and thereby to demonstrate his confidence in God, it is equally necessary that all the members of his body should likewise drink of the brook in the way, if they would hope to share with the Lord in the Kingdom blessings—glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature.

Our dear Master's time for drinking at the brook is past, yet the lessons and encouragements therefrom are still before us in the Scripture records. It is now our time to drink of the brook of experience,—to learn the lessons that are necessary to our preparation for the Kingdom. It is not enough that we have tasted of the brook of experience, that we have learned something of obedience, that we have endured some trials, that on some occasions we have learned obedience through the things we have suffered; we must continue drinking until we can gladly say—Father, thy will, not ours be done! If we drink not of the brook in the way we shall not share in the glory to follow.

Some of the Lord's people not discerning the matter in its true light, are disposed to pray that they may be spared from trials and temptations; whereas they ought to understand that the trials and difficulties of the consecrated are witnesses of the spirit that they are children of God, and are under his training and preparation for a glorious share in the Kingdom, to which he has called us. Because if we are not tried we cannot be "overcomers"; if we do not suffer with him, and learn to endure hardness as good soldiers, and to esteem our trials and difficulties from the right standpoint, and to count it all joy when they come to us, knowing their object and knowing the Lord's sustaining grace and strength, we will not be "fit for the Kingdom."

Others interpret the trials of life as evidences of divine disfavor, and fail to realize that they are designed of the Lord to shape and polish our characters and thus to work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Because of their misunderstanding they are profited little by many of life's experiences through which they are called to pass—they feel the rod, but not discerning the loving purpose behind it, they fail to learn the lesson intended. Let us become more and more awake, more and more alive to the things of God,—to the facts of the case as he presents them to us in his Word—to our call to joint-heirship to the Kingdom, and incidentally to the drinking of the brook of experience and wisdom in the way that will fit and prepare us for the glories to follow.

Drinking of the brook does not, however, imply that we sorrow and are disconsolate above others; on the contrary, those who drink of the brook properly are full of joy. As the apostle declares, they are enabled in everything to give thanks unto God,—in life's difficulties, as well as in its pleasures—even as he again says, Count it all joy when ye fall into divers difficulties, knowing that under divine providence they will work out for you a greater blessing. (James 1:2.) It is the world, which must also share its part of life's difficulties, that sorrows as those who have no hope, or who have false hopes. The apostle points out side by side the world's condition and the Church's condition under the trials and difficulties of this present evil world, saying, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." Then he explains the position of God's people, begotten of his spirit, who are walking in the Lord's footsteps, and drinking of the brook in the way, saying, "We ourselves also groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of the body"—the body of Christ, the Church. This hope, which we have, gives a changed coloring and silver lining to every dark and troubled subject which comes to us in common with mankind; so that inspired by draughts from the brook we can sing in the house of our pilgrimage, even though as yet we must also groan, because we are in this imperfect tabernacle, this unsatisfactory mortal body.

We want to ask the Lord, our Master and Head, that he will bless us more and more, as with fresh zeal we shall endeavor faithfully and rejoicingly to drink of the brook of life's experiences, and gain wisdom therefrom that will fit and prepare us for his service by and by; and which will the better fit and prepare us for his service also in the present time, and enable us by his grace to show forth his praises in all the trying circumstances and vicissitudes of life so as to glorify him in our bodies and spirits which are his. Let us, as we drink of the brook, take a lesson from the little birds, which when drinking repeatedly lift the head as though giving thanks to God. Let us continually give thanks to our Lord for every taste of life's experience, for every lesson, for every trial—appropriating them all to our spiritual development. The time for lifting up our heads in glory is nearing, too, and already the Master directs that seeing (with the eye of faith) the evidences of their approach, we may lift up our heads and rejoice, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh.—Luke 21:28.

DECEMBER 29

In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good—Eccles. 11:6.

All the Lord's people, in proportion as they desire to be the servants of the Truth, should be continually on the alert to note opportunities for service, and should expect to be guided and used of the Lord. Wherever we see evidences of devotion to the Lord and His Word, we should be on the alert to extend a helping hand. ... We are to be on the alert to pass along the blessing which we have received, and to esteem that this is the chief business of life with those who have consecrated themselves to the service of the King of kings—Z '02, 71 (R 2964).

We cannot read the hearts of others. God only can do this. Therefore, we are to sow beside all waters. We are authorized to withhold our holy things and pearls of Truth and character from but two classes: the "dogs"—those who contentiously snap, snarl and growl at, and bite us—and the "swine"—those who wallow in the mire of sin. To all others are we to give appropriate parts of the Word. Nor are we to do this work but once or twice. It is to be repeated as often as the needs of those with whom we deal require, regardless of our own convenience. We cannot tell at which repetition the Word will find lodgment; nor can we tell which person will respond. Like Samuel we often think those to be the Lord's anointed whom God rejects; and those not to be His anointed whom He accepts. Therefore we should be cautious in judging. God alone judges infallibly the hearts, and reveals their attitude by the touchstone of the Spirit, Word and providences. They prove whether the characters are genuine or alloy. Therefore let us wait upon His assays, which prove each case aright—P '32, 197.

Parallel passages: Gen. 49:24-26; Psa. 1:3; 127:1, 2; 128:1, 2; Prov. 11:18, 19, 30; Isa. 58:6-14; 62:1; John 18:37; 1 Cor. 15:58; Gal. 6:9; 2 Tim. 4:2, 5.

Hymns: 210, 70, 164, 260, 200, 275, 309.

Poems of Dawn, 147: *Only*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 197 (R 5489).

Questions: Have I this week spread the Truth? How? Why? With what results?

ONLY

ONLY a word for the Master,
Lovingly, quietly said,
Only a word!
Yet the Master heard,
And some fainting hearts were fed.

Only a look of remonstrance,

Sorrowful, gentle and deep,
Only a look!
Yet the strong man shook,
And he went alone to weep.

Only some act of devotion,
Willingly, joyfully done,
"Surely 'twas nought!"
(So the proud world thought),
But yet souls for Christ were won.

"Only"—but Jesus is looking
Constantly, tenderly down
To earth, and sees
Those who strive to please,
And their love He loves to crown.

R5489: OUR RESPONSIBILITY CONCERNING PRESENT TRUTH

"His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing; and I could not stay."—Jeremiah 20:9.

THE Prophet Jeremiah is here using a very forceful comparison. He had a burning zeal in his heart, a consuming sense of the importance of the message given him to deliver. His previous declaration of the Word of God concerning Israel had been so despised and rejected that he had become disheartened. He himself declared, "The Word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said: I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name. But His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary of forbearing, and I could not stay!" His message *had to be* spoken. The Lord had instructed him to tell Israel that they were about to be given over into the hands of their enemies.

This Word of the Lord to the Prophet Jeremiah was given prior to the seventy years' captivity of the Jews. There were false prophets among them who declared that the King of Judah was to gain a victory over their enemies. The people were glad to hear this assurance; and they despised the true Prophet of the Lord, who gave them the real Message from God. Jeremiah told them that they had failed to keep their Covenant with the Lord; that they had failed in their responsibilities to Jehovah, whose people they professed to be, and whom they had promised to serve faithfully; that it was not too late even then for any to be delivered, who would repent; but that the nation was surely to be delivered to their enemies and carried away into captivity.

JEREMIAH'S CRUCIAL TEST

Jeremiah knew that the false prophets would encourage the king, and that he himself would bring the king's wrath upon his own head by reiterating the message which Jehovah had commissioned him to deliver. He shrank from the infamy, the reproach and the persecution which by experience he knew would result from loyalty to the Lord. But he overcame the temptation to hold his peace. He would speak as God commanded him, let the cost be what it would. He would tell Israel again the words which had been given him. He would give them a further warning.

If Jeremiah had allowed his fears to overwhelm him, and had withheld the message, undoubtedly he would have been set aside as the mouthpiece of God, and another would have been commissioned to deliver the message. The burning within the heart of the Prophet would have grown feebler and would ultimately have died out. When a fire is kept shut off from a draft for some length of time, it will become extinguished. This is as true in the realm of moral and spiritual forces as in that of physical nature. This is why the Apostle Paul urged: "Quench not the Spirit." We might let the Holy Spirit of God die out in our hearts by a failure to do our duty, a failure to keep our covenant faithfully. The light within us, the holy fire, would smolder for a time, and finally become extinct. The Prophet Jeremiah could not withhold that which God had commanded him to speak; he could not quench the fire within his soul without losing his relationship with Jehovah.

GOD'S MESSAGE GIVEN US TODAY

Thus it is with us today. God has let us into the secret of His counsels. He has granted us a wonderful spiritual illumination. He has given us a Message of the utmost importance to deliver to His professed people. We have been informed by the Lord that a great change is impending—that the lease of power to the Gentile nations is about to expire. We are instructed that the present religious systems of Christendom are to go down, that the rule of the present order is about to end, and that the dominion is about to be given "to Him whose right it is" to reign. The kingdoms of this world are about to "become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever."

This Message is not to be stated in a rude manner. But it is to be stated, nevertheless. The great King whom God hath appointed is about to come in. In Jeremiah's time, the message was that the Kingdom of God, His typical kingdom, was about to be overthrown. The lease of power to the Gentiles, under the domination of the Prince of this world, was about to be inaugurated. This order of things was to be permitted to run for an appointed time. That time is now about to run out. The King's Son is soon to receive His long-promised inheritance. (Psalm 2:7-9.) We are glad that our Message is not now the *overthrow* of God's Kingdom, but the very *opposite* of this—the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

So we are to tell forth this glorious Message. We are to tell it in our actions, in our words, by the printed page, by pictorial presentations to the eye, and in every way that the Lord shall give us the opportunity. If through fear of persecution, of losing prestige in the eyes of men, for love of ease, or for any reason whatever, we should fail to give forth the

Message of God, it will be taken from us and given to one who is worthy. The Lord is seeking those who are valiant for Him, for righteousness, for truth. If we prove ourselves weak, we are not fit for the Kingdom.

ARE WE FULFILLING OUR COMMISSION?

Is this wonderful Message, this Message the like of which was never before granted to men or angels to tell, burning within us? And are we speaking it forth, that its inspiration may cause other hearts to take fire? Can we sing with the poet:

"I love to tell the Story,
It did so much for me!
And that is just the reason
I tell it now to thee"?

If we refrain from telling the Glad Tidings, the result will be that the fire of God's Holy Spirit will become extinguished within us. And if the light that is within us become darkness, how great will be that darkness! The possession of the Truth—God's Message—brings with it great responsibility. Shall we prove faithful to it? Shall we show to our God our deep appreciation of His loving kindness in granting us the knowledge of His wonderful Message of Salvation, His glorious Plan, with its times and seasons?

There is a difference between the operation of the Lord's Spirit in His children now and its operation in the days of the Prophet Jeremiah, and the other holy Prophets. During the Jewish Age the Holy Spirit acted upon the servants and mouthpieces of God in a mechanical manner. Now the people of the Lord have both His Message in His written Word and the begetting of the Spirit, which gives us a spiritual understanding impossible to His people of past Ages. The mysteries of God are now opened up to His faithful children, the watchers; and we are granted a clear understanding of "the deep things of God," some features of which were never revealed until the present time, even to the most faithful of the Lord's saints.—1 Thessalonians 5:1-6.

"THE DAY IS AT HAND!"

We are also told by the Apostle Paul that the things which were written of the servants of the Lord in past dispensations were written for *our* admonition and instruction and comfort, "upon whom the ends of the Ages are come." (1 Corinthians 10:11.) Seeing all these things, dearly beloved, "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?" How earnestly, with what painstaking care, should we give heed to the Word spoken unto us! Let us be faithful in proclaiming the Message of our Lord, now due. Let us tell forth the words which He has put into our mouths, whether others hear or whether they forbear—whether our faithfulness bring us the favor or the disfavor of the world and of nominal Spiritual Israel. But let us speak His Word in meekness and love, leaving the results with our great Chief Reaper. "The Day is at hand"!

"He cometh to His own—our glorious King!"

Can human tongue or pen show forth such glory?
Through earth and sky let our glad praises ring!
O Saints of God, tell forth the wondrous Story!

"He cometh now to reign. What wealth of joy
To all the world! Thy matchless name confessing,
O Son of God, we sound Thy glory forth
O'er land and sea—Thy promised Reign of Blessing!"

DECEMBER 30

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness—Psa. 65:11.

As we review the leadings of Divine providence during the year that is past, let God's goodness and mercy stimulate our faith and confidence in Him as respects the new incoming year. A proper retrospect on the part of a proper child of God will enable him not only to render thanks for the past but also to look up and lift up his head, realizing that our deliverance is nearer than when we first believed; and that He that began a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it, if we will but continue to submit our wills, our lives, our all, to His wisdom and loving care—Z '00, 365 (R 2737).

The word *year* in the Bible is sometimes used for a period averaging nearly 365¼ days, and sometimes for an Age. Both kinds of years the Lord crowns with His goodness. He crowns the natural year with His goodness, bearing up the Universe, and operating its stupendous machinery for His glory and the good of His creatures, giving them the blessings of the seasons. Thus amid the limitations of the curse the Lord abundantly blesses. Viewed as "the acceptable year of the Lord," the Gospel Age has been crowned with the Lord's goodness, in redeeming, teaching, justifying, sanctifying, completing, delivering and glorifying the Church; bringing the Great Company to eternal life; developing the non-Spirit-begotten consecrated for princesship in the earth; and preparing Jews and Gentiles for the Millennial Reign. So, too, the Millennial Age will be crowned with the Lord's goodness—forgiving, awakening, instructing, compassionating, drawing and blessing the whole race; lifting up the earth and the obedient to perfection, and giving the faithful everlasting life in Paradise—P '26, 173.

Parallel passages: Ex. 33:19; 34:6; Psa. 33:5; 34:8; 73:1; 107:8, 9, 43; 145:7, 9; Isa. 61:1, 2; 63:7; Matt. 7:11; Luke 4:18, 19; Rom. 2:4; Titus 3:4.

Hymns: 11, 45, 46, 55, 83, 89, 293.
Poems of Dawn, 272: *These Many Years*.
Tower Reading: Z '07, 364 (R 4100).

Questions: What were this year's special blessings? How did they affect me?

THESE MANY YEARS

THESE many years! What lessons they unfold
Of grace and guidance through the wilderness,
From the same God that Israel of old
In the Shekinah glory did possess!
How faithful He, through all my griefs and fears
And constant murmurings, these many years!

God of the Covenant! From first to last,

From when I stood within that sprinkled door,
And o'er my guilt the avenging angel passed,
Thy better angel hath gone on before;
And naught but goodness all the way appears,
Unmerited and free, these many years!

Thy presence wrought a pathway through the sea;
Thy presence made the bitter waters sweet;
And daily have Thy hands prepared for me
Sweet, precious morsels—lying at my feet.
'Twas but to stoop and taste the grace that cheers,
And start refreshed, through all these many years!

What time I thirsted and earth's streams were dry,
What time I wandered and my hope was gone,
Thy hand hath brought a pure and full supply,
And, by a loving pressure, lured me on.
How oft that hand hath wiped away my tears
And written "Pardoned!" all these many years!

And what of discipline Thy love ordained
Fell ever gently on this heart of mine;
Around its briars was my spirit trained
To bring forth fruits of righteousness Divine;
Wisdom in every check, and love appears
In every stroke, throughout these many years!

Lord, what I might have been, my spirit knows—
Rebellious, petulant, and prone to stray;
Lord, what I am, in spite of flesh and foes,
I owe to grace that kept me in the way.
Thine be the glory! Merit disappears,
As back I look upon these many years.

Thine be the glory! Thou shalt have the praise
For all Thy dealings, to my latest breath;
A daily "Ebenezer" will I raise,
And sing "Salvation" through the vale of death—
To where the crown, the golden harp appears,
There to rehearse Thy love through endless years!

R4100: "THOU CROWNEST THE YEAR WITH THY GOODNESS"

—Psalm 65:11.—

INTERESTING as it is to review the lessons of the year, reaching from the Creation to the boyhood of Samuel and the beginning of the epoch of the kings of Israel, we leave that to individual effort and consider here the beautiful golden text of the International lesson.

When we remember Father Adam's disobedience and that he justly came under the sentence of death therefor, and that in consequence ourselves and all of his posterity share his imperfections and dying conditions as we share the blessings of life through him, we have cause for gratitude toward God for endurable conditions of whatever kind he may be pleased to permit us to experience. From this standpoint every blessing is an unmerited favor, whether small or great, for we deserve nothing, all of our rights having been forfeited. Hence, as members of the world we should feel ourselves at the close of the year impelled to look up to the Creator and to confess that we have received at his hands numberless mercies and blessings which we could not claim by right or desert. For not only are we under condemnation through heredity, but we realize that individually we are unworthy of divine favor, for, as our Episcopal friends express it, "We have all done those things which we ought not to have done and have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and there is no health in us." It is appropriate, therefore, that the world, which the Apostle speaks of as the "groaning creation," should be exceedingly thankful to God for the blessings they enjoy, even though these have not been unmixed with bitter disappointments and sorrows and tears.

But if the natural man has cause for gratitude to God, much more have we, the children of God through the adoption which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Do we not enjoy all the blessings which the world enjoys? and have we not the same call as they to thankfulness? And, in addition, is it not true that God has done for us exceeding abundantly more than we could have asked or thought according to the riches of his grace? (Eph. 3:20.) How profitable it is for us to turn our minds backward and note the steps by which divine grace has led us to our present station, in which we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. When we were without strength and without merit Christ died for the ungodly, including us. We are amongst the favored ones who heard of the grace of God; we are amongst the comparatively few whose ears and eyes of understanding were opened to a realization of the Lord's grace and truth; we are amongst the still fewer number who, having heard, were enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and who appropriate the blessing to ourselves. We are amongst the still fewer number who received not the grace of God in vain, but under the guidance of the Word and Spirit of the Lord presented their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, their reasonable service.

"Oh, happy day, that fixed my choice
On thee, my Savior and my God!
Well may this glowing heart rejoice
And tell its raptures all abroad."

The Apostle says of himself, "If others have somewhat whereof to boast, I more." And so we see in general that if the world has something to boast of in respect to God's gifts

and blessings, and something for which they may be thankful, we more—we who are in Christ Jesus, who have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, and been made partakers of the holy Spirit, we may rejoice abundantly. We may be glad even in the house of our pilgrimage—even though here we have no continuing city, no abiding place, no security, but are buffeted by the world, the flesh and the Adversary continually. The Lord, our great Deliverer, is on our part; his promises, exceeding great and precious, are our support and consolation. We have laid hold upon one who is mighty to save; yea, more, he has laid hold upon us, or, as the Apostle expresses it, "we have been apprehended of Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:12.) Neither will he let us go so long as our hearts are loyal to him. Only the wilfulness which would take our interests out of the divine keeping could in any sense of the word separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Let all of this class review the year, especially from the spiritual standpoint, to note what progress each of us has made in spiritual growth, in grace, in knowledge, in love—the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit. In proportion as these are large let us rejoice; in proportion as they are small let us lament the fact, yet not to the degree of discouragement or surrender to the enemy. Let us hear the Master's voice saying, "Fear not, I have overcome the world," "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in your weakness."—John 16:33; 2 Cor. 12:9.

Reviewing the year in its temporal blessings and mercies and privileges and favors, and in its spiritual opportunities and strength and knowledge and development in character-likeness of our dear Redeemer—while rejoicing in all these, let us say to ourselves in the words of our text that the crowning of the year with blessings is in the divine goodness. The Lord would not have us understand that he does everything for us so that we have nothing to do for ourselves, but he does give us clearly to understand that all of our doings would accomplish nothing without his aid—that our efforts and strivings are profitable in their results only as they have the divine favor and blessing. God's goodness is the crowning of the year for us. We are glad at its close to remember how good he is, how generous, how sympathetic, how compassionate, how loving and kind—especially to the household of faith. To these alone he has exhibited or sent messages of his grace and peace as yet, but we are glad to see in his Word that soon the New Covenant will be inaugurated and its message of forgiveness will go forth in trumpet tones, a Jubilee message to the world of mankind that they have been ransomed by the precious blood which seals the New Covenant and which makes possible to them the "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21.) We rejoice, then, not only in our own favor and blessing, but also in the coming blessings, all of which we recognize to be of, by and through divine goodness. Our Lord Jesus was the great channel of this divine goodness, through whom it reaches us who are his followers, the adopted members of his Body. We are thus permitted to come into relationship with him, so that we also shall become channels for the dispensing of the divine goodness ultimately to natural Israel and to all the families of the earth.

DECEMBER 31

What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people—Psa. 116:12-14.

The close of the year is an excellent time for the making of new resolutions for the year to come. Let us, beloved brethren, make plenty of good resolves respecting what we shall be willing to be, to do, to suffer, to fellowship with our Lord; that we may by His grace make of it the best year thus far of our lives—the year of largest hopes, of largest endeavors, and by the Lord's grace, of largest successes in self-sacrifice, in overcoming the world and its spirit, in vanquishing self and the desires of the flesh, in resisting the Adversary, and in glorifying our Lord and blessing His people—Z '99, 286 (R 2551).

The present benefits of the Lord to us are His creative, providential, redemptive, instructional, justifying, sanctifying and delivering blessings; while His future benefits to us center in our attaining the Kingdom, in disposition, nature, sights, honors, associations, inheritance and office. The first return that we would make for the benefits is to take the cup of salvation. A cup usually symbolizes blissful and woeful experiences. The cup of salvation represents the experiences of bliss and woe connected with our obtaining our salvation. We will, therefore, with thankful and appreciative hearts accept such experiences. Further, we will call upon the name of the Lord, trustfully accepting His grace, mercy and truth, in our time of need. Finally, we will fulfill our general consecration vow of deadness to self and the world and aliveness to God, as well as our special vows under our general vow. We will do this now in the interests of all God's people, now and hereafter—P '36, 167.

Parallel passages: Psa. 51:12, 13; 103:2, 3; Isa. 6:5-8; Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 Cor. 6:20; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; Psa. 23:5; 63:6; Luke 22:17, 18, 20; Matt. 20:22, 23; 26:39, 42; John 18:11; Num. 15:2-5; Deut. 23:21; Jonah 2:9; Psa. 66:13-15.

Hymns: 325, 224, 324, 8, 47, 10, 277.

Poems of Dawn, 275: *New Year's Wishes*.

Tower Reading: Z '14, 279 (R 5538).

Questions: What were the week's experiences in line with this text? How were they met? What helped or hindered therein? In what did they result?

NEW YEAR'S WISHES

WHAT shall I wish thee?
Treasures of earth?
Songs in the spring-time,
Pleasure and mirth?
Flowers on thy pathway,

Skies ever clear?
Would this ensure thee
A happy new year?

What shall I wish thee?
What can be found,
Bringing thee sunshine
All the year round?
Where is the treasure,
Lasting and dear,
That shall ensure thee
A happy new year?

Faith that increaseth,
Walking in light,
Hope that aboundeth,
Happy and bright;
Love that is perfect,
Casting out fear:
These shall ensure thee
A happy new year!

Peace in the Savior,
Rest at His feet,
Smile of His countenance
Radiant and sweet;
Joy in His presence!
Christ ever near!
This will ensure thee
A happy new year!

R5538: THE BLESSING OF THE "CUP OF SALVATION"

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all His people."—Psalm 116:12-14.

TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL these words have a peculiar significance which they could not have had to the Prophet David. Nevertheless, we would suppose that the Prophet had to a considerable degree the proper thought as to the sentiment of the words. King David no doubt felt an appreciation of God's goodness. His Psalms show us that he had a very appreciative heart, grateful for the blessings that came to him from the Lord. Properly enough his heart cried out: "What shall I render unto the Lord?" What return can I make for all His lovingkindness?

David knew of God's promise to Abraham; he knew that God would sometime bless all the families of the earth, and that this blessing would come through the Seed of Abraham. The Children of Israel knew that they were Abraham's seed. King David was one of these, and he felt that in some way he would be identified with this Promise. The matter was more or less vague to him; but, nevertheless, Abraham's Seed was to bless the world.

In proposing to "take the cup of salvation," we think the Psalmist had in mind that whatever experiences the Lord might consider necessary for him he would accept; for he must have a share in that salvation. He would continue to call upon the Lord that he *might* have such a share; he would pay his vows unto the Lord "in the presence of all His people." He had made solemn vows, and he would fulfil them—he would consider this a privilege; he would delight in doing God's will.

DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

To the Christian, however, all this has a much deeper significance. Beginning with our Lord Jesus, these words have a special meaning to each of the sons of God called to joint-heirship with the great Head of the Church. Having been begotten of the Holy Spirit and received into sonship, these wish to make a special return for all God's mercies. These have the actual forgiveness of their sins through Jesus, as David did not. His sins were only typically covered; and if he could say: "What shall I render?" surely much more should we say: "What shall *I* render unto the Lord?"

The Apostle Paul exhorts us: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God—your reasonable service." This is what we gladly render, then—our bodies as *living sacrifices*. In every truly noble heart gratitude is the responsive chord to kindness and love; and no harmony is sweeter or more inspiring to noble deeds and lofty purposes. God would have His children cultivate for their own sake, as well as for the sake of others, all the graces of true nobility and moral excellence. It is therefore most fitting that we should note every deed of love and kindness toward us, and be careful to return the gratitude and appreciation due. How often does love go unrequited because selfishness or thoughtlessness crowds out the nobler instincts of the soul!

While human love and acts of kindness often draw largely upon us for the exercise of this grace of gratitude, appreciation, how much more does the constant loving-kindness and tender mercy of our Heavenly Father thus fittingly draw upon our inmost being to respond in grateful acknowledgment and praise! To Him we are indebted for every good that we possess. What this implies only those can know who have been brought by His love into the secret place of the Most High, and made to feast upon the "finest of the wheat," the wealth of our Father's Storehouse. We are the special objects of His grace.

"HIS LOVING KINDNESS, OH, HOW GREAT!"

And who of us cannot trace a long line of special providences on our behalf? Who of us as we take a mental retrospect of our lives cannot exclaim with the poet:

"Looking back I praise the way
God has led me day by day!"

How wonderfully the Lord has guided His people! His children have ever been His constant care. No good thing hath He withheld from them, and all things have been made to work together for their good if they obeyed Him. Who that has trusted the Lord through many years, through sunshine and shadow, through smiles and tears, by still waters and through storm and tempest, has not proved the verity of His precious promises and His abiding faithfulness! Surely, "*Not one thing hath failed* of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you!" (Joshua 23:14.) In the smallest and in the greatest affairs of our lives He has ever watched for our interests. Every cloud has had a golden lining!

What, then, shall we render unto the Lord for all His benefits? What have we, indeed, that we have not received from Him? Nothing! As a tender parent loves to see his child appreciatively accept his favors, so does our Heavenly Father regard our attitude toward Him, and our manifestation of appreciation of His favors and love toward us. His unspeakable gifts to us were purchased at a great cost to His heart. Then we will thankfully take the cup of salvation, through faith in our Redeemer, and pay our vows unto the Lord. We will drink this cup with our dear Master—this cup of suffering and of joy. "We will trust and not be afraid."

The Father has made a special provision for those who have made a full surrender of themselves to Him. The experiences which He has arranged for them constitute "the cup of salvation." And in accepting this cup from the Lord, we are accepting all the experiences that come to us in His providence, whatever they may be—joy or *sorrow*, pain or *pleasure* or *anything*. As Jesus exclaimed: "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" so should this be the language of our hearts. It had in type been foretold of our Lord that He should be lifted up, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. He knew that He was to be the great antitypical Sin-Offering; that He was to be "made sin" for fallen man. Yet this cup that the Father had poured for Him He declared Himself very willing to drink. And this is the cup which He has given to us.

Our Savior said to His disciples who desired to sit next to Him in the Kingdom: "Are ye *able* to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" He Himself continued to drink of that cup until the end—He drank the dregs of the cup. And so it will be with His followers. We are to drink of this same cup. It is our individual cup, and yet it is *His* cup. If we be truly loyal we will accept our share of the cup thankfully, gladly. And we know that as we drink of it *He* will be with us; we shall not be alone. He supervises the experiences of each of His members; and with every temptation and trial He will provide some way of escape, if the trial threatens to become too severe.

THE CUP OF JOY IN THE KINGDOM

On the occasion of the institution of the Memorial of His death, the Master in His conversation with the Apostles said: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that Day when I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom." (Matthew 26:29.) Our Lord was here contrasting two great Days—the Day of *suffering* and the Day of *glory*. This Gospel Age has been the Day of suffering. The Millennial Age will be the Day of glory, and is especially spoken of as "the Day of Christ."

The fruit of the vine, the literal cup, represents two thoughts. The cup of *wine* is produced at the cost of the *life* of the *grape*. The grape loses its own individuality. The juice is pressed out, and thus the fruit of the vine is made ready for use. The cup of wine—the juice of the grape—represents, however, not only the crushing of the grape, but also the exhilaration that comes as the result. So in our drinking of this figurative cup. To us it symbolizes our Savior's sufferings and death, and our own participation with Him in these sufferings. But wine also represents joy, gladness, and is thus used in the Scriptures. So in the sense in which the Lord used the words "fruit of the vine," quoted in the preceding paragraph, the cup represented the joys of the Kingdom.

In the earthly experiences of our Lord Jesus the Father marked out for Him a certain specific course. This course constituted His cup of suffering and death. But the Father promised Him that after He had drunk this cup faithfully, He should be given a different cup, a different experience—glory, honor and immortality. And then the Savior was authorized by the Father to make the same proposition to those who might desire to become His followers—that if they would suffer with Him, would drink His cup of death with Him, then they should participate with Him in His future cup of joy.

"NOW IS THE ACCEPTABLE TIME"

Our cup is a cup of joy and also a cup of bitterness. But when we are called upon to drink a bitter draft, let us remember Him who bravely and faithfully partook of this bitterness, rejoicing to do the Father's will; and let us take courage, and likewise rejoice that we are accounted worthy to *share* this cup with our beloved Lord. And as He who was *perfect* needed strength and help Divine in connection with His experiences in the drinking of the cup, as He sought the Father in earnest prayer for the needed assistance, so must we do. We should also be continually on our guard lest we enter into temptation, lest we look away from Him from whom alone cometh our help.

"I will pay my vows unto the Lord *now*," said the Psalmist. And "now is the acceptable time—*now* is the Day of Salvation"—for the Church. *Now* is the time sacrifices are to be offered—*not by and by*. The Lord has so arranged that this Vow which we take upon ourselves, this Covenant of Sacrifice, must be fulfilled by us. The flesh which we consecrate must be consumed. If we seek to withdraw the sacrifice from the altar, we shall be dealt with in such a manner as to destroy the flesh; else we ourselves shall be destroyed. If we faithfully drink of the cup which the Father has prepared for us, we shall afterward receive the blessings which He has promised to those

who thus drink. Therefore, now, in the present life, we drink of this cup He has given us; for unless we do this *now*, we shall have no share in the Kingdom blessings in the life to come.

In our Lord's case, literal crucifixion was necessary. He must bear the fullest measure of the Law's demand; He must bear the penalty of its every violation, even as in the case of the vilest criminal under the Law; otherwise He could not have redeemed every Jew. He must bear the curse of the Law—He must hang on a tree. But in our experiences, the cross will not be a literal cross of wood; the nails will not be literal nails; but bitter words and slander and misrepresentation will surely be our portion—and perhaps physical violence in some form to some of the last members of the Body. We do not know.

BY WAY OF THE CROSS

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." We are all to pass through the trying experiences represented by the *wine-press*. We are to lay down our lives in the Divine service. We are to submit ourselves to the crushing experiences, to be obliterated as individuals, in the human sense, and to become New Creatures. "If we suffer [with Him], we shall also reign with Him"—not otherwise. So we joyfully accept the invitation to drink of His cup. And not until the cup has been drained to the last shall we receive the other cup—the cup of Kingdom joys. While our Lord had a great blessing in the obedience which He rendered to the Father, yet it was a trying time for Him down to the last moment, when He cried, "It is finished." And so with the Church. We must drink *all* of the cup; none of the contents is to be left. We must endure *all* of the experiences.

All the sufferings of Christ will be complete when the Body of Christ shall have finished its course. The new cup of joy was given our Lord when He was received up into glory. Then all the angels of God worshiped Him. Soon our cup of joy will be given to us. No doubt it was a glorious time when the sleeping saints were awakening in the spring of 1878, and entered into their reward and received the cup of blessing. And one by one, those who were alive and remained at the Coming of the Master are being gathered Home. Undoubtedly we shall all partake of this joy with them soon, if we are faithful. We believe the fulness of joy will not be reached until all the members of Christ are with Him beyond the veil. Then we shall share His Throne and partake of His glory. Then with our beloved Lord we shall drink of the "new wine" in the Kingdom; for the promise is to all His faithful saints.

"YE ARE MY WITNESSES, SAITH JEHOVAH"

The concluding statement of the Psalmist as given in our text is that he would pay his vows "in the presence of all His [God's] people." It is not enough that we shall be loyal in our hearts; but the Lord desires a public confession, a witness before men. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10.) And all the witnesses for the Truth must be martyrs for the Truth. They must, in other words, be willing to suffer for it. And so it will be to a large

extent with those who are faithfully, courageously, holding up the banner of Truth. They will be targets for the Adversary.

Our Master said that whoever would not confess Him before men, He would not confess before the Father and before the holy angels. Only those who are thoroughly loyal are to be of this very select company of which our Lord is the Head, and which is soon now to be gathered into the Heavenly Garner.

Then let us appreciate more and more this "cup of blessing" which we are privileged to drink with our blessed Master; and let us "call upon the name of the Lord" for grace to help in every time of need. We need Him daily, hourly, momentarily. And we may come to the Throne of Grace at any time in the name of our great Advocate.

Our Father's ear is ever open to the cry of His children. They are as dear to Him "as the apple of His eye." They "are graven upon the palms of His hands." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you," is His promise to His own. All that we can render will be at best very, very little in return for all His bounties, for all His matchless grace toward us. But the measure of love and zeal that accompanies our little all will indicate the measure of our gratitude to our Heavenly Father and our great Redeemer.

"What shall I render, Lord, to Thee?
Thy love surpasses all my thought!
What can a fitting tribute be
To Him who my poor life hath bought?

"Who sought me in my low estate,
And raised me up to heights Divine!
What words can fitly sound Thy praise,
Or thought encompass love like Thine?

"What shall I render, Lord, to Thee?
My heart, my strength, my life, I bring!
My hands, my voice, in service glad,
To Thee, my Savior and my King!"

DAY BY DAY, HOUR BY HOUR

"God broke our years to hours and days
That, hour by hour and day by day,
Just going on a little way,
We might be able all along
To keep quite strong.
Should all the weight of life
Be laid across our shoulders, and the future, rife
With woe and struggle, meet us face to face

At just one place,
We could not go.
Our feet would stop; and so
God lays a little on us every day.
And never, I believe, on all the way
Will burdens bear so deep,
Or pathway lie so threatening and so steep,
But we can go, if by God's power
We only bear the burden of the hour." Anon.

PRAYER

And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body—Rom. 8:23.

The Lord's people are not to parade their difficulties, bemoaning their lot; on the contrary, they have the privilege of prayer and the instructions of the Word of God teaching them why present evil conditions are permitted at all, and how and when and why the time is nearing in which all tears will be wiped off all faces, and there shall be no more sighing and crying and dying. Instead therefore of groaning before the world, they should rejoice and show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Our sympathy for the poor world without these advantages should so bestir us to tell them the Gospel, that our own woes would be smothered—partially forgotten—Z '02, 40 (R 2947).

The human family groans under the curse, which consists of rank growth, drought, blight, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, volcanoes, tidal waves, storms, floods, extremes of climate, Satan, fallen angels, sin, error, sorrow, depravity, hatred, strife, persecution, exaltation of the wicked, exploitation, tyranny, priestcraft, sectarianism, labor, panics, loss, alienation from God, sickness, dying and death. God's Gospel-Age people groan inwardly, from the effects of the curse, and from the added sufferings of their sacrifice. The race groans outwardly; though unable to overcome internal, we are to suppress external groanings. The world groans, while expecting deliverance, which God will give them at the revelation of the elect in glory. We groan while awaiting our full sonship in the resurrection, which will deliver us from the evils of the flesh into the glories that we will receive with Jesus—P '33, 163.

Parallel passages: Psa. 5:1-3; 32:6; 37:4; 42:8; 50:14, 15; 116:2; Ezra 9:6, 15; Dan. 6:10; Gen. 18:23-32; Matt. 15:22-28; Luke 12:37; 18:1-7; Eph. 6:18; Psa. 69:6, 13; 74:10, 11, 18, 20-23; Mark 8:6; Acts 27:35; 6:4; Rom. 1:4; 1 Tim. 5:5.

Hymns: 35, 50, 56, 235, 239, 274, 323.

Poems of Dawn, 116: *Communion With Our Father*.

Tower Reading: Z '12, 149 (R 5021).

Questions: Has this week been one of prayerfulness? What helped or hindered therein? What have been the results?

COMMUNION WITH OUR FATHER

OFT when alone in prayer I kneel
Before my Father's throne;
I cannot tell Him all I feel,
Nor make my wishes known.

With heart subdued, and head bowed low,

I lean upon His breast,
And while the tears unbidden flow,
My love for Him confess.

I have no boon to ask of Him,
Save that His will be done,
To make me holy, pure within—
An image of His Son.

But as He smiles and draws me near—
His Spirit from above
Floods all my soul with peace so dear,
And fills my heart with love.

Though from my gaze He hides His face,
My soul, from self apart,
Hath found its happy resting place
Close to His loving heart.

R5021: PRAYER A GREAT PRIVILEGE

—Matthew 6:1-18.—

"Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. 6:1. (R.V.)

THE MASTER in today's lesson tells of proper and improper giving of charity. He extends the subject and explains proper and improper prayers and finally proper and improper fasting. In all these He denounces hypocrisy, theatrical display. His followers are to be actuated solely by a desire to please the Heavenly Father and have His approval. There may be times and places where the giving of charity in the presence of others would be perfectly proper, or praying in the presence of others would be entirely right, and where fasting might come to the knowledge of others without reproach.

The point which the Great Teacher makes is the motive actuating us. If we are actuated by a selfish motive, if we are seeking show and applause or earthly gain, the procedure cannot bring Divine approval or blessing—"Blessed are the pure in heart." We may be *seen* to do good or to pray or to fast, but we are not to do our charities, our praying and our fasting *to be seen*. Of such the Lord says, "They *have received* their reward"—nothing more is coming to them; they get the publicity sought.

THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER

Prayer is a privilege. Jesus did not command His disciples to pray, nor did He even give them a form of prayer until they requested it. "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,

uttered or unexpressed." The Lord's people must feel their need of Divine grace and help in order to appreciate the privilege of approaching the throne of heavenly grace. The trials and difficulties, the sorrows and temptations of life frequently impel God's children to prayer. It marks a better, a higher Christian development when they love to come to the Throne of grace, not only in their sorrows, but also in their joys, to give thanks, to praise, to worship, to adore.

It will be noticed that our Lord did not tell about how the world should pray, but merely taught His disciples: "when ye pray." As a matter of fact, the Gentiles, the world of mankind in general, have no access to the Throne of grace. Only those in covenant relationship with God (Jews and Christians) ever had any Divine assurance that their petitions would be accepted by Him. This may cause surprise to some, so general is the custom of encouraging and exhorting everybody to pray. A brief glance at the situation, however, shows us the fixed principle underlying the matter. Let us note it. The world in general, the race of Adam, was alienated from God through wicked works. Adam was under a covenant with God by which he enjoyed the privileges of a son of God. This included fellowship, communion, prayer and Divine supervision and care even to the extent of everlasting life. But Adam's disobedience broke that covenant, abolished that covenant-relationship and all its privileges. (Hos. 6:7, R.V.) The only ones who now enjoy the privilege of prayer are those who have been accepted of God back into covenant-relationship. The natural Israelite was so accepted under the Law Covenant; hence the Temple at Jerusalem was called the House of Prayer. It was specifically for the Jewish nation, but all nationalities had the privilege of becoming Jewish Proselytes and thus of being received into all the privileges of Jews, which included the privilege of prayer.

Our Lord, on the basis of His better sacrifice for sins, made holy and acceptable to still higher privileges of prayer such as became His disciples, His footstep followers. These, from Pentecost onward, were called sons of God and enjoyed the begetting of the Holy Spirit. At first these were only Jewish believers, but in due time the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down, and all Gentile believers, from the time of Cornelius onward, were accepted as spirit begotten sons and granted all the privileges of prayer.—Acts 10.

These Gentiles did not come into relationship with God through the Mosaic Law Covenant, but through the Covenant of sacrifice, under which they were called and accepted as joint-sacrificers with Christ: "Gather together My saints unto Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) Only such Gentiles as accept Christ and enter with Him into this covenant of sacrifice can, during this Age, become sons of God and enjoy the privileges of sonship, of which prayer is one. The habit of inviting people out of covenant-relationship with God to pray is both unscriptural and unreasonable. God heareth not sinners (John 9:31); those who come to Him through Christ are acceptable only because Jesus is their Advocate. It is plain to be seen, then, that those who approach God in their own names—without having accepted the Advocate and His terms of discipleship—such can have no standing with the Father and their prayers are unacceptable.

Instead of exhorting our friends and neighbors to pray to God and to trust for the fulfilment of their prayers, we should give them the Scriptural counsel, to repent of sin and by faith to accept the forgiveness of their sins, according to the testimony of God's Word, by making a full consecration of themselves to be the footstep followers of Jesus. Then, as sons of God, they would have all the privileges of sonship in this present time as well as the glorious prospects hereafter.

VAIN REPETITIONS OF THE HEATHEN

All are heathens or Gentiles—all of the world who have not left the world and come into covenant-relationship with God through Christ. Such outsiders, not understanding the Only Way, the Only Door of God's favor, vainly suppose that they will be heard for their much speaking, and therefore repeat their prayers. Some use praying wheels; others use beads; and still others repeat hundreds of times certain ejaculations.

None are heard except those of Jesus' followers, and Jesus counsels these not to think that the length of their prayers would make them acceptable with the Father. They have no need to offer long prayers, because, as Jesus said, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." Why then should we ask at all? Because this is the Divine arrangement, and evidently with the purpose of stimulating our faith and of giving us the greater and the more frequent blessings. God thus deals with us as with dear children whom He loves and whom He would educate into the practices of life most helpful to themselves. When Jesus had long prayers to offer they were never uttered in public; He went apart into the mountain. So with His followers; they are to go aside and have their communion with the Father chiefly in private, although fellowship in public prayer in gatherings of the Lord's people is distinctly approved.

A FORM OF SOUND WORDS

Responding to the request of His disciples Jesus gave a sample of a proper prayer. We note its brevity, its simplicity, its directness, its orderliness.

(1) It opens with an ascription of praise and a plea that we are coming as children to a father: "Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed [adored, honored] be Thy name." God's Name represents His character, His Kingdom, His personality. First of all, then, we ascribe honor, reverence, majesty, glory to our great Creator, who through His appointed way we delight to call our Father in Heaven.

(2) Next in order we acknowledge the Divine rule, authority. This means that our hearts are submissive to the will of God, for joy or sorrow, for pleasure or pain, for life or death, and we are continuing to express our confidence in the Divine power and promise that ultimately the Divine will shall be as fully and completely done in the earth as it is now done in Heaven: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven." In this we recognize the coming of Messiah's Kingdom and indirectly our own hopes connected with that Kingdom—that we, if faithful, shall be associated with the

Lord in His glorious Throne, in dispensing the blessings of Divine power and mercy to mankind, so as to effect the regeneration of all the willing and obedient of mankind.

(3) Our daily needs, our daily bread, is next the subject of request: "Give us this day our daily bread." How simple! God has promised that our bread and our water shall be *sure* in the sense that He will not forget us and our needs. In our petitions we merely suggest that we are waiting confidently upon the Lord, nothing doubting His willingness and ability to perform His promises. He has not promised, nor are we to ask for an abundance, wealth, riches, nor are we to specify fine food or luxuries. The thought is, Father, grant us daily such provisions for life's necessities as seemeth to Thee best for us. And should Divine Providence ever fail to make the provision, the believing soul is to recognize that it is neither from oversight nor from lack of power, but because Divine Wisdom sees best thus to deal with us.

(4) "Forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors." Here is emphasized the Master's teaching that only the merciful shall obtain mercy, that only the forgiving shall be forgiven. This has no reference whatever to the forgiveness of their original sins—they are past and gone forever to those who remain under the blood; they were covered when we accepted Christ and entered into covenant-relationship with Him. But we have daily shortcomings, weaknesses, imperfections, frailties, trespasses against the Divine Law. These we are to acknowledge, and Divine arrangement has been made for their forgiveness in harmony with our prayers, with but the one proviso, viz., that we appreciate the matter so deeply that we ourselves are acting upon the same principle in our dealings with others.

(5) "Lead us not into temptation [to abandon us there]." We feel our own weakness, imperfection; hence, while knowing that we must be brought in Divine providence into positions of trial and testing, we may well pray not to be abandoned there, not to be left to our own strength, but that in harmony with the Lord's agreement His grace may be sufficient for us.

(6) The Bible assures us that there is an Evil One, and that he has great power and influence amongst men, that he is "the Prince of the power of the air," and "the god of this Age." How appropriate that we should request the Lord not to abandon us to the Devil's wiles!

The words, "For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever, Amen," are not found in the oldest Greek manuscripts, and are therefore properly omitted in the Revised Version as being no part of the Scriptures. The kingdom or rule of the present time are not of God. His Kingdom and power and glory are not in evidence. We await the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom for the overthrow of Satan's Empire, and the binding of the Adversary for a thousand years, and the ushering in then of the Divine Kingdom and power and glory, forever.

PATIENCE

Do all things without murmurings—Phil. 2:14

We may all have in our natural dispositions a tendency to repine, to grumble, to bemoan afflictions which come to us, even in the service of the Truth; but as we become more and more developed in Christlikeness the Lord will surely expect of us that we shall gradually attain more and more to that standard which He sets for us; in which the trials and difficulties of the present will be more than offset, more than overbalanced by His Spirit, and by the witness of His Spirit, that all these things are working together for good to us, working out for us the greater glory by preparing us for it—Z '02, 40 (R 2947).

God's people are not to sympathize with, nor condone wrongs in teaching or practice. Nor are they to sit quietly by and let sin and error abound and have free course. Thus Jesus, the Apostles, the faithful Prophets, evangelists, pastors or teachers and others of God's faithful people have been dissatisfied with and protested against them. Such dissatisfaction and protests are not to be considered "murmuring" in the sense of this verse. The kind of dissatisfaction and protests that this text calls murmuring are complaints made at one's lot, experiences, opportunities, difficulties, trials, sufferings, humiliations and the Lord's providences as these affect oneself or others. These indicate that one's will is not dead but quite alive; and the person so doing is opposing God and living for self—P 33, 163.

Parallel passages: Psa. 37:7-9; Lam. 3:26, 27; Luke 8:15; 21:19; Rom. 2:7; 5:3, 4; 8:25; 12:12; 15:4, 5; 2 Cor. 6:4, 5; 12:12; Gal. 6:9; Eph. 4:1, 2; Col. 1:11; 1 Thes. 1:3; 2 Thes. 3:5; Heb. 6:12; 10:36; 12:1; Jas. 1:3, 4; 5:7, 8.

Hymns: 4, 20, 34, 78, 91, 114, 196.

Poems of Dawn, 100: *Mortally Wounded*.

Tower Reading: Z '13, 312 (R 5332).

Questions: What have been this week's experiences as to patience? How were they met? What was helpful or hindering therein? In what did they result?

MORTALLY WOUNDED

I LAY me down to sleep,
With little thought or care
Whether my waking find
Me here—or *there!*

A bowing, burdened head,
Only too glad to rest,
Unquestioning upon
A loving breast.

I am not eager, bold,
Nor strong—all that is past!
I'm willing *not to do*,
At last, at last!

My half-day's work is done,
And this is all my part:
To give a patient God
My patient heart;

And grasp His banner still,
Though all its blue be dim;
These stripes, no less than stars,
Lead after Him.

Weak, weary and uncrowned,
I yet *to bear* am strong;
Content not e'en to cry,
"How long! How long!"

R5332: PATIENCE A CARDINAL GRACE OF CHARACTER

"Ye have need of patience [cheerful endurance], that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the [fulfilment of] the promise.—Heb. 10:36.

THE Apostle is addressing the Christian Church—You who have left the world, who have accepted Christ as your Standard-bearer, as well as your Redeemer, and who are seeking to walk in His steps, and have made consecration of your life to the Lord—"Ye have need of patience." To a certain extent you did the will of God when you made your consecration to be dead with Christ. But that will of God was more deeply impressed upon you when you began to realize more than at first what this *sacrifice* would *mean*, and that only those who *suffer* with Christ shall *reign* with Him.

"After you were illuminated" you saw the matter clearly, and "endured a great fight of afflictions." This was well. But St. Paul goes on to show in the context that some, after having demonstrated their zeal for a certain time, become cold. They become weary in well doing. And he tells us that these thus cut themselves off from the favors, privileges and blessings belonging to the Church of Christ. His exhortation is that those who are still loyal to God at heart continue so and exercise *patience*, remembering that this is one of the cardinal graces of Christian character. Many have naturally a little love, a little gentleness, a little patience, a little meekness, etc. But after we begin to grow in the graces of the Holy Spirit, we need *patience* to control the flesh, the spirit of the world, the spirit of selfishness.

The will of God is in one sense of the word the standard of God—full perfection—that we should be like our Father which is in Heaven. But God remembers that we are fallen creatures, and that we cannot do perfectly. Our text does not mean that we must do the will of God in the perfect and complete sense; but rather, as the Apostle elsewhere says, ours is a *reasonable service*. When we present our bodies living sacrifices to God, it is our reasonable service. God does not expect us to do that which is impossible.

THE PURPOSE OF OUR TESTING

What is this will of God? Stated in concrete form, "This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification." (I Thess. 4:3.) As the Apostle teaches, consecration is a full and complete setting apart. If we do such a setting of *ourselves* apart at the beginning, then the *Father* sanctifies us—begets us as New Creatures, and sets us apart. So we have, first of all, our setting of ourselves apart; and then God's acceptance by our begetting of the Holy Spirit as New Creatures, and His continued work in us.

We are doing the will of God when we fully consecrate ourselves to Him, and attain a place in the New Creation. But He wills to put us to the test. How much do we love God? How sincere are we? A soldier in an army might be loyal in time of quiet, but how would he be in time of stress? Would he desert the flag then, or would he prove himself a good soldier? He would need a great deal of patience. If he says he loves his country, his endurance and faithfulness will be tested in her time of need. He must go on picket duty; he must sometimes do menial work. He must endure wearisome marches, and many privations. All these things are required of a faithful soldier. If he is faithful, he is likely to be promoted, honored, for his faithful service.

So we are tested as to our *loyalty*. What are we willing to *endure* for Christ's sake? How *fully* are we submitted? How *deep* does our submission go? Are we wholly in harmony with the will of the Lord? Is our interest merely superficial, or does it enter fully into our hearts? The question is not merely, Shall we make the consecration?—but after the Christian has taken all of these preliminary steps, to what extent will he manifest patient endurance and obedience and loyalty?

God puts us to these tests because He has great honors to bestow on those who will be overcomers. They are to be a select company, and these will receive the Promise. As the Apostle says, it is after we have *proved* our loyalty to the very last, that we shall receive the Promise; i.e., its fulfilment.

THE ESSENCE OF THE PROMISE

When, where, what is the Promise? Undoubtedly the promise will be received in the resurrection. The promise includes all that God has in reservation for them that love Him—that love Him more than they love houses and lands, or children, or parents, or friends, or husbands or wives, or self, or any other thing.

The particular promise that the Apostle refers to here is *The Promise*. All our hopes and blessings are centered in the original Promise made to Abraham, when God brought him out of the land of Chaldea into the land of Canaan. God promised Abraham that in His Seed should all the families of the earth be blessed. That has been the great Promise for encouragement to the Seed, to give them patience and fortitude. This is the essence of the Promise—that those who receive the Promise shall be the Seed of Abraham to bless the world. The faithful in Christ will be associated with Him in His Kingdom—will have the honor of blessing all the families of the earth under this Kingdom. Every creature of God shall then be brought to a knowledge of His Truth, and shall have the opportunity of being restored, if he will, to perfection, to all that was redeemed on Calvary.

Now the opportunity is *different*. Now the selection is being made of those who will inherit the Promise as the Seed of Abraham. "If ye be *Christ's*, then are ye *Abraham's Seed*, and heirs according to the Promise." The Apostle is in our text urging that we continue to be Christ's and to abide in Him. All those who thus remain in Him to the end will be glorified with Him. In order to remain faithful, we must have His spirit of devotion.

NOTABLE EXAMPLES OF PATIENT ENDURANCE

St. James exhorts the Church saying, "Take, my brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." Those whom the Apostle addressed already knew of the sufferings of Jesus. They already knew of the faithfulness of the Apostles. And now he was calling the attention of their minds to something *additional*. He is urging, Look back into the past, and see that patient endurance has been characteristic of all who have lived holy lives. These examples should be lessons of encouragement to us, in addition to those we have in the living brethren around us!

Then there is always something to be gained in casting the mind backward. The things close at hand are too near to be seen in their proper light. It was fitting that the Apostle should call attention to those faithful ones of the past, so that we might be encouraged to note what God desires. In those who are His, He desires a willingness to endure patiently and loyally, thus manifesting true character, that which greatly pleases Him.

As we look back over the Old Testament record of the Prophets, we notice that many of them displayed this very quality referred to by the Apostle as loyalty to the Lord, a willingness to suffer afflictions for *His sake*, and not as experiences brought through chance upon them by the people. We see Moses—how willing he was to suffer affliction because of his faith in the Promise made to Abraham and his conviction that the Promise would come true. He preferred to suffer with the people of God rather than to live at ease in the royal family of Pharaoh, into which he had been adopted.

We see in Job another example of patient endurance of tribulation and of strong opposition for a considerable time. We see the same in Jeremiah—how much his faithfulness cost him of hardship, and how patient he was. We see the same in Daniel the

Prophet—his faithfulness to the Lord, his patient endurance of whatever God permitted to come against him. And so with others of the Prophets. And we read that their experiences were written for *our* admonition, *our* instruction. Although they belong to one Dispensation and we to another, yet their experiences furnish us good lessons.—I Cor. 10:6, 11.

PERSONAL APPLICATION OF THESE LESSONS

Applying these lessons to ourselves, we may say that to whatever extent we may be privileged to speak the Word of God and to suffer persecution therefore, if we take it with patience, it will bring us a corresponding blessing and commendation from the Lord. But we cannot think it would be pleasing to Him if, when we suffer, we think, Oh, how terrible, terrible, terrible! Such an attitude would not be taking His Word for it, that "*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,*" and that all things shall work out for our good.—2 Tim. 3:12; Rom. 8:28.

When Job was rich, prosperous, God tested him by taking from him all his family, all his wealth, his health, and even allowing his wife to turn against him. Yet in all this Job did not turn against God. He did indeed express wonder, but he looked to the Lord in faith and said, "Though worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." I shall yet receive the manifestation of His favor, and learn what He means by these experiences, these afflictions, coming upon me. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."—Job 13:15.

After his testings had been accomplished, God gave him back children, houses, lands, friends. And these coming in abundance shadowed forth the blessings of Restitution—how the tribulations of mankind will eventually work out for good to those who will love God. If those who are now suffering affliction because of their loyalty to the Lord, because of their trust in His arrangements, will take afflictions and trials joyfully, these will surely work out good to them—"a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

CHEERFULNESS

God loveth a cheerful giver—2 Cor. 9:7.

Not merely as respects money matters, as generally applied, is this true, but in respect to all of our little offerings and sacrifices to Him and for His cause. If we would be pleasing to the Lord and grow in His favor and in nearness to Him, we must bring our hearts more and more into the condition that He approves, that He loves, namely, heartiness, cheerfulness, promptness in every service we may render. The trouble with many Christians is that they have not thoroughly learned what a great privilege we of this Gospel Age enjoy, in being permitted to present our little sacrifices and self-denials to the Lord, under the assurance that our imperfect works shall be acceptable through Christ to God—Z '02, 42 (R 2950).

God is constantly giving all His creatures the things appropriate to their being. Especially is He continually giving to His consecrated ones grace, mercy and Truth. Nor does He bestow His gifts stingingly or grudgingly. "He giveth liberally and upbraideth not." God is a cheerful as well as a liberal Giver. And He desires His people to be like Him in this respect as well as in others. "Freely ye have received; freely give" is a statement expressive of the Lord's ideal for us. We are not only to give money but also time, talents, knowledge, love, influence, reputation—in a word, our all. We should be so grateful and appreciative and joyous for God's gifts, so sympathetic of others' needs, so happy to give and to see others blessed, and so delighted that cheerful giving gains God's special love, that we should delight to give—P '33, 163.

Parallel passages: Psa. 16:6; 36:8; 37:7, 16; 40:8; Prov. 3:13-18; 14:14; 15:13, 15, 30; 16:8; 17:1, 22; 30:8; Eccles. 9:7-9; Isa. 12:3; John 15:11; 16:20-24; Rom. 5:2; 12:12; 2 Cor. 7:4; 8:2; 12:10; 1 Pet. 1:8; 4:12, 13; Phil. 4:4; 1 Thes. 5:16; Heb. 10:34; Jas. 1:2; 5:13; 1 John 1:4.

Hymns: 27, 38, 57, 94, 100, 179, 237.

Poems of Dawn, 163: *He That Scattereth Increaseth.*

Tower Reading: Z '10, 142 (R 4603).

Questions: Have I been cheerful this week? Amid what circumstances? Why? What helped or hindered? What resulted?

HE THAT SCATTERETH INCREASETH

IS thy cruse of comfort failing?
Rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine
It shall serve thee and thy brother.
Love Divine will fill thy storehouse,
Or thy handful still renew;

Scanty fare for one will often
Make a royal feast for two.

For the heart grows rich in giving;
All its wealth is living grain;
Seeds which mildew in the garner,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain.
Is thy burden hard and heavy?
Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear thy brother's burden;
God will bear both it and thee.

Numb and weary on the mountains,
Wouldst thou sleep amid the snow?
Chafe that frozen form beside thee,
And together both shall glow.
Art thou stricken in life's battle?
Many wounded round thee moan;
Lavish on their wounds thy balsams,
And that balm shall heal thine own.

Is thy heart a well left empty?
None but God its void can fill;
Nothing but a ceaseless Fountain
Can its ceaseless longings still.
Is thy heart a living power?
Self-entwined, its strength sinks low;
It can only live in loving,
And by serving love will grow.

R5926: THE GRACE OF GIVING

—2 Corinthians 9.—

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

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

CHRISTIAN benevolence—almsgiving—is the lesson inculcated in today's Study. The general disposition of the fallen nature is to give adherence or support to the strong and to expect weaker ones to rally around and uphold us. This is self-pleasing—the way of the fallen nature. But the method of the New Creature in Christ is to be the reverse of this. He is to be on the lookout for the welfare, the interests and the comforts of others, especially of those in his own family and of the weaker members of the Household of Faith. The stronger of the brethren in Christ should take pleasure in helping the weaker and the less able, and so far as possible in bringing all up to the stature of manhood in Christ.

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

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

BLINDED BY RELIGIOUS PRIDE

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

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

either the humble Jews or the Gentiles to His favor, and reject themselves, the leading representatives of His Cause and work.—John 7:43-53.

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

THE BENEFITS OF SYSTEMATIC CHARITY

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

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

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

It was the Apostle's experience, as it is the experience of all thoughtful people, that systematic charity is better than spasmodic giving. Not only is the result generally larger, but the influence upon the giver is more beneficial; for it keeps before the mind an object, a service to be rendered as unto the Lord. With many, almost the only opportunity for serving the Lord's Cause is that of contributing money. Of course, where a consecrated

child of God can do so, it is far better that he should give to the saints after the manner of St. Paul and his traveling associates—giving spiritual gifts and blessings, either by public preaching or by house-to-house visiting—presenting the Truth either by the printed page or by tongue or both.

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

LIBERALITY AN INDEX OF LOVE

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

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

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

to see His people cultivate breadth of heart as well as of mind—generosity in proportion to their knowledge of Him and of His generosity.

OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF OUR GIFTS

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

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

Our Lord showed us how He measures our gifts—that He esteems them not according to the amount given, but chiefly according to the spirit which prompts the gift—when He drew attention to the poor widow who cast two mites into the Temple treasury. (Luke 21:1-4.) From the standpoint of His estimation, that poor widow had cast in a larger sum than had any of the wealthy who had given merely out of their abundance, and not to such an extent that they felt it. How many of the Lord's people would be more "fat" spiritually today, if they would give attention to the exercise of this talent, this opportunity for service, we cannot say. The Lord alone knows. But today's Study makes it incumbent upon us to point out a privilege in this direction which is within the reach of the very poorest of the Lord's people.

A THANK-OFFERING TO THE LORD

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

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

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

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

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

"Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift!" That Gift is our Savior, our Redeemer. (John 3:16.) In this connection it is impossible for us to tell the riches of Divine grace toward us—the numberless blessings and mercies which are ours through our Lord. He represents to us the very fulness of every Divine provision for our eternal welfare. As the Apostle elsewhere says, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Deity bodily." (Colossians 2:9.) As yet, only the Church can now give thanks to God for His unspeakable Gift. But by and by the whole world of mankind will be in a condition to recognize that Gift and to render thanks. When, at the close of the Messianic Reign for the restoration of the Adamic race to their original perfection, all wilful sinners shall have

been destroyed, then "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God." Then every creature in Heaven, on earth and in the sea shall be heard saying, "Praise, glory, honor, dominion and might be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, forever!" for the Unspeakable Gift.

PURITY

Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them—Eph. 5:11.

Our reproof of sin may always be through the living epistles of our daily lives, which, as bright and shining lights, should ever reprove by manner, look, act and tone, everything tending toward darkness and sin. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Occasionally it may be proper, and still more occasionally it may be duty, for us to speak or to act in opposition to darkness; but the light of a godly life, testifying for the Truth and exhibiting the holy Spirit, is certainly one of the most forceful reproofs of sin that can be administered—Z '04, 74 (R 2966).

In this text the word *fellowship* means partnership, participation in the works of darkness, the deeds of sin and error. These are unfruitful because they lead to no good results. We have fellowship in such works, when we perform them or support and encourage others in performing them. Of course, those who stand for God, truth and righteousness even to the sacrifice of their all in death cannot participate in such works. Rather their course is to reprove them. This they may do, first, and always, by example, wherein they not only do not do such works, rather their opposites, but also by manner, look and tone show disapproval; then, secondly, and occasionally, by speech expressing their disharmony with, and opposition to, the unfruitful works of darkness. Usually the former method is the most effective reproach; yet at times with the support of the former the latter method will prove the most effective reproof—P '33, 163.

Parallel passages: Psa. 19:8; 24:3-5; 51:7; 119:140; Prov.15:26; 20:9; 21:8; 30:12; Isa.1:18, 25; 6:7; Dan. 12:10; Mic. 6:11; Mal. 3:2, 3; Matt. 5:8; John 15:2; Phil. 4:8; 1 Tim. 1:5; 3:9; 5:22; 2 Tim. 2:21, 22; Titus 1:15; Heb. 9:14; Jas. 4:8; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 John 3:3.

Hymns: 47, 74, 78, 125, 128, 150, 198.
Poems of Dawn, 40: *The Cost of Discipleship*.
Tower Reading: Z '98, 211 (R 2335).

Questions: Have I striven for purity this week? How? Why? Under what circumstances? With what results?

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

LUKE 9:23.

WOULD ye be My disciples? Consider again:
Can ye follow My footsteps through trial and pain?
Can ye throw away pleasure, and glory, and fame,
And live but to honor My cause and My name?

Can ye turn from the glitter of fashion and mirth,
And dwell like a pilgrim and stranger on earth,
Despising earth's riches, and living to bless?
Can you follow the feet of the shelterless?

Can ye ask from your heart the forgiveness of men?
Can ye list to reproaches, nor answer again?
Can ye pray that repentance to life may be theirs
Who've watched for your falling, who've set for you snares?

When ye hear I am come, then can ye arise,
The joy of your heart springing up in your eyes?
Can ye come out to meet Me, whate'er the cost be,
Though ye come on the waves of a storm-crested sea?

When I call, can ye turn and in gladness "come out"
From the home of your childhood, the friends of your heart?
With naught but My promise on which to rely,
Afar from their love—can ye lie down and die?

Yea, we'll take up the cross and in faith follow Thee
And bear Thy reproach, Thy disciples to be.
Blest Savior, for courage, to Thee we will fly;
Of grace Thou hast promised abundant supply.

R2335: "PURIFY YOUR HEARTS, YE DOUBLE MINDED."

"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."—Jas. 1:8.

BY NATURE all mankind have the depraved mind or will, whose chief characteristic is selfishness. And it is the desire to gratify this depraved will, including all selfish desires, that leads into sin in its every form. But those who have tasted of divine grace, and have come unto the Father through the Son and the merits of his sacrifice, and whose eyes have been opened to discern the difference between righteousness and unrighteousness, and the natural result of both under the operation of the divine law, and who have consecrated themselves to the Lord, are said to have a new mind, a new will,—sometimes called a clean heart and a right spirit. The natural, fallen disposition or will or mind is Scripturally termed "the mind of the flesh," while the renewed mind, disposition or will is termed "the mind of the spirit," because it is the result of the influence or spirit of the truth.

Nevertheless, this new mind or will, based upon more proper views of right and wrong, is evolved through the very same brain as the other; and these brains by which we do our thinking and reasoning and willing are very closely and sympathetically allied to

our depraved physical conditions, so that it is more natural, more easy, for us under present conditions to exercise the will or mind of the flesh than to exercise the will or mind of the spirit. Nor can this connection between our depraved physical conditions and our wills be completely broken up: so long as we are in the flesh it will be impossible for us to completely deaden its influence upon our minds and wills: consequently the will of the flesh and the works of the flesh would be the most easy and the most natural to us—the thoughts, words and deeds of the fallen disposition coming without seeking and without effort.

On the contrary, as the new mind or will was begotten or implanted in us by an outside influence, foreign to ourselves and our depravity, it, like all invaders, for a long time at least must hold its control, if at all, as would an invading foreigner—*by force*. The force or power by which the spirit of truth, the spirit of righteousness, the spirit of our God, gained a foothold in our hearts, was through the enlightenment of our minds and the quickening or revivifying of certain organs of the mind which had for many generations lain dormant and consequently become dwarfed and weak, and of other organs which for many generations had become distorted and perverted through misuse, under the domination of error, superstition, etc.

The spirit of truth, the spirit of the Lord, entered our minds as a great general might land upon a foreign shore, and recruit his army from amongst those whom he desires to conquer,—by lifting up and encouraging and enlightening the rightly disposed, and drilling these and arming them in his service, for the overthrow of a bad government, and the establishment of a righteous government. Such a new government, seeking the best interests of every citizen, and willing to have the cooperation of each, would nevertheless find it extremely difficult to control the lower elements of society, except by putting all of its affairs fully in charge and under the control of the rightly disposed: and so, too, in our minds, we find that there are certain lower organs or propensities which have maintained their strength and vigor, while some of the higher organs of our nature have lost their vitality and power to rule, and become dwarfed under the control of sin and ignorance. The spirit of truth, the spirit of the Lord, having gained entrance to our minds, has enlightened and quickened and is constantly drilling these better elements of our natural dispositions, and seeks to restore to them the control originally theirs, over the baser or lower propensities of our nature.

Nothing else need be expected than warfare between the new mind seeking under the Lord's direction to regain the control, and the depraved mind which obtained the control under the reign of sin and death. The Apostle mentions this warfare, saying:—"The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5:17.) The inspired Apostle here puts the matter very strongly, and yet experience proves to all Christians that he puts it very truthfully, "*Ye cannot do* the things that ye would."

So far, then, from being discouraged that our new minds cannot conquer an absolute peace, and come into such perfect conditions that a wrong thought could never rise up to assert itself and to tempt us, we should, on the contrary, while prompt to crush the

slightest uprising of the mind of the flesh, nevertheless realize that our condition is the very one which the Lord designs as best for us. We should realize that our faithfulness to righteousness is attested, not by the fact that we have no trials or besetments from the evil mind of the flesh, but that by the grace of God we have a holy *will*, a holy desire to promptly resist and by the Lord's grace to overcome every evil suggestion.

There are a few people in the world, we believe, who claim to have become so dead naturally and so alive spiritually that they have no "motions of sin in the flesh;"—so that no evil thought or desire ever so much as suggests itself to them. In our judgment these people are deceiving themselves; not only because their alleged experience is different from the experiences of other Christian people, faithfully battling against every motion of the flesh to the end of life's journey, but more particularly because their alleged experiences are contrary to the Word of Truth which in many places assures us (concerning the new creature with the new mind, seeking to overcome the mind of the flesh, and to bring every thought and word and act into subjection to the will of God in Christ), saying, "*Ye cannot do [perfectly] the things that ye would.*"

This implies not only that the Lord's people, the new creatures in Christ, will be *liable* to besetment on the part of the mind of the flesh, but it implies also, that the mind of the flesh (in spite of our best efforts to down it, to mortify it), while not succeeding in accomplishing its evil purposes, will nevertheless hinder us in divers ways from accomplishing all the good and great and noble things to which the new mind will prompt us. He who thinks that he is accomplishing great things, he who succeeds in accomplishing all that he would, all the things that he wills to accomplish, may be sure that he is not willing on a high enough plane; just as he who fancies that he has no besetments of the flesh is merely deceiving himself, and is so asleep as respects his new mind that he does not recognize sharply the distinctions between the new mind and the old mind, nor discriminate closely between truth and error, righteousness and sin.

THE DOUBLE MINDED.

A double-minded man or woman is one who has received the new mind and recognizes the difference between the mind of the flesh and the mind of the spirit, but who, instead of giving over the control of his life to either one, thinks erroneously that he can succeed better by dividing matters. The double mind is the compromising disposition. The old nature, as soon as it recognizes the presence of the new, is inclined to dissimulate, and to propose compromise and peace, fearing its own extermination. The new mind urges right, truth, the spirit, disposition, of God; and that these should have free course, and that every thought daring to assert itself in opposition to these recognized principles of righteousness should be summarily dealt with and put to death as a rebel. The mind of the flesh trembles at such thorough-going law and discipline, and raises various objections:

(1) It would cause an awful rupture and a lifelong war between the new mind and the tendency, mind or will of the fallen flesh. It would mean self-denial; it would mean the risk of breaking of tender ties, and the rupture of long cherished hopes and ambitions.

(2) It objects that such a course would be fanatical; that such is not the course of the world in general, nor even the course of the most respectable among those who are classed as Christians; and that to follow the course proposed would, therefore, mean, as gauged by worldly wisdom and customs, to become a fool for Christ's sake, and to be considered such by all the worldly-wise.

(3) It urges its own claims and rights: it admits that at one time it usurped full control improperly, but declares that it is reformed now. Its proposal, therefore, is that there should be a lasting peace as between the old mind and the new, that the new mind shall have the full right to control in all matters pertaining to religious worship, Sabbath observance and outward deportment, and that the old mind (*reformed*) shall continue to have full charge of business and secular affairs; and that in matters of conscience, respecting dress, amusements, etc., there shall be a compromise between the two minds, which, it suggests, would really be the happy medium and more desirable and in better taste than the extremes of either.

This is the condition represented by the Apostle, when he says, a double-minded man is *inconsistent* in all his ways. And alas, how many Christians are in this very condition of inconsistency: they profess on the one hand to be renewed in mind, and are actually so to some extent; yet on the other hand, in many of the affairs of life they are walking not after the spirit's direction but after the will of the flesh. They more or less feel this inconsistency, and their lives are not satisfactory to themselves, and far from satisfactory from the divine standpoint. Nor does the world appreciate them; for frequently it calls them hypocrites, pointing to their inconsistencies as proof. Their course is thoroughly disapproved by the Lord's Word which declares that none such shall constitute the Kingdom class, which shall be composed only of "overcomers," in whom the mind of the spirit has the control, the mastery, bringing even the thoughts of the heart into subjection to the will of God in Christ.

The double-minded man, the man who has two wills in control, and who is obliged to compromise matters continually, by "splitting the difference" between the two minds, will be apt to find the old mind more and more securing control in his heart;—until finally his mind or will becomes as fleshly as it was before grace and truth reached him—full of selfishness. The only trace of the "new mind" remaining in such will be an outward semblance of respect for righteousness, truth and honesty, a "form of godliness" which, as a mere veneer, will serve to keep up outward appearances and respectability, while inwardly the heart, the will, is completely reprobate. Such have reached the condition of the scribes and Pharisees of old—they have become mere hypocrites, "whited sepulchres, full of all manner of corruption."

What then is the right attitude of mind, what is the proper course to take? We answer that the proper course is to have only one mind, one will—the will of God—to permit the new mind, the new spirit, the new disposition, to have full control. As the Apostle says, "Let the mind of Christ dwell in you richly and *abound*," and it will bring forth good fruit, that will be a blessing to yourself and to others, and pleasing to the Lord: and such

will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord. We are to place ourselves in every particular under the control of the new mind, and as the Apostle again declares, "Make *no provision* for the flesh, to fulfil its desires." (Rom. 13:14.) The mind of the flesh, the desires of the flesh, are to be considered as mortal enemies,—to be fought against and exterminated so far as possible, and with them there is to be no compromise, no terms, no covenant, no agreement. "Mortify [kill, deaden] therefore your members [your mental members, your depraved tendencies] which are upon the earth."—Col. 3:5.

This same thought of the necessity of having only the one will, the one set of principles before our minds, if we would be successful in making our calling and election sure, was enunciated by our Lord, when he said, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." That is to say, if our eyes be focused in harmony together as one, the object before us will be seen in its true, proper light and shape, but if we were cross-eyed, our eyes glancing in different directions, every object looked at with both eyes would seem distorted. So with the eyes of understanding: if we attempt to look at matters from the heavenly standpoint, and at the same time from the earthly standpoint, the result will be unsatisfactory—confusion, uncertainty, incorrectness of judgment.

As we have found that the old nature, if permitted to have a voice at all, would eventually capture the citadel of the heart, so we find also that if the new nature be granted full sway to overcome the will of the flesh, to bring every thought and word and deed into subjection to the will of God, this also means a gradual development, a growth in grace and in the knowledge and the will of God. It means that the entire heart is thus seized in the name of the Lord, and reckoned as his, and reckoned a pure heart on this account; but it means also a progressive battle with and a progressive victory over the weaknesses, the frailties of our mortal bodies; and it means additionally the establishment, in every quarter of our beings, of fortified defences against the besetments of the world, the flesh and the devil. Thus the developed Christian, whose eye is single to the pleasement of God, and whose mind, purpose or will is single to the service of the one Master, shall, by the grace of God, day by day, month by month, year by year, find the ability, more and more, to hinder his flesh from rendering service to Sin. And not only so, but his flesh, once the willing servant of sin until mortified, rendered dead to Sin, shall more and more be quickened, energized, by the new mind, to its service, and thus more and more become a servant of righteousness and of truth: so that it not only will be passively the Lord's, in the sense of not being an opponent of truth and right and purity, but so that it will be the Lord's in a positive sense, aggressively and actively engaged in opposition to sin and error, and in the service of truth and righteousness.—Rom. 8:11.

HOW THE NEW MIND SHOULD RULE.

Many gibes and taunts are thrown at the present House of Congress, whose Speaker and representative is the Hon. Thomas B. Reed, who is styled "the Czar and autocrat of the House." Nevertheless, and without attempting any discussion of the merits or demerits of the arrangement criticized, from their political and human standpoint, we see there a most fit illustration for our subject under consideration.

The human brain is scientifically, phrenologically, subdivided into various organs, representative of various propensities or dispositions: these may be illustrated by the various representatives of the various States, assembled in the House of Congress. Each different organ has its own particular thought or interest, yet the *will* is not the expression of any one organ merely, but the voice of the majority. When a motion or bill is offered in Congress, it may be of special interest to only a few of the members, and the State interests which they represent. In such event, if personal or sectional selfishness ruled amongst the members, the matter in question could not be passed, because the majority would not be sufficiently interested to favor it; and hence, to accomplish its end it would be necessary to appeal to the selfishness of the various other members, by agreeing to favor certain interests of theirs in return for their cooperation. Thus, Congress, if each member and each state stood entirely separate, and without any combination, would be comparatively powerless, unless a degree of patriotism should be shown larger than we would have any reason to expect. Hence the tendency has always been to party division and party cooperation; the party in the majority having the control of the situation, and being held responsible accordingly for the results. So with our minds: if each organ stood wholly separate from the others, it could move only on lines of selfishness, unless it were perfect, which we know it is not. Hence in the human mind, as in Congress, party lines have been established, and for very much the same purpose. In the mind of the Christian the party lines are, the old mind and the new mind, the old self and the new self, the old creature and the new creature, the old will and the new will, the mind of righteousness, and the mind of sin, the mind of love and the mind of selfishness. All these various names describe the same two minds.

In Congress it was found that as its number of representatives increased there was an increased tendency on the part of minorities to baffle or hinder the accomplishment of anything by the majority: the minority party would discuss the subject for hours, days and weeks, if permitted to do so, rather than let the matter go to a vote, in hope that in the end the will of the majority should be frustrated. But Speaker Reed, cooperating with the leaders of his party, concluded that it was not the intention of the law to hinder legislation, and that consequently the dominant party should have opportunity to proceed to enact the laws which it, as the majority of the body, deemed to be the proper laws. Consequently rules were laid down giving the Speaker, as the representative of the majority, certain privileges and powers, by which the opposition would be limited in its discussion of the various subjects, and the will of the majority more speedily and more thoroughly enacted.

Now this is exactly the condition of things in the human heart, where the teachings of the Lord have been accepted, and where the propensities or organs of the mind have come to a strict party division;—the one the party of truth and righteousness and love, in harmony with the Lord, and the other the party of sin and selfishness, with contrary sentiments. If *conversion* has taken place it means that the higher organs of the mind, sufficient in number or in influence, have gained the control of the mind; that these preponderate in number or in influence; that they constitute the majority, and the evil

propensities the minority. Any heart in which the evil propensities are in the majority and in control is an unconverted heart.

And what was found in Congress respecting the disposition of minorities to baffle the will of the ruling majority is found also in our minds, namely, the disposition of our natural mind not only to be heard, but to foil and baffle and render void the will of the new mind, in respect to the control of the affairs of life. What the Scriptures propose to us, therefore, is illustrated again in Congress: the Scriptures propose that the new mind, having obtained the control, shall elect a Speaker, a head,—and that that head or Speaker for our every talent, directing all our interests and all our efforts, shall be Christ Jesus our Lord. They propose that we shall place full authority and power in the hands of the Lord, so that his word and will shall be our will, our law. And how safe it is for us to admit such a Czar, such an autocrat, to control us, since we have learned to know him as the very embodiment of justice, wisdom, and love. Safely we can trust our affairs in his hands.

There are other analogies which might be drawn: for instance, the power of the Speaker of the House rests solely in the fact that it is the power of the majority. If the majority which placed him in power and gave him the authority which he exercises should become a minority, his power would immediately terminate; and the opposition party might give its representative equal power in an opposite direction. So with our hearts; only as our hearts voted to have the Lord in control, did he take charge; and if our wills, the preponderance of our propensities, our judgments, cease to be on the side of the Lord, he no longer retains his power in our hearts and lives, and the evil majority appoint a successor, in line with the selfish propensities, favoring everything selfish.

In Congress, when any matter is brought up, each representative has an opportunity for expressing himself, either directly or indirectly, either on the floor personally, or through representatives in committee. And so with our wills: when a matter is presented by one organ of the mind, the other organs have a chance to respond, and to seek to influence the majority, and to overthrow the rule of righteousness. For instance, a suggestion is made to the mind by the organ of Combativeness, to the effect that there is a good, proper cause why the whole being should be angry, and undertake vengeful retaliation; and under the influence of the eloquence of Combativeness, various other of the lower organs would most surely be aroused; namely, Pride, Self-esteem, Destructiveness, Selfishness, etc., and in addition perhaps some of the higher organs might be temporarily swayed by the old sympathies, prejudice, antipathy, etc., to favor the angry, malicious and resentful course. Conscientiousness might excitedly declare that it was a righteous cause of indignation; Caution might join, and claim that if the thing were not now opposed violently, worse results would follow; even Spirituality and Veneration might be swayed into favoring the angry course, with suggestions that it was in the service of God, and a duty towards God, and toward righteousness, to be angry and to crush the opponent with retaliation and vengeance. Thus, for a moment the entire mind might be swayed toward the side of evil, yet without previous wilfulness or sin—because of the hereditary tendencies of the mind.

But here the gavel of the Speaker is heard, Memory calls attention, and points out that the will of the majority has already been expressed to the contrary of such a course; and calls attention to the rules already adopted;—namely, to put away all anger, malice, hatred and strife, as being in general works of the flesh and of the devil. Memory calls attention to the fact that the majority adopted as the rule of action the words of the Speaker, Christ, "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and speak evil of you." Commit your way unto the Lord, remembering that he has said, "Vengeance is mine, I will recompense." Where the will of the majority of organs is loyal to its own previous decision, the effect of Memory's calling attention to that law will be instantaneous: at once Conscientiousness, Veneration, Spirituality, Caution, and all the higher organs realize that they were about to make a mistake; and immediately they change front, fully supporting the law of the Speaker, Christ. Selfishness, Combativeness, Pride, etc., may attempt to argue the point, but immediately they are called to order and reminded that by vote of the majority they are strictly under the law of Christ, and all further discussion of the subject is forbidden.

Similarly, illustrations might be drawn as representing other passions, tastes or desires of the flesh, which temporarily might seem to gain some control; but from the moment that Memory calls attention to the proposal as being in conflict with the law of the Master, there should be an instantaneous surrender. Such a course would prove that the will had all along been thoroughly loyal to the Lord, and that he reigns there. It proves the reign of Christ in that heart far better than if no suggestion to the contrary course had come up. And who cannot see that a life thus ordered, and under strictest control of the will of our Head, Christ Jesus, is not only the only proper life (the only one in which the new mind is properly exercised), but in addition to this the only mind which is a "*sound* mind." People who are continually carried from their moorings by their emotions show that their minds are unsound; such are continually proving to those around them that they have poor judgment. They are frequently angry, troubled, vexed, hurt; or continually falling into one wrong act or another, as they confess afterward. Indeed, the majority of the things at which they take offence, become angry, etc., prove to have been mistakes, nothing having been done or intended to anger, hurt, or injure them. And we know, not only from the Scriptures, but also from our own observation, that the world of mankind in general is thus of *unsound* mind; and, as the Apostle explains, the only ones in all the world who have even the spirit or disposition of a sound mind are the new creatures in Christ Jesus, who have the new mind, the new will, in control. These, as we have seen, would be liable to be carried away also, by evil passions, evil surmisings, etc., but those who have put themselves fully and completely under the control of Christ and his law of the New Covenant are kept from the extremes to which otherwise they would be as subject as others.

The Apostle's exhortation to the double minded, is in place, and should be heeded promptly by all who realize that they have a double mind or will which can never please the Lord nor bring joy and blessing either now or hereafter: "Purify your hearts, ye double minded;"—purge your consciences by hearty obedience to the truth, by the washing of water through the Word.

"Grant, Lord, a heart, submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer's throne,
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone;

"A heart in every thought renewed,
And full of love divine,
Perfect and right, and pure and good,
A copy, Lord, of thine."

WHAT BECAME OF A LIE.

"First somebody told it,
Then the room wouldn't hold it,
So the busy tongues rolled it
Till they got it outside.
When the crowd came across it
They onward did toss it,
Till it grew long and wide.
From a very small lie, Sir,
It grew deep and high, Sir,
Till it reached the sky, Sir,
And frightened the moon;
For she hid her face, Sir,
At the dreadful disgrace, Sir,
That happened at noon.

"This lie brought forth others,
Dark sisters and brothers,
And fathers and mothers
A terrible crew.
And while headlong they hurried,
The people they flurried,
And troubled and worried
As lies always do.
And so evil boded,
This monstrous lie goaded,
Till at last it exploded
In smoke and in shame.
While from mud and from mire
The pieces flew higher,
And hit the sad liar,
And killed his good name."

—Mrs. M. A. Kidder in Jewish Gazette.

PRAISE

He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God—Psa. 40:3.

The filling of the Spirit of the Lord leads to songs and rejoicings, not only with the lips, but with the heart—refreshing, comforting and uplifting not only the "singer" but also the hearer. It is this "new song" *in the heart* that constitutes the Christian a separate and distinct being from all others about. Because it is in the heart, therefore, it must be in the mouth also, and must influence all the affairs of life; for we cannot but speak the things which have so wonderfully uplifted and refreshed our souls—Z '02, 75 (R 2966).

The new song is the Song of Moses and the Lamb, the harmony of the Scriptures as seen in the Divine Plan of the Ages. This Plan proceeded from God's character; is in harmony with His character; is a manifestation of His character; is carried forward by His character; reflects credit upon His character; produces in the faithful and obedient His character; and will ultimately vindicate the perfection of His character. The speaker in this text is the Christ, whose mouth consists of those who express His thoughts. To these the Lord's secret is given. They tell it forth harmoniously with itself, with Scripture passages and teachings, with God's character and Christ's Ransom, with facts and with the designs of the Lord's Word. As the picture of a song suggests, they do it joyously. While "singing" it to all who will listen, they especially "sing" it to all who have an ear for its melodious notes—P '33, 163.

Parallel passages: Ex. 15:1-21; Judg. 5; 1 Sam. 2:1-10; 2 Sam. 22; Luke 1:46-55, 67-79; Psa. 8; 9; 18; 19; 24; 29; 30; 33; 40; 47; 50; 65; 66; 75; 76; 77; 92; 93; 95; 96; 97; 98; 99; 104; 111; 113; 115; 116; 117; 118; 134; 139; 147; 148; 150.

Hymns: 11, 45, 46, 235, 237, 238, 283.

Poems of Dawn, 223: *My Beautiful Secret*.

Tower Reading: Z '92, 143 (R 1402).

Questions: Has this been a week of praise? Why? How? Under what circumstances? With what results?

MY BEAUTIFUL SECRET

I HAVE learned a beautiful secret,
I know not how nor where—
But I know it is sweet and precious,
And true, and glad, and fair;
And that God in heaven reveals it
To all that have ears to hear.

And I know that ere I learned it,
My way was weary and hard;

And somewhere in life's music
There was always that which jarred—
A hidden and dreary discord,
That all its sweetness marred.

But my harp of life was lifted
By One who knew the range
Of its many strings—for He made it,
And He struck a keynote strange;
And beneath the touch of the Master
I heard the music change.

No longer it failed and faltered;
No longer sobbed and strove;
But it seemed to soar and mingle
With the song of heaven above;
For the pierced hand of the Master
Had struck the keynote—Love.

Thy heart's long-prisoned music
Let the Master's hand set free!
Let Him whisper His beautiful secret
To thee, as He hath to me:
"My Love is the Golden Keynote
Of all My will for thee."

R1402: PRAISE YE THE LORD.

Psalm 103.

Golden Text—"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."
—Verse 2.

Verses 1 to 5. In the beginning of a Christian's experience fear more than love, alas, too often, has the chief control of his heart and lips. And this because of a false theology, taught him from earliest infancy, even in nursery rhymes impressing upon the simple mind theories which, while denominating God the very essence of Love, paint his character and plans as the most atrocious conceivable, and wrest the Scripture "parables and dark sayings" to their support. In this early stage of general Christian experience, therefore, fear, and not a heart full of love leads to worship. This fact is noted by the prophet.—Isa. 29:13.

The bondage of fear in many instances fails to hold the penitent or to draw him near to the Lord, and consequently we frequently hear expressions similar to those of the old familiar hymn—"Where is the blessedness I knew

When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-reviving view
Of Jesus and his Word?"

Some, however, in spite of all their false ideas, learn in their hearts what they are much slower to learn with their heads, that "God is Love." They drink in the *spirit* of the Scriptural teaching even when, misled by misinterpretations and twistings, they think that the letter of God's Word is in opposition. Their hearts are better than their theology or their heads.

Such, and still more especially those whose *heads* as well as their hearts are illuminated by the grace of our God, reach as a development this higher state of Christian experience indicated by the prophet in the verses under consideration. They reach the place where acquaintance with and appreciation of the Lord cast out all fear, and where their whole being loves and praises and desires to serve the grand one who is so worthy.

Such do not generalize too much God's favors: they particularize. And naturally and properly (verses 3 and 4) the first item for praise is the *redeeming love* through the sacrifice of his son as the propitiation (*i.e.*, satisfaction) for our sins, which has forgiven our iniquities, healed our diseases, and redeemed our lives from destruction. "Hallelujah! What a Savior!" Not that this is all *done* for us yet. No; only by *faith* can we reckon it as done. But God has begun the good work, the sacrifice for our sins was paid on Calvary, and shortly we shall be presented before the Father blameless and unreprougible, without any of our present mental, moral and physical diseases and weaknesses, and in the full possession of the new life and the new resurrection bodies.

Verses 6 to 10. Having expressed the sentiments and attitude of the saints, the prophet next turns to the people in general—the half-hearted Christians as well as the worldly—and declares (verse 6) that God is on the side of justice and makes the cause of the weak and oppressed ones his cause. He declares (verse 7) that this was fully illustrated in the *laws* which he promulgated through Moses and in his *dealings* with Israel, including their deliverance from the task-masters of Egypt. And all these show (verse 8) God's general goodness and sympathy and compassion.

Verse 9. Yet none must presume upon God's love and mercy, and trample upon his laws; for although slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, "He will not always chide [*contend* with the wayward] neither will he keep [*i.e.*, *retain* or *hold back*] his anger forever."

Verse 10. What chastisements he has so far given are not to be esteemed as the full penalty for our sins. He has been holding back the full penalty in mercy according to his provision in Christ. So far "He hath not dealt with us according to [the just desert of] our sins, nor rewarded us according as our iniquities deserved" under his own law. But we must not suppose, therefore, that he will *never* execute that law which declares that *death* is the full penalty for full wilful sin. The Lord through the Apostle Peter declares this

same truth, that thus far he has *held back* the full penalty, because willing that all should come to a full appreciation of the truth, and by acceptance of it be saved from the full penalty of wilful sin.—2 Pet. 3:7-10; Acts 3:23; Heb. 10:26-30.

Verses 11 to 18. But the Lord, in thus threatening the wilfully wicked, does not wish to awaken dread in the hearts of those who do love him and seek to know and to do his will. Hence when these find that their lives are imperfect, much as they desired and endeavored to have them otherwise, they are not to be in fear of the "wrath" and "vengeance" which are to be let loose upon *wilful* sinners in due time. Ah, no! God considereth our frame; he knows our weakness, and as the Apostle declares, *we shall be saved from wrath through Him (Christ, our Redeemer). Toward all such as love and reverence him, and who are in covenant relations with him, and hence under the blood of the new covenant, God's compassion is far beyond that of an earthly parent. As high as the heaven is above the earth, so great is his love for such, and as far as the east is from the west, he has removed their transgression—laying our sins upon his own spotless Lamb, our Redeemer, and imputing his purity to all who will accept it, as in due time this gift of love is testified to all. And not only does God's blessing rest upon these his "saints," but in some degree it follows even to their children.*

Verses 19 to 21. Here prophetically the reference is to that great kingdom for which we pray, "Thy kingdom come." In it the angels (messengers) and ministers (servants) of God will fully carry out his great plan, his goodness to all, showing *mercy* unto thousands of those who love and obey him, and executing also the *judgments written (destruction—not everlasting torments, the judgments which some have imagined, but which would be in violation of the things written)* upon those who treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath and perdition of ungodly men.

Verse 22. Then, with a clean universe, after the close of the Millennial age, all God's works in all places of his dominion will praise and honor him. And all who are in full accord with the great divine plan can even now in advance hail that grand, gracious time with joy and exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

HELPFULNESS

Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it—1 Cor. 12:26.

Every Christian in proportion as he is in harmony with the Head and His spirit of love, will be prompt to act. Sometimes in our human bodies the hand may stretch forth assistance to an injured member so quickly that it seems impossible to conceive that the message first went to the head, and that our hand was subsequently directed by the head to assist; and so it is with the disciples of Christ. Those who are in full touch and sympathy with the Head, the Lord, are to so large an extent of "*one spirit*" with Him, so anxious to do His will, and so well informed with respect to what His will is, that they sometimes seem to act almost automatically, in respect to rendering help by word or deed, or otherwise, to those with whom they are in contact—Z '02, 103 (R 2984).

This text treats of sympathy in the full sense of the word. Such sympathy means to feel with others; to feel one with them in condition, experiences, sentiments and purposes. Thus we sympathize with God and Christ in that we feel one with Them in character, plan, work and triumph and in the mistreatment that They receive from Satan and his servants. In our sympathy with the brethren we not only feel with them as we do with God and Christ; but additionally we feel with them in their mistakes, lacks, faults, failures and weakness well knowing that we are encumbered with like infirmities. God and Christ being free from these do not call forth our sympathy for these. We do not sympathize with, but pity the world for their disharmony with good principles and for the mistreatment that they receive from Satan and from his willful and deluded servants—P '33, 164.

Parallel passages: Psa. 20:2; 46:4, 5; 84:1-10; 102:13-15; 111:1; 132:16; 133; 134; Prov. 3:27, 28; 11:25; 22:9; 25:21; Isa. 40:11; 52:7; 58:6-11; 61:1-3; 01 Acts 20:28; 11:29, 30; Rom. 15:15-27; 1 Cor. 12:28; 13:3; 2 Cor. 8:1-15, 24; Phil. 4:10-18; Col. 1:24; 1 Tim. 6:18; Heb. 6:10; 13:16; 1 Pet. 2:5; Mark 9:41.

Hymns: 23, 95, 170, 172, 179, 277, 322.

Poems of Dawn, 161: "A Cup of Cold Water."

Tower Reading: Z '13, 168 (R 5250).

Questions: Have I been helpful this week? To whom? Why? How? What helped or hindered? Under what circumstances? With what results?

"A CUP OF COLD WATER"

THE Lord of the Harvest walked forth one day,
Where the fields were white with the ripening wheat,
Where those He had sent in the early morn
Were reaping the grain in the noonday heat.

He had chosen a place for every one,
And bidden them work till the day was done.

Apart from the others, with troubled voice,
Spake one who had gathered no golden grain:
"The Master hath given no work to me,
and my coming hither hath been in vain;
The reapers with gladness and song will come,
But no sheaves will be mine in the harvest home."

He heard the complaint, and He called her name:
"Dear child, why standest thou idle here?
Go fill the cup from the hillside stream,
And bring it to those who are toiling near;
I will bless thy labor, and it shall be
Kept in remembrance as done for Me."

'Twas a little service, but grateful hearts
Thanked God for the water so cold and clear;
And some who were fainting with thirst and heat,
Went forth with new strength to the work so dear;
And many a weary soul looked up,
Revived and cheered by the little cup.

R5250: SERVICE OF THE BRETHREN A PROPER ZEAL

"The zeal of Thine House hath consumed Me."—Psa. 69:9.

THESE WORDS must have seemed extremely poetical, hyperbolic, to those of David's time. David indeed had a zeal for the House of God—for the Tabernacle first, and subsequently for the Temple, which he desired to build, but which the Lord would not permit him to build. David had a real zeal for that House.

We get the key to this prophecy from its application in the New Testament to our Lord. When Jesus had made a scourge of small cords, He drove the money-changers out of the Temple. Then His disciples remembered and probably quoted the passage: "The zeal of Thine House hath eaten Me up." (John 2:17.) The Lord's House in that case was the Temple; and our Lord's zeal in cleansing the Temple of all merchandise would be considered by some as very appropriate, and by others as very extreme.

But the still deeper meaning is indicated by the declaration that the Church is His House—the House of God. The Apostles, speaking of the Church, say that we are the Temple of the Holy Spirit. (I Cor. 6:19.) Again, it is said that we are builded together as living stones. (I Pet. 2:4, 5.) So we see that the real House of God for which Jesus had zeal was the House of Sons. The Jews had been a House of Servants under Moses; but

Christ was a Son over His own House—the House of Sons—"whose House are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end;" for "Faithful is He that calleth you."—Heb. 3:5, 6; I Thess. 5:24.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE

Having this view of the House before our minds, we can see in what way Jesus' zeal for the House of God consumed Him—burned Him up. We use the word *burn*, *consume*, in the same way that we use the word *rust*, in the case of *iron*. And so zeal is that which is warm, aglow, hot. With this view of the Master and His House before our minds—the House that He was interested in—we perceive that His zeal, His energy for them, prompted Him, led Him, to lay down His life—for as many as would become God's House, God's sons, God's people. This zeal for the Lord's House, for the Lord's people, consumed His time and strength in helping them.

During this Gospel Age the Lord invites the Church to be similarly consumed with Him. But the only ones who are yet members of the House of God, or sons of God, are those who are begotten of the Holy Spirit, as the Apostle distinctly tells us. If we then have this Spirit of Christ, it will be the spirit of service. It will be a zeal, a warmth, an energy, prompting us to serve in the Church. It will mean that we will be consumed as the Master was consumed—in the service of His Church, which is His Body.—Matthew 20:28; I John 3:16.

THE PREPARATION FOR THE DIVINE NATURE

There are sons of God on the Heavenly plane who were never given an opportunity to manifest such a zeal as this. There was no offer made to them to be associated in the reclamation of mankind. This privilege was given to the Logos, the Only Begotten. To Him was given the opportunity to lay down His life—"Who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name."—Phil. 2:7-9.

Our Lord's zeal has not cost Him His Heavenly home, His Heavenly estate; but, on the contrary, God has highly exalted Him—to a higher position. The statement that He was consumed refers to His earthly life, which He laid down for the world. The Father has given Him a still higher nature than He had before—the Divine nature. And this zeal in being consumed prepared Him for the high reward of the Divine nature.

St. Peter says that the Lord hath "given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these [working in us] we might become partakers of the Divine nature." (2 Pet. 1:4.) The Apostle Paul says that if we suffer with Christ, we shall reign with Him; if we be dead with Him, we shall live with Him. (2 Tim. 2:11, 12.) If we have our earthly natures consumed, then we shall get the Divine nature. "We shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."—1 Cor. 15:51, 52.

This opportunity, then, of manifesting a fulness of zeal for the service of God, was granted, not to Adam, or to any of the human family, until this Gospel Age. This opportunity will *not* come to the sons of God in the next Age. The sacrificing then will be at an end; and there will be no more sin, sorrow, pain, sighing, crying or dying!—Isaiah 35:10; 51:11; Revelation 21:4.

"One more day's work for Jesus,
One less of life for me!
But Heaven is nearer, and Christ is dearer,
Than yesterday to me;
His love and light fill all my soul tonight!

"One more day's work for Jesus!
How glorious is my King! 'Tis joy, not duty, to show His beauty;
My soul mounts on the wing,
At the mere thought how Christ my life has bought!

"One more day's work for Jesus!
How sweet the work has been,
To tell the story, to show the glory,
Where Christ's flock enter in!
How it did shine in this poor heart of mine!

"O blessed work for Jesus!
O rest at Jesus' feet!
There toil seems pleasure, my wants are treasure,
And pain for Him is sweet.
Lord, if I may, I'll serve another day!"

GOSPEL WITNESSING

Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry—2 Tim. 4:5.

To what extent are we each and all zealously using the opportunities which the Lord has put in our power to glorify His name and to bless our sin-sick neighbors, not only by telling them about Jesus and His wonderful words of life, but to what extent are we additionally helping them to come to Him? There are various ways in which we may assist—by word, by letter, by invitation to meetings, *etc.* However, one necessary element in all help is that our own course of conduct must be in accord with that which we commend to others. If we ourselves have been with Jesus and learned of Him and caught some of His self-sacrifice and love, we will be better able to help others who desire to come to Him—Z '04, 41 (R 3315).

Zeal may be defined as an ardent devotion to persons, principles, causes and things, expressing itself in enthusiastic activities on their behalf. It is, therefore, a quality that is ardent, burning, feelingful. It boils over in enthusiastic feelings. The affections are wrought up to a boiling point; and it enlists the energies of body, soul and spirit in its exercise of ardor. It is an ardent devotion; hence it gives itself up in any possible way of self-sacrifice in the interest of the object to whose interest it is devoted. It exercises itself in the interest, sometimes of persons to whom it is attached by affectional devotion, sometimes to principles to which it is attached by ardent devotion, sometimes to a cause to which it is attached by warm advocacy, sometimes to things to which one cleaves with burning devotion and sometimes to a combination of two or more of these with an enthusiastic devotion—P '48, 51.

Parallel passages: Psa. 40:3; 69:9; Eccles. 9:10; 11:6; Isa. 61:1-3; 62:1; Jer. 20:9; Matt. 4:17; 5:14; 10:7; 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15; Luke 2:49; John 9:4; 18:37; Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 9:16; 15:58; Gal. 6:9, 10; Phil. 2:15, 16; 2 Tim. 4:2.

Hymns: 70, 116, 210, 245, 260, 261, 275, 309, 314, 348.

Poems of Dawn, 308: *We Still Can Serve.*

Tower Reading: Z '01, 151 (R 2808).

Questions: Have I witnessed to the Truth recently? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

WE STILL CAN SERVE

YOU'RE growing old? Your task is done?
And now you rest with setting sun,
Lamenting that your work is o'er,
That you can't labor any more?

Ah, weary not to do God's will!
Go, labor on, your task fulfill.
You'll always have the Master's care—

The oldest trees some fruit must bear;

For age has labors none the less
Than youth, though in another dress.
As evening twilight fades away
New glories shine, not seen by day.

R2808: THE CHURCH'S GREAT COMMISSION.

—Matt. 28:16-28.—

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world [age]."

OUR Lord's next manifestation to his disciples was near the close of the forty days of his invisible presence after his resurrection. It was, according to our reckoning, the sixth occasion of the kind, and much more marked in some respects than previous ones, for, in common with others, we believe that at this time our Lord manifested himself not only to the eleven apostles mentioned in our lesson, but also to the whole multitude of believers whom the Apostle Paul mentions as being "over five hundred brethren." (1 Cor. 15:6.) This meeting, we are informed, was by special appointment of time and place; hence there was an opportunity for all the deeply interested ones to be gathered together. Dr. Bordman suggests some of those composing this number to have been "the eleven apostles; the seventy evangelists; Mary of Nazareth; Mary of Magdala; Mary of Bethany; Mary the wife of Cleophas; Mary the mother of John Mark; Martha, and Joanna and Susanna, and the woman of Jacob's Well; Peter's wife's mother and the impotent man of Bethsaida; the centurion of Capernaum and the widow of Nain; the penitent woman of Simon's feast and the woman healed on the way; Jairus and his daughter and Bartimeus; the Syro-Phoenician woman, and the deaf mute of Decapolis; the grateful leper of Samaria and the woman bound with the spirit of infirmity; Zacchaeus and Lazarus, whom he raised from the dead; and the blind and deaf and mute and halt and palsied and lunatic whom he had healed; and Joseph and Nicodemus." We would certainly expect these to be amongst our Lord's friends who had great confidence in him, and who, after experiencing great disappointment respecting his death would have great hopes enkindled in their hearts through the reports of the apostles of his resurrection and his manifestations to them.

Wise was the plan which gave to his followers the "infallible proofs" of his resurrection, and the instructions necessary to appreciation of the same, in so gradual a manner as we have seen. Three manifestations on the day of our Lord's resurrection; one a week later, on the eighth day; the fifth probably two weeks later on the 22nd day after his resurrection, and now the sixth manifestation, probably ten days after that, about the thirty-second day. Thus gradually the two lessons necessary were taught: (1), the *fact* of our Lord's resurrection, that he was no longer dead but alive; and (2) that he was "*changed*," that he was no longer "the *man* Christ Jesus," but that he was now "a quickening *spirit*," manifesting the powers and attributes which they knew belonged to

spirit beings—invisibility and power to appear in various forms as a man—power to come and go as the wind, none knowing whence he came or whither he went.—John 3:8.

We note the wisdom manifested in the order of the appearances also: first to Mary, who seems to have been a woman full of faith as well as full of zeal, and one whose word would have influence with the apostles; next Peter, a leader amongst them, was convinced; then the remainder of the eleven, except Thomas, who doubted; then the eleven, Thomas included, and perhaps some of the women with them, not mentioned; then what would seem to them the long interim of non-appearance, in which some of them started back again to the fishing business; then the convincing of these that the risen Lord had all the power that he ever possessed, and was as able to be with them and to guide them and to provide for their necessities as when he was a man, and with them daily in the flesh; then the instruction of them that their mission should still be to feed his sheep and his lambs; and his appointment for this general meeting, which would be rendered doubly forceful by reason of its previous appointment.

The time had come; the friends of Jesus were gathered; for nearly five weeks they had been studying the great lessons of divine providence connected with the death and resurrection of the Lord, and how all these could happen to him and he still be the promised Messiah—yea, as he explained, how all these things were necessary to him in order that he might be the Messiah and accomplish all the great and wonderful work predicted in Holy Writ—how he must first suffer to redeem mankind, before, as the King of Glory, he should be fully authorized and empowered to bless them with eternal life and all the privileges and blessings proper to the redeemed and reconciled.

When they saw him they worshiped him, "but some doubted." The ones who doubted we cannot reasonably suppose to have been any of the eleven apostles, for they were fully satisfied, thoroughly convinced, and had so expressed themselves previously. Those who doubted must, we think, have been of the "five hundred brethren" present at this appointed meeting, who had had no previous intercourse with him since his resurrection, and some of whom, we may reasonably suppose, were much weaker in the faith than the apostles and the special friends already communed with. The statement that "some doubted" is an evidence of the candor of the Evangelist's record. It shows us, too, that the Lord's followers were not over credulous, but rather disposed to sift and weigh the evidences presented, and the subsequent zeal, energy and self-sacrificing spirit of those who believed gives us abundant evidence of the sincerity of their convictions respecting our Lord's resurrection, which they as well as we recognize to be the very keystone of our faith in him. If Christ be not risen our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins.—1 Cor. 15:17.

When our Lord appeared his message was the very one they needed to have impressed, and which he had been to some extent impressing at his previous appearances. It was that all *power* in heaven and in earth had been given unto him. We are not to understand by this that the Father had abdicated or surrendered any of his own power or authority, but rather are to remember that, as the Apostle Paul elsewhere states, in any such declaration the Father is always excepted. (1 Cor. 15:27.) Nor are we to understand

that our Lord meant that power and authority were given him to set aside or overrule or violate any feature of the divine law and plan. We are rather to understand his words to mean this: I came into the world to do the Father's will, and by manifesting my obedience to that will, and fulfilling its demands, to not only redeem mankind from the sentence of death through Adam, but also to secure to myself the title and *authority* promised of the Father to belong to the Messiah. From the time I made my consecration I was *reckoned* to be the Messiah, but my Messiahship depended upon my faithfulness even unto death—even the death of the cross. I was faithful in this, and as a reward the Father has raised me up from the dead, a partaker of the divine nature, and the heir of all the gracious promises and blessings before mentioned as pertaining to Messiah. All this Messianic power and authority that was once mine reckonedly or prospectively is now mine *actually*; for I have finished the work which the Father gave me to do, and that acceptably; and its acceptance has been manifested in my resurrection to my present condition of spiritual glory and power.—Acts 17:31.

"*Therefore* go ye, disciple all nations." Their commission to go and spread him as Messiah was based on the fact that the Father had accepted his work, finished at Calvary, and had *recognized* him with full authority as Messiah, by his resurrection from the dead: *therefore* we may preach Jesus, the power of God and the channel of all his promised mercies and blessings to all who have "an ear to hear," to all nations, and not, as previously, to the Jewish nation only.

Following the assurance of his *authority* as the Messiah, our Lord, addressing especially the eleven apostles, but indirectly, with and through them, addressing all his followers, gave them and us the great commission under which we, his people, have since been operating. It might be termed the *ordination* of his apostles and all his followers as preachers, ambassadors, members of the royal priesthood, speaking and teaching in the name of the Master, the fully empowered Messiah. The commission divides itself into three parts: (1) "Make disciples of all nations;" (2) "baptizing them;" (3) "teaching them." The word teach, in the Common Version (vs. 19) is not from the same Greek word rendered "teach" in vs. 20. The word in vs. 19 signifies proselytizing or making disciples of. The word "teach" in vs. 20 signifies instruct.

A wrong thought is derived from this text by many students of the Scriptures, when they consider it to mean, Go and convert all nations. This is not the thought, but rather, Go ye and gather converts from all nations, and baptize them and teach them, etc. This view is in accord with our Master's declaration on other occasions, in which he testified that they would not be converted at his second coming, but quite the reverse: "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" This interpretation is in harmony with our Lord's statement in Matt. 24:14, "This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a *witness* unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." Whoever gets the wrong thought respecting the commission is apt to take the wrong action in his endeavor to comply with it. Those who have concluded that the Lord intended the conversion of the world are led to various subterfuges, both in mind and in conduct, in order to attempt to carry out the commission they misunderstand. This is leading some at the present time to ignore the Scriptural definition of the terms of membership in Christ's

Kingdom—to lower the standard both of faith and of conduct, in order to admit a larger proportion of the human family and in order to, if possible, convince themselves and others that the world is growing better and being converted. Some have not only concluded that the preaching of the cross of Christ and faith in the redemption is unnecessary but have even gone further than this, and have claimed that even a historical knowledge of Christ is unnecessary, and that heathen religions are to be esteemed as part of the preaching of the Gospel, and that the heathen obedience to their religious customs is to be esteemed as obedience to the Gospel. Thus more or less false views of the commission are leading astray many who see no hope in any other way of ever attaining to that which our Lord commissioned nearly nineteen centuries ago, and which otherwise they would feel has thus far failed most miserably, and has no hope of ever being accomplished.

On the other hand we hold that the commission rightly read and understood has been fulfilled; that the message of Christ and the Kingdom has been proclaimed, directly or indirectly, with more or with less force and energy, in every nation under heaven, and that as a result some from every nation have been made disciples; and that incidentally a "witness" has been given to all the peoples of the earth respecting the redemption and the divine provision for salvation through the Redeemer. Of these disciples gathered out of all nations by the message of the Lord a "little flock" will be found to whom it will be the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom, in joint-heirship with Jesus in glory as the Seed of Abraham, through whom, in the Millennial age to follow this, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. From this standpoint only can our Lord's commission be properly appreciated and its fulfilment recognized.

DISCIPLING THE WORLD.

The work of the Evangelist comes first—Go, make disciples of as many as will hear your message. The word "disciple" signifies pupil, and those interested through the evangelist are only supposed to be pupils in the school of Christ, in the primary department. As they become instructed in righteousness their full consecration is in order, as represented in *baptism*—death to self and to the world—buried with Christ by baptism into his death. (Rom. 6:3-5.) Then comes the third step, *teaching them* to observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded. Any neglect of this commission and its order of procedure means comparative failure; and yet on every hand we see that its specific features are neglected. We find the majority of professed Christians giving the baptism first, in a wrong order as well as of a wrong kind. Secondly, they disciple them into sectarian denominations and make them members of these, and get them to consecrate their money and energies to these rather than to the Lord. Thirdly, having thus gotten them into sectarian bondage they neglect them, and go out after others, failing entirely to give them the "*teaching*" which the Lord indicates is necessary as a preparation for joint-heirship in his Kingdom—*teaching* respecting the divine character and plan, and the graces of the holy spirit and the necessity for rooting out the spirit of worldliness and selfishness, and developing the spirit of the Lord,—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love.

To follow the Lord's instruction the Royal Priesthood should first, when discipling, inform those who have ears to hear that they are sinners through the fall;—imperfect in thought, in word and in act; and consequently unacceptable to God and under sentence of death, extinction; but that God has made a provision for their rescue, and their return to harmony with him and to life everlasting: that Christ Jesus, in harmony with the Father's plan, paid the penalty of Adamic sin and condemnation, and thus purchased the whole race of Adam, and proposes to set at liberty all who obey him. That now he is offering *release by faith* to as many as have the hearing ear—"even as many as the Lord your God shall call," and that such as hear and accept the call may reckon themselves as "justified by faith," as having their sins covered, and as being thus reconciled to the Father through faith in Christ; and that now, if they become followers or disciples of Christ they may become joint-sacrificers with him, and by and by be made joint-heirs in his Kingdom, and its great work of blessing the world.

So many as are interested in the message will inquire the way by which they can attain this, and the answer must be that the full acceptance of discipleship must be indicated by a full consecration, heart, mind and body, to the Lord—even unto death; and that this submission of the will to the Lord is counted as a *baptism*, a burial, an immersion with him into death; and that as soon as they have performed this real baptism or immersion of the will they should submit themselves to an outward immersion in water, which would symbolize this, portraying their death and burial to self, to sin and to the world, and their resurrection to newness of life and conduct as members of the body of Christ.

They are to be urged to take this step of consecration unto death, not in their own strength or name, nor in the name of their instructor; but are to be pointed to the fact that this course is authorized by the Father, by the Son and by the Holy Spirit. It is thus to be done "in the name of" or by the authority of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and not in the name of a sect or denomination or any human teacher. It is a mistake on the part of some to consider this text to mean that converts are to be baptized *into* the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. On the contrary the Apostle distinctly declares, that we are baptized *into* Christ as members of *his body*.—Rom. 6:3-5.

Those who go thus far, who respond to the preaching of the Gospel, and inquire concerning the way, the truth and the life, and who, with true repentance from sin and contrition of heart, desire to become disciples of Christ, and who then take this step of consecration, are baptized thereby into the *Church*, "the body of Christ"—not the Baptist Church nor any other human institution, but the one true Church, the Church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven. (Heb. 12:23.) They need not that their names should be written in any earthly roll or register. The names of such, we are told, are written in the Lamb's book of life, and if they are faithful to their covenant he will not blot out their names, he assures us. The seal of their acceptance is the holy spirit, whose leadings and instructions and marks of character become more and more discernible to them and to others daily, as they thereafter seek to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

But still they will need instruction: in fact, all that has gone before in their Christian experience has merely prepared them to receive instruction; and when they have reached

the condition of justification by faith, and then of sanctification (consecration to the Lord, baptism), they have merely become "babes in Christ." As such they are ready for spiritual food, and should first be fed with the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby, and as they make progress the Lord himself stands pledged to it that they shall have "meat in due season," and as they are able to bear it the "strong meat" which belongs to them that are developed, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, "overcomers," soldiers of Christ, having on his armor and fighting a good fight, lifting high the royal banner, and active in helping others to attain the same conditions.

To Satan, our wily foe, we must credit the perversion of this great commission, so explicitly stated; making it meaningless as we have seen: first by making it mean the conversion of the world; second, by destroying the real idea of baptism; third, by confusing the Lord's people as to the matter of discipling, and to make them think that it is gathering membership into sectarian bundles; fourth, to make them think that this is all that is necessary, and that teaching in the Church is a waste of time, which should be devoted to what the Adversary calls "saving souls," but what in reality is an endeavor to gather unregenerate people into sectarian systems and to delude them into thinking that they are in any sense of the word members of the true Church of Christ, and saved; fifth, by misleading those whom he cannot thus delude, but who realize that there is to be a growth in grace and in knowledge, into a misunderstanding of the Apostle's statement (mistranslated in our Common Version), "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you."—1 John 2:20, 27.

Under this last delusion many are turned aside from the instruction which the Lord designs should be given through teachers whom he would raise up—turned aside to vagaries, to dreams and imaginations and misinterpretations of Scripture which they fancy are whispered to them by the holy spirit, but which frequently give evidence of being the suggestions either of their own minds or of the fallen angels.

Let us, as the Lord's people, seeking for the old paths, note well the Master's instruction in this connection, and let each one of us who seeks to serve his cause labor exactly along the lines here marked out—not thinking that his own imperfect judgment or that of fellow-mortals is superior to the Lord's, but to the contrary, that the Lord, the Head of the Church, alone was competent to give the proper commission which must be followed implicitly.

That our Lord gave this commission, not merely to the apostles but to all who should believe on him through their word, is clearly shown by the words with which he closed the commission,—“Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age.” The apostles did not live to the end of the age, and hence the Lord's words signify that he will be with all of his followers who avail themselves of his commission, and who endeavor to present his message to those who have ears to hear out of all nations. He of course did not mean that he would be personally present with them, for he had already told them that personally he would go away, and that personally he would come again at the end of the age (John 14:2), and his words are not to be understood as contradictory. His meaning in the present instance evidently was that he would supervise their work, he would be the

real head of the Church, he would oversee all of their affairs, he would be with them in the sense of supporting and guiding and counselling those who would walk in his way and proclaim his message—and in proportion as they were faithful to the charge. This assurance of the Lord's presence was intended to give the apostles courage for the work he was committing to them. While he was with them in the flesh they merely followed his direction, and as soon as he was smitten they felt as sheep having no shepherd, and now he was going away, but he wished them to realize that his power would be with them and his supervising guidance of their affairs would be granted them, as surely as while he was with them in the flesh—tho apparent only to the eye of faith. According to their faith it should be unto them a strength, a power.

And all the way down through the age the Lord's people have similarly been required to walk by faith and not by sight, and the lesson no doubt has been valuable to them in spiritual upbuilding, much more so than had he remained in the flesh with us. And if the thought of the Lord's spiritual supervision of his work was to be a source of encouragement and strength to those who would attempt to teach in his name all through the age, much more may we of the present time realize his actual presence in the harvest of this Gospel age, altho we see him with no other than the eye of faith, yet, believing, we have joy unspeakable and strength and courage for the work. He is with us in the harvest work as he was with the apostles in the sowing of the seed.

Surely he who was careful to supervise the sowing work is not less interested and careful in respect to the reaping. Let us then thrust in the sickle of truth with energy and courage, remembering that we serve the Lord Christ, remembering that we are not responsible for the harvest but merely for our energy in gathering what ripe "wheat" we can find. If the labor be great for the finding of few grains of ripe wheat we are to rejoice the more in those we do find, and learn to love and appreciate the more that which is scarce and precious. Let us remember, too, while using all the wisdom we can in this service, that the Lord's object in giving us a share in his work is not so much what we can accomplish as in the blessing that the labor will bring upon us. This will be an encouraging thought to the dear ones who are engaged in the "Volunteer" work; and if they find many discouragements and but small results the reflection that the Master knoweth them that are his, and that he appreciates every sincere effort made to serve his cause and to lay down our lives on behalf of the brethren, will give courage and strength to those who otherwise might faint by the way.

COMFORT IN SORROW

"Neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength—Neh. 8:10.

Sorrows indeed may, and often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord is our helper in all these things. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and trouble has never yet learned the preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow, when we draw near to the Lord, that He draws specially near to us. So the Psalmist (130) found it, when, in deep affliction, he cried to the Lord and reasoned of His righteousness, saying: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications." Feeling his own shortcomings and longing for full deliverance from every imperfection, and prophesying the bountiful provisions of the Divine Plan of salvation through Christ, he adds: "If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities [imputing them to us], O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared [reverenced]"—Z '95, 20 (R 1759).

The bulk of mankind are, generally speaking, usually given to sorrow rather than to joy. It could not be otherwise under the reign of the Adamic curse; for pain, suffering, sickness, losses, disappointments, enmities, dying, death and mourning abound on all sides and make the race sorrowful; for we are all living in the night of sin in which weeping endures (Psa. 30:5). Hence joy is not the usual and enduring experience of the race under the curse. It is the privilege of God's people to be joyous—P '42, 100.

Parallel passages: Gen. 3:16, 17; 1 Sam. 1:15; Esth. 9:22; Job 41:22; Psa. 13:2; 16:4; 18:4, 5; 32:10; 69:29; 116:3, 4; Isa. 35:10; 51:11; Jer. 31:12, 13, 25; John 16:20-22; 2 Cor. 2:7; 6:10; 7:8-11; 1 Thes. 4:13, 14; Rev. 21:4.

Hymns: 60, 222, 38, 3, 43, 203, 204, 105, 231, 228, 173.

Poems of Dawn, 225: *Sorrow*.

Tower Reading: Z '15, 344 (R 5802).

Questions: Did I seek to obtain God's comfort and not be unduly sorrowful? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

SORROW

COUNT each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's Messenger sent down to thee; do thou
With courtesy receive Him; rise and bow;
And, ere His shadow pass thy threshold, crave
Permission first His heavenly feet to lave;
Then lay before Him all thou hast; allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow
Or mar thy hospitality, no wave

Of mortal tumult to obliterate
Thy soul's marmoreal calmness. Grief should be
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate,
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free;
Strong to consume small troubles; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to
the end.

R5802: THE MINISTRY OF SORROW

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

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

But while we are waiting for our deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to us, and the manner in which we receive them should be a matter of deepest concern; for according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or its adversity and trial bear to us a blessing or a curse. Those experiences which we are accustomed to regard as prosperous often have in them subtle dangers. If wealth increases or friends multiply or a large measure of earthly joy comes to us, how almost imperceptibly the heart finds its satisfaction in the things of earth! But when the keen edge of sorrow and disappointment is felt, when riches or health fail, when friends forsake, and enemies take up a reproach against us, the natural tendency is to despondency and despair.

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

DEPTHS OF SORROW LEAD TO HEIGHTS OF JOY

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

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

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

In the midst of the cares, perplexities and difficulties that come to the children of the Lord, we are to trust Him fully, and to possess our souls in peace and patience! We are to *wait* patiently for the Lord to outwork the issues of our experiences in His own good way. How *necessary* is the patient waiting on the Lord! The Psalmist says, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning." (Psalm 130:5, 6.) In every experience of sorrow and distress, and when the strain of the jarring discords and the stinging vexations, and wounds that make the heart bleed,

threaten to overwhelm the spirit, let the child of God remember that "He *knows*, and *loves*, and *cares*," and that His ministering angel is ever near us, and that no trial will be permitted to be *too severe*. The dear Master is standing by the crucible, and the furnace heat will never be permitted to grow so intense that the precious gold of our characters shall be destroyed, or even injured. Ah, no! If by His grace the experiences may not work for our good, they will be turned aside. He loves us too well to permit any needless sorrow, any needless suffering.

THE REWARD OF PATIENT WAITING

"Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." (Psalm 37:5-7.) We must not be disappointed and allow our faith to falter when the test of patient endurance is applied, while the outward peace and quietness which we crave tarry long. Our Father has not forgotten us when the answer to our prayers seems to be delayed. Outward peace and calm are not always the conditions best suited to our needs as New Creatures; and we would not desire conditions in which the precious fruits of the Spirit would not grow and develop in us. Therefore, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice." (1 Peter 4:12, 13.) He who numbers the very hairs of our heads is never indifferent to the sufferings and needs of His weakest and humblest child. Oh, how sweet is the realization of such loving, abiding care! "When *He* giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"

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

How loving and tender is our God, and how wise and strong! His promises have never failed those who have put their trust in Him. We may feel that our efforts to be good and to do good are very unproductive, that the opposition from without and within is very strong. But it is when we are weak, when we realize our own helplessness and

incompetency, that we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. It is then that we may realize that His strength is made perfect in our weakness. The fact that we are weak and lame does not separate us from the love and power of our God, while we are striving to do His will; for "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." Then let us more and more lay hold of this strength of the Lord, that we may courageously pursue our course in the narrow way of difficulty and trial. Precious indeed to the saint of God is the ministry of pain and sorrow!

"YE HAVE SEEN THE PATIENCE OF JOB"

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

But did he lose his faith in God? Hear him: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord!" (Job 1:21.) "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." (Job 13:15.) Job was indeed much cast down, but he maintained his integrity of character and his faith in the Lord through all. He did not charge God with injustice, and God did not desert His faithful servant. He reproved his accusers and required them to offer sacrifice, and instructed Job to pray for them, that their trespasses might be overlooked. In the end he was blessed more abundantly than ever before. God made him a great type of the human family, of the troubles of their fallen condition and of their final restoration to all that was lost in Adam, with the blessings of added experiences to make them wise. How faithful is the Lord in all His dealings! Truly His children should never doubt His love; for

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

PRECIOUSNESS OF INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

It is when continued trust in the Lord and His many responsive providences in our lives have ripened into precious personal acquaintance and intimacy that we learn to delight in Him. Yes, it is when heart answers to heart, when pleading prayer brings recognized answers of peace, when the Divine love and care have been clearly seen in the guidance of our way, that we can recognize the abiding presence with us of the Father

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

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

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

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

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

OVERCOMING BAD HABITS

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word—Psa. 119:9.

How responsible is the position of those who are building character in themselves and in others! Remember that our characters are manifested by our habits of life; and each act, even the smallest, tends to form some new habit, or to confirm one already established. How important, then, that our thoughts and actions should not be aimless, but with a purpose (1 Cor. 10:31); and, above all, that our lives should be "transformed [re-formed] by the renewing of our minds"; that, putting aside the evil, and all influences which tend toward evil, we should receive of the Lord, through His Word, the "spirit of a sound mind," the "mind of Christ." In this view of the case, it is indeed a solemn thing to live, a solemn thing to think, and to act; and it behooves us to guard well our words, our thoughts and our actions, and ever to bear in mind our responsibility to God, both for ourselves and for others as ambassadors for Christ—Z '05, 360 (R 3674).

What is meant by habit? It may be defined as the custom of the mind or disposition to think or to direct action along certain previously and usually employed lines. Habits have a tremendous power for good or for evil. The proverb says, Sow a thought and reap a motive; sow a motive and reap an act; sow an act and reap a tendency; sow a tendency and reap a habit; sow a habit and reap a character; sow a character and reap a destiny. Habit begets a fondness for the deed performed. Habit, given free course, controls our general conduct—our thoughts, speech, gestures, tone of voice, carriage, dress, manner, *etc.*—BS '73, 75.

Parallel passages: Num. 8:7; Neh. 15:22; Job 17:9; Psa. 19:12-14; 24:3-5; 32:5; 51; 119:9; Isa. 1:16; 52:11; Jer. 22:21; Mic. 2:1; Rom. 6:11-23; 1 Cor. 6:9-11, 18; 10:14; 2 Cor. 7:1; Gal. 5:1; 6:1, 7, 8; 2 Tim. 2:22; Jas. 1:8, 12-14; 4:8; 1 John 1:9; 5:21; Rev. 3:5; 21:7, 8.

Hymns: 130, 136, 312, 194, 96, 198, 350.

Poems of Dawn, 306: *The Early Impress.*

Tower Reading: Z '90, 5 (R 1186).

Questions: Have I recently sought earnestly to rid myself of bad habits? What helped or hindered therein? With what results?

THE EARLY IMPRESS

PROV. 22:6

I TOOK a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day;
And as my fingers pressed it still
It bent and yielded to my will.

I came again when days were past,
The bit of clay was hard at last;
My early impress still it bore
And I could change its form no more.

I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it day by day;
Molding with parental art
A young boy's soft and yielding heart.
In time his tender years were gone,
It was a *man* I looked upon;
My early impress still he bore
And I could change him nevermore!

R1186: THE CHARACTER OF OUR SACRIFICE.

It is claimed by some that the sacrifice which the church is invited to make is a sacrifice of sinful practices and thoughts in which we formerly took delight, and that thus we are to follow in the Master's footprints as he set us an example.

This is a great mistake. Renouncing sin is in no sense a sacrifice, and in so doing we are not following our Lord's footprints; for he had no sins to renounce. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;" he was "the Lamb of God without spot or blemish;" he knew no sin; he was the "holy one," the "just one." We cannot begin, therefore, to follow in his footsteps until we have been first cleansed from our sins through faith in his blood as the price of our redemption. Then, through his merit imputed to us, we are holy (pure), and therefore, if we offer ourselves to God as sacrifices, we are acceptable as sharers together with our Lord in his sufferings for the sins of the world. This is clearly expressed in Paul's words to those already justified by faith in Christ—"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God."

Not only do the apostles thus present it, but the types which prefigured the sacrifice taught the same thing. The animal presented for the typical sacrifice must be the most choice of its kind—"without blemish." (Exod. 12:5; Lev. 9:3; Exod. 29:1; Lev. 1:3.) Had our Lord not been absolutely free from sin, he never could have redeemed us. It was because there was not one such spotless one among men, that no man could by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him.—Psa. 49:7.

Instead, therefore, of insulting God by offering our sins as a sacrifice upon his altar, and claiming *therefor* the exceeding great reward of exaltation to the divine nature, we should forsake our sins because they are sinful, because we have no right to them and should take no pleasure in them. We are not to claim a reward for simply doing our duty. When we simply pay a debt, do we expect the creditor to reward us handsomely for it? Do we not rather pay the creditor a reward (interest) for not compelling us to pay it sooner? What would he think, if the debtor should demand the reward, or interest? And

what must our heavenly Father think of poor bankrupts who have not a farthing to pay their past indebtedness, and who are daily plunging deeper into debt and at best can only make a feeble effort to resist sin, coming to him with nothing to cancel the sins of the past and with mere promises of reformation which they cannot fulfill, and then claiming therefor the exceeding great reward of being made sharers and joint-heirs with his Son who never knew sin? Think you, would not such presumption justly merit deep abasement? especially, where the spotless robe of the imputed righteousness of Christ has been offered and recognized and spurned? Will such a one be accounted worthy to be the bride of the King's Son, or as meriting the divine favor in any way? Far from it. Well did the Psalmist put the prayer in our mouths—"Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me."—Psa. 19:13.

The sacrifice which we are *privileged*, not compelled, to make, is a sacrifice of things to which we have a right through Christ, and things which in themselves are lawful and right. As condemned sinners we had *no rights*; all our rights were forfeited and therefore we must die. But when our life was redeemed from destruction by the payment of our ransom price, and we gratefully accepted of the favor of life through faith in the precious blood of Christ, then, all the rights and privileges of perfect men are reckoned as restored to us. As believers these rights are now ours, though we have not yet come into actual possession of the things thus secured to us. And these *rights* are what we are now privileged to sacrifice; and if completely sacrificed, then we may be sure "it is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom," and to make us joint-heirs with his Son in all his glory.

The sacrifice of all our rights implies the sacrifice of life itself as human beings, trusting to the power of God to raise us from death, not to human being, but to being in a higher nature, according to his promise. And what we cannot understand of the philosophy of so great a work we must simply trust to God's promise.

The actual experience of the great restitution, in which all the rest of mankind shall be so greatly blessed, shall never come to the body of Christ, since they sacrifice this purchased right for the privilege of sharing with Christ in the higher nature and glory. They give up all hope of that, and make no claims on God's bounty or favor for the life that now is. All that remains of our humanity is to be spent in the divine service—in active cooperation with the Lord's plan, sacrificing all earthly interests for that great cause, and expecting no reward of an earthly kind.

Such being the conditions on which we may obtain the exceeding great reward offered to us, how necessary that we should keep our eye fixed on the glory of the exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we may gain strength as new creatures, to keep the old nature, the human, continually subject to the will of God; that we carry out our covenant faithfully unto death, being daily crucified with Christ and sharers in his sufferings.

OVERCOMING LONESOMENESS AND DESPONDENCY

"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD"—Psa. 130:1.

We are sometimes "cast down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor. 4:9). This expression shows that while the Apostle and his companions did not suffer despair, did not feel forsaken, they sometimes felt a heaviness of spirit. This heaviness of spirit, or feeling of loneliness and depression, is natural at times to all mankind under the adverse conditions prevailing in the world. The weight of this casting down may be accentuated to some extent by the condition of the physical health. Those who are weak or in pain physically are apt to feel any mental pressure or trouble. This is all to be fought against in the Christian; for we know that our afflictions and disabilities are something outside and not of the Lord, except in the sense that He permits them for our development, for our future work in the Kingdom. We are therefore to be of good courage. If the Lord permits us to have trouble, we are to exercise fortitude, to patiently endure, and not to allow it to destroy our faith or our happiness or our loyalty of spirit to Him to whom we have vowed allegiance.

We are to put up with whatever our Father permits, in sweetness of temper, and to say to ourselves, "This may be a good lesson to me. Perhaps these cast-down feelings, this feeling of desolation, may help me to sympathize more with others." The poet has truly said:

*Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.*

So let us see to it that we do not allow this feeling of depression to conquer us and to destroy our faith and energy; but rather, looking to the Lord for assisting grace, and claiming His precious promises, we are to rise above the difficulty and press bravely onward—Z '15, 120 (R 5671).

Lonesomeness may be defined as *a sad or dejected condition as a result of lack of companionship with and separation from other people*, and despondency as *a condition in which one is much discouraged and disheartened*. These undesirable qualities can be overcome by fighting the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12), by using Bible teachings and examples of other Christians, by drawing near to God and Christ and fellowshiping with Them and (when possible) with other believers, by engaging heartily in God-pleasing service, by calling to mind God's precious promises, encouraging Christian Poems and hymns, and by being persistently determined not to give Satan the victory, but to give it to God—BS '80, 60.

Parallel passages: Gen. 21:9-21; Ex. 6:9-12; 1 Kings 19:1-14, 18; 2 Kings 6:15-17; Job 3; 4:5; 7:3-6; 17:7, 13-16; 42:10-16; Psa. 6:6; 55:4-6, 16; 66:8, 9; 67:1; 69:1-3, 16; Acts 13:22; Psa. 102:3-7, 11, 12; Jer. 3:14-19; 5:15-22; Jonah 4:2, 3, 8; Isa. 53:3, 6; 63:3; Matt. 26:31, 38, 40; 27:46; Mark 14:27; 15:34; John 16:32; Luke 24:17-21; 2 Cor. 4:9; Matt. 11:28-30; Luke 15:20-24; John 6:37; Rom. 3:25, 26; 4:25; 5:1, 8-11;

6:23; Col. 3:3; Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:14-16; 13:5; Jas. 4:8-10; 1 John 1:3, 7; Gen. 12:2, 3; 22:16-18; Rom. 4:11, 12; Gal. 3:16, 29; Psa. 23:6; 24:3-6; 34:17-19; 37; 46; 91; 145:18, 19; Ezek. 18:21, 22; Matt. 28:20; Luke 18:29, 30; John 14:1-3, 21, 23, 26, 27; 15:25, 26; 17:20-23; 2 Cor. 6:17, 18; 7:1; 2 Tim. 2:19-21; Rev. 3:5, 20.

Hymns: 3, 38, 43, 57, 60, 104, 305.

Poems of Dawn, 42: *Courage! Press On.*

Tower Reading: Z '95, 20 (R 1759); Z '15, 120 (R 5670).

Questions: What experiences have I had recently with lonesomeness and despondency? How have I fought against these undesirable qualities? What helped or hindered? Under what circumstances? With what results?

COURAGE! PRESS ON

Tired! well, what of that?

Didst fancy life was spent on beds of ease,
Fluttering the rose leaves scattered by the breeze?
Come, rouse thee! work while it is called to-day:
Courage! arise! go forth upon thy way.

Lonely! and what of that?

Some must be lonely; 'tis not given to all
To feel a heart responsive rise and fall,
To blend another life within its own:
Work can be done in loneliness. Work on.

Dark! well, what of that?

Didst fondly dream the sun would never set?
Dost fear to lose thy way? Take courage yet!
Learn thou to walk by faith, and not by sight;
Thy steps will guided be, and guided right.

Hard! well, what of that?

Didst fancy life one summer holiday,
With lessons none to learn, and naught but play?
Go—get thee to thy task! Conquer or die!
It must be learned; learn it, then, patiently.

R1759: THE MINISTRY OF EVIL.

—Psa. 130.—

THE life of every human being has its lights and shadows, its seasons of joy and its depths of sorrow. These make up the warp and woof of experience, and the web of

character that flows from the active loom of life will be fine and beautiful, or coarse and homely, according to the skill and carefulness with which the individual appropriates and weaves into it the threads of experience. In every life, under the present reign of sin and evil, the somber shades predominate; and to such an extent that the Scriptures aptly describe humanity in its present condition as a "groaning creation." Nor is the Christian exempt from these conditions that are upon the whole world; for "we also groan within ourselves, waiting for deliverance."—Rom. 8:22, 23.

But while we are waiting for the deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to us, and the manner in which we receive and use them should be a matter of deepest concern to us; for, according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or adversity and trial bears to us a blessing or a curse. Those experiences which we are accustomed to regard as prosperous often have in them subtle dangers. If wealth increase or friends multiply, how almost imperceptibly the heart finds its satisfaction in earthly things; but, on the other hand, when the keen edge of sorrow and disappointment are felt, when riches fail, and friends forsake, and enemies take up a reproach against us, the natural temptation is to despondency and despair.

Just here is an important part of the great battle of the Christian's life. He must fight the natural tendencies of the old nature and confidently claim and anticipate the victory in the strength of the great Captain of his salvation. He must not succumb to the flattering and deceptive influences of prosperity, nor faint under the burdens of adversity. He must not allow the trials of life to sour and harden his disposition, to make him morose, or surly, or bitter, or unkind. Nor may he allow pride or ostentation or self-righteousness to grow and feed upon the temporal good things which the Lord's providence has granted him to test his faithfulness as a steward.

Sorrows indeed may, and often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord is our helper in all these things. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and trouble has never yet learned the preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow, when we draw near to the Lord, that he draws specially near to us. So the Psalmist found it, when, in deep affliction, he cried to the Lord and reasoned of his righteousness, saying, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications." Feeling his own shortcomings, and longing for full deliverance from every imperfection, and prophesying the bountiful provisions of the divine plan of salvation through Christ, he adds, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities [imputing them to us], O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared [reverenced]"

How blessed are such assurances when the soul is painfully conscious of its infirmities and of its inability to measure up to the perfect law of righteousness. When the heart is true and loyal, God does not mark our infirmities in a record against us. They are not imputed to us, but are freely forgiven through Christ in whose merit we trust and whose righteousness is our glorious dress,—arrayed in which, we may come with humble boldness, even into the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

If God thus ignores the infirmities of our flesh and receives and communes with us as new creatures in Christ, his children should also so regard one another, considering not, and charging not against each other, the infirmities of the flesh, which all humbly confess and by the grace of God strive daily to overcome. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The case is different, however, when the infirmities of the flesh are cultivated, indulged and justified that the errors may be continued. Then, indeed, they are charged against us, and if we do not speedily "judge ourselves," the Lord will judge and chasten us.—1 Cor. 11:31, 32.

"I wait for the Lord," the Psalmist continues, "my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning." How necessary is this patient *waiting* for the Lord! In the midst of cares, perplexities, difficulties and infirmities we may remember that all the jarring discords of life are working together for good to them that love the Lord, to the called according to his purpose. But for the consummation of this purpose of God toward us we must "*wait*," and, while waiting patiently, endure hardness as good soldiers. "Trust in the Lord, and *wait patiently* for him, and he will bring it to pass." Time is an important element in all God's plans: we are not, therefore, to be disappointed when the test of endurance is applied while the blessings we crave tarry long. God took time to frame the world and to fit it for human habitation; time (6000 years) to give the world its necessary experience with evil; time (4000 years) to prepare for the advent of Christ as the world's Redeemer; time (2000 years) for the preparation of the Church to share in his glorious reign; and time must be allowed for the shaping and adjusting of the individual affairs of all his people. God has not forgotten when the answers to our prayers seem to tarry long. He who heeds the sparrow's fall and numbers the very hairs of our heads is not indifferent to the faintest call or the smallest necessity of his humblest child.

O, how blessed is the realization of such care over us.

"MORE THAN THEY THAT WAIT FOR THE MORNING."

"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that wait for the Morning,—I say *more* than they that wait for the Morning."

The "brethren," are not in darkness respecting the dawn of the Millennial Morning, because taught there of by the Comforter (See 1 Thes. 5:4), and because to their eyes of faith the Day Star (the Day-bringer—Christ) has already appeared, and they rejoice in the inspired testimony that although "weeping may endure for the night [of sin's predominance] joy cometh in the Morning" of the great day of the Lord. And as the dawn of the new day, "the day of Christ," becomes more and more distinct, many besides the "brethren" can and do see signs that "the night is far spent and the day is at hand;" and by and by, notwithstanding the dark clouds and terrible storm of trouble that will temporarily hide the signs of morning from them, all the world—even the still sleeping nominal church—will awake to the fact that "The morn at last is breaking."

But many of those who are now watching for the Morning from the standpoint of Socialism, Nationalism, etc., are not waiting for the Lord—in fact, they do not know the Lord, his character and his Kingdom having been so sadly misrepresented by those who claimed to be his mouthpieces. They rejoice in the Morning, because it ushers in the golden age of human equality, general education, decreased toil, and increased privileges, comforts and luxuries. "God is not in all their thoughts," when they look for the Morning. Looking from a more or less selfish standpoint, and unguided by the divine revelation—for no man knoweth the mind of God save he who has the spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:11, 12)—they fail to see the real object and chief characteristic of the coming age of blessing, and are merely championing the interests of the masses as against the present special advantages of the wealthy. They see not the greatest blessings of the dawning day;—that with earthly comforts and privileges it will bring the great blessing of a trial for everlasting life;—that it will be the world's Judgment Day, to determine who, under those favorable conditions, will develop characters in harmony with God's character.

But with the "brethren" it is different. While they appreciate the coming earthly blessings none the less, but the more intelligently, the Lord, his character and the work which will be accomplished for men by the great Physician—as Prophet, Priest and King—these more weighty and more valuable considerations outweigh by far the earthly favors which will attend his Kingdom's rule. Yes, the "brethren" wait for the Lord himself, longing to see the King in his beauty—the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely. Yes, truly *our* souls "wait for the Lord *more* than they that wait for the Morning."

Then let all the Israel of God hope in the Lord (verses 7, 8), for with the Lord there is mercy; mercy not only in dealing with our infirmities, but also in shielding from overwhelming trials and in granting grace to help in every time of need,—to those who abide in the Vine by faith and obedience. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

R5670: "LIGHT AFFLICTIONS" HERE—"GLORY TO FOLLOW"

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body."—2 Corinthians 4:8-10.

THE Apostle Paul is here addressing the Church at Corinth, and in the larger sense addressing the entire Church of the Gospel Age. He is apparently describing to some extent the experiences of himself and those who were with him in his missionary labors. He traveled from place to place, but not as our pilgrim brethren now do; for sometimes he spent an entire year, sometimes more than a year, in one city. Nevertheless, he was a traveler, going about where other missionaries of the Lord had not gone, addressing the Jews and whoever else might give evidence of having a hearing ear. On these tours he took with him assistants. We are therefore to consider that his words here referred not

only to the Apostles (for he was the only Apostle of the company), but also to the others with him; and that this Epistle, as are all the inspired writings, was designed by the Lord for the instruction and benefit of all the saints throughout the Christian Dispensation.

The Apostle's assistants were general ministers of the Lord, as are all God's children in proportion as they do a work of ministry. His words would seemingly be addressed, then, to all who are engaged in the Lord's service. In this Epistle he points out that there are differences in the services rendered—"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully"—and also differences in the experiences of the various members of the Body of Christ. He says that some of them had been the objects of persecution and that others had shared in those persecutions by suffering with those so persecuted, indicating that the Lord recognizes and appreciates this association with those in distress, if there be such association.

This thought is brought out also in St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews. (Chapter 10:32-34.) If those not so actively engaged in the service are faithfully doing all that their hands find to do, the Lord is as appreciative of it as He is of those who because of greater ability or physical strength or opportunities are able to accomplish more—each doing to the extent of his opportunity the work of the Lord.

The Apostle said of himself and his companions, and of all those laboring faithfully in the service of the Master, "We are troubled on every side." There are many troubles that are common to the whole human family—lack of employment, sickness, death, poverty, etc. There are multitudinous troubles which come to the world; and of course the Apostle and his companions were subject to these difficulties like other men. To many these trials of life bring distress. But while St. Paul and those with him had their ailments and difficulties, their persecutions and trials, they also had the knowledge of the Truth and the Lord's sustaining grace; and they were enlisted in the army of the King of kings. They were not distressed by their troubles, but were trusting in the Lord's precious promises that these should all work out for their good.

"AS HE WAS, SO ARE WE, IN THIS WORLD"

And so we are not to allow the troubles of life to distress us as they distress other people. We have something that others do not have—the Lord's assurance that everything in our lives shall be a bearer of blessing to us if we are faithful. This enables us to rejoice in tribulation, if we really believe this promise of our Father's Word. There are other troubles that come to the Lord's people, but do not come to the world. The world is more or less in opposition to those who are engaged in publicly preaching the Truth and to those who are associated with them. There is a battle on between right and wrong, light and darkness. The world, being attached to their darkness, feel an enmity toward the light, a hatred of it; and they are often disposed to give special trouble to those who are the Lord's representatives in a particular capacity.

Occasionally we find worldly persons who are of good heart and kind intention and who are desirous of helping on a good work; but these are exceptions. Our strongest

opposition, however, comes generally, as did that of the Master, from those who are our brethren, though many of them are only nominally so. Then we have the Adversary particularly against us. It is true that the whole world have the oppositions of the Adversary, but he is especially active against those engaged in the public service of the Lord. Satan seems to bring before these special temptations, and it is not surprising that they should be the particular objects of his rage and of his wiles. But those who are thus engaged in God's service have special blessings at His hands, and extra fortifications. So while we may be sure that those in the public ministry have more troubles from the Adversary, they are also given more grace to cope with them.

OUR DEATH THE GATEWAY TO LIFE

"We are perplexed, but not in despair," says St. Paul. The Apostle and his company were not the only ones who have been at a loss to know just what to do. The whole world have been perplexed, and are particularly so today. The general anxious uncertainty of our day results in a large measure, it would seem, from the nerve-racking experiences of the present time. If people knew the right thing to do in respect to their business, their homes and their affairs in general, they would not be so full of doubt and bewilderment. But no one is wise enough to get along without some perplexity; and present conditions in the world are causing much distress and also anxious foreboding for the near future. Those who are engaged in the work of the Lord have some perplexity. But the anxiety or uncertainty of the Lord's people should never go to the length of despair. Those who are of the world, getting out of work and being in various difficulties, become very despondent. Frequently we hear of suicides. Things look very dark to people who take their own life.

It may yet be true of the Lord's people that things will look very dark; but they are not in despair, and will not be in despair whatever may come; for the Lord has said that He will never leave us nor forsake us. This gracious promise should give us a hope sure and steadfast. Our anchor of hope should hold. Our position, therefore, is very different from that of the world, who have no particular hope. The world have no solid anchor, no precious promises to hold them fast. We know that if the worst comes to the worst, if we should even die of starvation, our hope lies beyond the Veil, beyond death. Therefore God's saints of today look upon death as the gateway by which to enter into fulness of life, into a realization of all our hopes and joys. If, therefore, there is despair, it would prove that our anchorage has been cut loose. Whoever would find that he is in despair would find that he is letting go his faith, and should immediately seek counsel from the Word of God and from others strong in faith, and should go to the Lord in frequent and earnest prayer, assured that if faith is restored despair will go.

"I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE"

"We are persecuted, but not forsaken." There are persecutions of certain kinds that come to those in the world. Sometimes their neighbors have a grudge against them, and they thus are more or less persecuted. But they have no effective means of dealing with such a matter and nothing to comfort them. Sometimes they give as good as they get. But

in the case of one of the Lord's children it is very different. When we feel that justice calls for retaliation, then we should remember that it is not ours to retaliate, to return evil for evil. The Lord has told us that we should leave all matters relating to justice in His hands. "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." He does say that we are to run away from persecutions; therefore we are not to condemn those who run away as following a wrong course. We are told by the Master, "If they persecute you in one city, flee to another." So if a child of God is persecuted in one neighborhood and he can get away to another neighborhood, it would be better to go.

But though persecuted for righteousness' sake, the Lord's people are not forsaken. The world and those possessing the world's spirit may harass and buffet them, but the Lord does not forsake them. When persecutions come to us, however, we are to inquire, "Are these oppositions and persecutions coming to me on account of my loyalty to the Lord, or is it that there is something in my disposition which causes them?" If the latter is the case, we should diligently endeavor to rectify our fault. If, on the other hand, we find by careful scrutiny of ourselves and our conduct that we have been doing our best, our very best, and that the persecutions are coming to us on this account, then we are to rejoice in the persecution.

We are "cast down, but not destroyed." This expression shows that while the Apostle and his companions did not suffer despair, did not feel forsaken, they sometimes felt a heaviness of spirit. This heaviness of spirit, or feeling of loneliness and depression, is natural at times to all mankind under the adverse conditions prevailing in the world. The weight of this casting down may be accentuated to some extent by the condition of the physical health. Those who are weak or in pain physically are apt to feel any mental pressure or trouble. This is all to be fought against in the Christian; for we know that our afflictions and disabilities are something outside and not of the Lord, except in the sense that He permits them for our development, for our future work in the Kingdom. We are therefore to be of good courage. If the Lord permits us to have trouble, we are to exercise fortitude, to patiently endure, and not to allow it to destroy our faith or our happiness or our loyalty of spirit to Him to whom we have vowed allegiance.

We are to put up with whatever our Father permits, in sweetness of temper, and to say to ourselves, "This may be a good lesson to me. Perhaps these cast-down feelings, this feeling of desolation, may help me to sympathize more with others." The poet has truly said:

"Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary."

So let us see to it that we do not allow this feeling of depression to conquer us and to destroy our faith and energy; but rather, looking to the Lord for assisting grace, and claiming His precious promises, we are to rise above the difficulty and press bravely onward.

OUR "COVENANT BY SACRIFICE"

We are "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." The Apostle thus declares that the Lord's people, in proportion as they are faithful in His service, have a likeness to the Lord in their service, in their death. Our Lord's experience in the narrow way was three and a half years of dying. He was daily laying down His life—surrendering His life. He was an Example to us of how we should surrender our lives. He laid down His life, not in the service of the world, but of the Lord's professed people. While the merit of His sacrificed life was to be used of the Lord for the life of the world, yet He laid it down in the direct service of His Jewish brethren.

The Hebrew people were the people of God. Our Lord spent His life especially with those who were truly desirous of pleasing God and knowing His will, whether found amongst the rich and influential or amongst the poor and lowly. Jesus welcomed publicans and sinners, and gave His life for them. He knew that among this humble class He would find the greater proportion of true wheat. He was laying down His life during all the three and a half years of His earthly ministry, and merely completed this work at Calvary.

And so it is with all of the Lord's true people. They have made "a covenant by sacrifice." They have consecrated, dedicated their lives to the Lord and His service; and as Jesus their Master laid down His life in doing good, in proclaiming the Truth then due, so they are to lay down their lives in the same manner, whether the time of their ministry be three and a half years or twenty years or whatever it may be—until the Father's good time shall come for their deliverance. They will be in full harmony with the Lord and will gladly have fellowship in the sufferings of their great Head—and properly so; for they are prospective members of His Body. Thus all of these members are continually bearing about in the body the dying of their Lord. They are dying daily as He died, "laying down their lives."

"THEREFORE GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY"

This is all the work of the New Creature. The old creature is merely compelled to follow in the way of the New Creature, and this setting aside of the will of the flesh is the basic feature of our dying. When our dying has been completed, our lives faithfully laid down, it will bring us to that condition where we shall hear the Master's "Well done!"

St. Paul also says that "the life of Jesus" is to be "made manifest in our body." We understand him here to be referring to the human body. The New Creature owns this body. With the people of the world there are not two personalities, but merely the one creature. This duality of personality is applicable only to those who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit. The old body is suffering; but the New Creature rejoices, glad to be in the service—gives thanks to God day by day respecting its tribulations, knowing that these are working out "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Thus the life of Jesus is manifested through us to the world, and to the brethren. The world cannot understand. They say, "If I were in your place, in such a trial, I would be

miserable. But you are rejoicing!" So they cannot understand. But we have a newness of life that the world cannot appreciate. All who can appreciate this should daily grow in grace and knowledge. We should show forth more and more of the Lord's life in our characters and in our bodies. Thus we shall be manifesting more and still more of the Lord's Spirit, doing more of the Lord's work, becoming more like Jesus—all of which will prepare us for the glory beyond, when the New Creature shall be completed, when all the perfections and glories of the new nature will be ours.

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